ForMig Forschungsverbund Migration und Wissen

Innovating Qualitative Research: New Directions in Migration

Miriam Busse / Edda Currle / Torsten Kühlmann / Délia Nicoué / Marlen Rabl / Bernd Rebstein / Bernt Schnettler

ARBEITSPAPIERE

aus der Verbundforschung

Nummer 1 - September 2011

Forschungsverbund Migration und Wissen (ForMig)
Redaktion: Helga Schubert
ISBN 978-3-9812340-4-6
ISSN 1613-0332
ForMig wird gefördert vom
Bayerischen Staatsministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst

Content

Preface and Introduction

This collection of articles highlights the first results of the interdisciplinary research network on “Migration and Knowlege” (ForMiG).[1]

These contributions are based on a presentation given as part of the Midterm Conference of the European Sociological Association, held on the 20th and 21st of September 2010 in Bayreuth.

International migration is a phenomenon that is encountered world wide and just since the era of globalization. International migrants have constituted between 2% and 3% of the world population consistently throughout recent decades. Approximately 200 million people across the globe no longer live in their native country. Yet, behind these numbers lie a wide variety of migration forms, migrants, countries of origin and destinations as well as diverse attitudes towards migrational policy. Even Germany was, and still is, a target destination, transitional area and point of origin for the process of international migration.

Public debate regarding the scale, structure and the societal consequences of migration in Germany suffers from disseminated, false or biased ideas. Public discussion often reduces the complexity of international migration to problems of illegal migration, human trafficking, integration, wage dumping and misuse of the social system.

The Bavarian Research Network on “Migration and Knowledge” aims to counteract this one-sided discussion through the investigation of the potential of immigration in Germany. This research is, therefore, focused on the knowledge possessed by migrants, how knowledge is shared between migrants and representatives of the host countries as well as the formation of new knowledge. From this perspective the research group gains an awareness of immigration as a knowledge resource, capable of contributing to innovation, economic development, social change and employment in the host country.

The two leading terms in this paper, “knowledge” and “migration”, are too complex to be scientifically defined without ambiguity. A broad spectrum of disciplines is applied to the study of knowledge and migration: anthropology, sociology, psychology, geography, education and economics to name but a few.

Similarly varied is the canon of research methods. The widely used quantitative social science strategies yield numerical data from large samples via standardised data collection methods. But in recent years, this method has increasingly been joined by a qualitative research approach. The goal is a holistic understanding of the individual and their environment by defining the reality of the people surveyed and understanding how they assign meaning.

The research focuses on the interpretation of conversations, texts, pictures and movies in order to generate new hypotheses regarding human interactions. The review of existing theories on social phenomena is of less interest. A high degree

[1] The research network comprises 10 individual projects and is funded by the Bavarian State Ministry for Science, Research and Art.

of flexibility and openness is required in the conduct of the investigation and analysis if new insight is to be gained.

The contributions gathered in this volume draw on various methods of quantitative social research and discuss their application to studies of international migration. They reflect the diversity of qualitative research approaches as well as discussing the range of immigration into Germany. All the contributions share a common structure. A brief introduction will present the practical research in which the methods are used. This is followed by a detailed explanation of the method including its development, evolution and boundaries. Examples of the application of these research practices are then presented in order to illustrate the data collection and the findings of the applied method. Each article concludes with a discussion of the potential of the proposed method and its limitations.

Currle demonstrates how the various facets of migration events can be explored via focus group interviews. The article shows how difficulties arise when focus group interviews are conducted with migrants and how these difficulties may be overcome through the methods found in two research projects.

Busse and *Kühlmann* present a novel combination of the focus group interview and the Critical Incident Technique, both proven methods of qualitative research. An example of a research project on knowledge sharing between inpatriates and local work colleagues indicates how the individual weaknesses of the two methods can cancel each other out by integrating them in a hybrid method.

Nicoué uses narrative interviews to describe the varied experiences, expectations and behaviours of immigrants from Ethiopia and Eritrea on their multi-stage route to Europe. Several interview excerpts are used to illustrate how migrants experience the various stages of their journey and how they acquire and exchange knowledge, develop and discard expectations, learn behavioural practices and adapt to changes in context.

While the first three articles deal with the reconstruction of the subjective knowledge possessed by migrants either during or after their migration to Germany, *Rebstein*, *Rabl* and *Schnettler* focus on the question of how migrants transfer their knowledge to nationals of the host country. The authors utilise ethnographic analysis of video documentaries, recorded at public events, in which migrants attempt to impart their knowledge to a mostly German audience. Special emphasis is placed on the meaning of “moderating”. This term refers to an annotated and interpreted translation specifically tailored for the sharing of knowledge at multilingual events.

Torsten M. Kühlmann

Spokesman of the ForMig research Network

I. Focus group discussions in migration research

Edda Currle

1. Introduction

This paper reports the experiences of the european forum for migration studies (efms), an institute based at the University of Bamberg, involving the focus group discussions used in its research so far.[1] Firstly, we will provide an overview of the method of focus group discussions. Next, we will introduce two of the efms research projects that utilized focus group discussions. We will then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of focus group discussions in migration research concerning the recruitment of participants, the implementation of focus groups and data interpretation.

2. Focus group discussions: Description of the method

2.1. Definition

As a qualitative data collection method, focus group discussions are effective in helping researchers to learn the social norms of a community or subgroup, as well as the range of perspectives, experiences, attitudes and opinions that exist within that community or subgroup. A focus group discussion is a group discussion which enables analysis and understanding of a selected topic on the basis of common group characteristics (for example gender, age, ethnicity or socioeconomic status). In contrast with a group discussion, there are some key elements necessary for a focus group discussion:

- The moderator guides the discussion by key questions.
- The discussion involves a special topic which has to be kept by the moderator.
- The moderator starts the discussion with an information input (this could be a short presentation, a film, or other suitable material).
- Results of focus group discussions are generated by the dynamics of the participants.

It might be said that group discussions represent a broader concept, whereas focus group discussions are a more specific term. The give-and-take interaction of focus group discussions allows the participants to share ideas and discuss priority issues. Meeting with focus groups, under the guidance of the moderator, is not only useful for gathering numerous views and perceptions simultaneously, but also for observing the exchanges between different participants (Morgan, 1992, p. 12).

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[1] Founded in 1993, the main topics of the efms are migration and integration of migrants in Europe. The efms is actively involved in scientific research, policy counseling, preparation of expert surveys, evaluation, training, information and documentation.

For this reason the results of focus group discussions do not reflect single persons' views to the same extent as personal interviews do. Personal interviews are better suited to gain information on individuals while focus group discussion provide the researcher with a wide range of different perspectives. This guarantees a high degree of density and depth of information (Henseling, Hahn & Nolting, 2006, p. 3). In sum:

> "Any group discussion may be called a focus group as long as the researcher is actively encouraging of, and attentive to, the group interaction." (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999, cited in Barbour, 2007, p. 2).

2.2. Historical background of focus group discussions

To better understand the way focus groups work, we will take a brief look at the historical background of the method. It was developed by Robert Merton in the early 1940's when he joined a research project of Paul Lazarsfeld (Merton, 1987, p. 552). He originally called his method "focussed interview". Although its origins lay in sociology, the social sciences paid little attention to the method at first, which is partly due to a small number of publications at that time (one example is Merton & Kendall reporting the method in 1946). Instead, the method has been in common use in market research since the 1950's.[2] In this field it can be applied to the development and design of new products and the optimization of sales strategies for both products and services. This development is behind the emphasis placed by the literature on focus groups relating to "issues and problems that bear little resemblance to the questions that social scientists usually investigate" (Morgan, 1988, p. 10). In the 1980's the method was applied to new fields and entered policy counselling, especially in the fields of environmental and climate policy. In this context, focus group discussions have been used to test the design and process of political campaigns and initiatives. Only since the 1990's a growing number of scientific literature deals with the implementation of focus groups in the social sciences.[3] In German-speaking countries the full potential of the method has only been realized in the last few years (Henseling et al., 2006, p. 10).

2.3. Application in the social sciences

Working with small samples, the results of focus group discussions are not representative. Used in main surveys, the crucial benefit of focus group discussions compared to standardized surveys is the greater openness of responses. This allows the analysis of complex behaviour and motivations. Attitudes, opinions and tolerances become clear. In some cases focus group discussions are an alternative for those who prefer not to participate in face-to-face interviews (Henseling et al., 2006, p. 10).

In the social sciences focus group discussions are often used in pilot studies to obtain initial information, orient the research theme and identify scientific ques-

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[2] Merton himself stated, in 1986, his astonishment at the widespread use of focus groups: "One gains the impression that focus-group research is being mercilessly misused as a quick-and-easy claim for the validity of research which is not subjected to further, quantitative test." (Merton, 1987, p. 557).

[3] Links for further reading are cited in 7.

tions, often combined with other methods.[4] Theses may be generated in order to develop the survey instruments such as questionnaires or interview guides. Focus group discussions are also useful in the field of evaluation of political or social measures. Effects of projects or social measures can be analysed during their implementation. Any disparity between intention and implementation may be identified (Morgan, 1998, p. 13).

In one of the following examples, the efms has used focus group discussions as a supplement for other qualitative methods in order to develop a quantitative study. The other research project used self-contained focus groups. The application of focus group discussions may prove difficult if the subject matter evokes emotions or has a negative affect on group atmosphere. Discussing a controversial or emotional topic can exacerbate possible conflicts between group members. This is especially true for migration research when the discussion involves members of different ethnic groups. A moderator who is conducting discussions with members of different ethnic backgrounds must be aware of differences in the style of communication for different ethnicities, for example the different ways they may convince others of one's opinions.

Focus group discussions typically involve six to ten people. Groups of fewer participants are appropriate when participants are deeply interested in the topic and, therefore, require more time for discussion. This is particularly true in situations where the conversation regards personal experiences, the participants possess considerable knowledge about the topic or when they are highly emotionally involved. Ideally, several focus group discussions should be held with different participants who do not know each other.

2.4. The implementation of focus group discussions

Phase one: Planning of focus group discussions

Thorough preparation is required when conducting focus groups. This can consume a great deal of time and money in comparison to other methods. Knowledge regarding this method is generally limited and researchers must acquire the relevant skills before implementing focus group discussion sessions. To begin with, the following questions must be answered: where will the session be conducted; what will be the size and number of the discussion groups; what will be the form and structure of the discussion and the final report (Morgan & Scannell, 1998, p. 5).

When defining the target group there should ideally be relevant background information regarding the group. Group compositions that are likely to cause problems should be considered in advance. If possible, further demographic and social background information on the participants should be gathered in order to avoid problematic group compositions. Previous experience also indicates that the focus group discussions work best when the research topic is of interest to the participants (Morgan, 1998, p. 9).[5] In many cases, the recruitment of participants causes a problem. Depending on the group composition there are many strategies to overcome this problem (Morgan & Scannell, 1998, p. 85).

[4] Busse and Kuhlmann for example incorporated the Critical Incident Technique in focus groups (see their paper in this volume).

[5] More information on the ideal group composition: Morgan & Scannell, 1998, p. 55.

Basically, a decision must be reached as to whether the discussion is more or less structured. A less structured discussion allows the participants to talk more freely but can allow the conversation to deviate from the discussion theme (Morgan & Scannell, 1998, p. 45). The interview guide for structured discussions defines the content as well as the time budget of a focus group discussion. The interview guide should cover as many relevant discussion issues as possible. In contrast to standardized questionnaires, precisely formulated questions shall not dominate and limit the answers. As with any interview guided method the art is to use the questionnaire not in a rigid, but in a flexible, adaptable manner.

The questions may be open, introductory, transitional, key and ending in form (Krueger, 1998, p. 21). The appropriate formulation of the questions is highly dependent on the target group. The information input that starts the discussion can be a crucial part of the method and may be comprised of a short presentation, pictures, short films or other visual materials such as flyers or posters. The reliance on information input reveals the origin of this method since market research offers considerably more options for information inputs than the social sciences, as used in product tests (Henseling et al., 2006, p. 18).

Phase two: Implementing focus group discussions

The moderator plays an important role in ensuring the quality of the collected data and is, therefore, crucial to the focus group's success. They determine the course of the discussion, topic and central aspects without excessively controlling the group dynamics (Morgan, 1998, p. 9). Their task is to ensure that all the questions detailed in the interview guide are covered while simultaneously encouraging the participants to discuss the topic in depth. They must be able to accommodate silences and recognize possible obstructions during the course of the discussion and, if necessary, correct a problem. This is especially true when a dominant speaker, who may restrict the voices of others, influences the conversation. While restraining dominant speakers may rectify this problem, the moderator should also encourage reluctant participants to speak.

During the discussion, an assistant moderator takes notes on their impression of the conversation in a "field diary", which also records non-verbal forms of communication and seating arrangements throughout the discussion. In migration research, particular sensitivity is required when dealing with certain groups, such as ethnic minorities.[6]

Phase three: Data analysis[7]

During the analysis of data obtained in focus group discussions, the participant's personal background should be considered as well as the spatial context of the interview. Similarly, the moderator's role and influence on the participants needs to be critically analysed. A technically supported qualitative analysis is recommended for the data interpretation (Krueger, 1998b, p. 89). The coding system uses a-priori-Codes, which are manually assigned to the data material. By contrast, in-vivo-Codes, are obtained from the material according to the concepts used by the actors who are subject to the study (Kuckartz, 2005, p. 74).

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6 Basic and comprehensive information on the role and the tasks of a moderator: Krueger, 1998a.

7 „Focus Group Analysis is Unique“ (Krueger, 1998b, p. 20).

To achieve a systematic analysis of the interactions between participants the patterns of interaction are identified in the data and analysed. The analytical potential of the data is significantly increased if the moderator has already paid close attention to such patterns during the course of the discussion since later interpretation of interaction patterns will be easier. Attention should also be paid to compromises, mergers, or convictions that arise during the discussion. This indicates that single statements must be considered as well as identifying patterns and trends shown during the conversation. Thus, the focus group moderator should, ideally, analyse the data themselves (Krueger, 1998b, p. 76).

3. The research projects by the efms using focus group discussions[8]

3.1. Brain Gain?

The research project "Brain Gain?" analyses the patterns of immigration and career as well as the working conditions experienced by foreign researchers in Bavaria. It is part of the Bavarian research network "Migration and Knowledge, ForMig. Migration and integration are primarily referred to by the German media as "a problem". Interpreting the topic in this way means underestimating its importance. Insufficient attention has been paid to the prospect of mobility as an opportunity for modern societies. Therefore, the research network ForMig concentrates on the various ways in which knowledge is transferred between societies and how this knowledge is transformed or rebuilt. ForMig aims at providing research on the topic of migrants' knowledge, the mechanisms of knowledge transfer and the possibilities for creating new knowledge. The work on ForMig started in September 2009 and will last for three years.

The research project "Brain Gain?" asks how and why a particular group of highly qualified migrants come to Bavaria. This group consists of foreign scientists working at non-university institutes of the Max-Planck-Society and the Fraunhofer-Society. The study aims to understand the motivations behind the migration of foreign scientists to Germany and identify which migration channels they use, why they wish to stay and whether they wish to re-migrate or to move to another country. It also aims to discover the factors that restrain or support a decision to migrate and under which conditions knowledge transfer works best.

Due to the lack of empirical research data on foreign scientists, a broad pilot study was conducted combining different methods. As well as expert interviews, biographical and narrative interviews were used in conjunction with focus group interviews with researchers from abroad. Since focus group discussions do not focus on individual information, narrative interviews were also used in the preliminary study. In the focus group discussions, we brought together different scientists and encouraged them to discuss their "migration stories", because we wanted to learn about a wide range of experiences, perspectives, attitudes and opinions concerning the research questions mentioned above. Since the participants' answers are mutually influenced by each other, topics are likely to be

[8] A further research project using focus group discussions is "Temporary Immigration". In this volume Busse and Kühlmann describe in detail the design of their project as well as advantages, difficulties and experiences of the method.

raised that were neglected in the face-to-face interviews. In the focus group discussions we aimed to bring the experiences of different migrants into contrast. Through the combination of both methods we expected to gain deeper insights into the motivations behind migration. Both methods, focus group discussion and narrative interview, should help to develop the questionnaire for the standardized survey in the second phase of the project.

The participants of each focus group were scientists from the same institute but have different home countries and differ in age and occupational status. The use of researchers from the same institute aids in overcoming the difficulties in establishing the group and these homogeneous participants were able to quickly enter discussion. Heterogeneous groups often struggle to find acceptable basis for debate since they are uncomfortable revealing their opinions and experiences (Henseling et al., 2006, p. 14). This is also a problem when boss and subordinate meet in a focus group.

In the end we could realize two focus group discussions, one in each society. In one case we received five commitments but only three members from India, Lebanon and Mexico. The seven assured members of the second group all attended the discussion. Altogether the participants came from eight different countries. In most cases, the researchers occupied lower positions such as research assistant or researcher. Three participants were female, seven male. Both discussions were held in English and took place at the institutes.

3.2. RAXEN thematic study “The asylum-seekers’ perspective: Access to Information and to effective remedies”

The second research project using focus group discussions is a thematic study for the Racism and Xenophobia Network, which was founded in 2000 and is coordinated by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, FRA. The RAXEN network consists of 27 so-called National Focal points (NFP’s), each one of them representing a European Union Member State. The RAXEN National Focal Points are the FRA’s main source of data and information concerning racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and related intolerance. The information they provide at the national level constitutes the essential background material for the development of comparative reports and studies at the European level by the FRA. Since June 2001 the efms has been contracted as the National Focal Point for Germany.

The main objective of the thematic study “The asylum seekers perspective: Access to Information and to effective remedies” was to provide the FRA with country specific information regarding the impact of existing national policies on asylum seekers in selected areas. The views and perceptions of asylum seekers should be collected and analysed in order to identify patterns that may be useful for making policy decisions on EU-level.

The first issue that will be studied concerns the fairness of asylum procedures and, more specifically, the duty to provide information to asylum seekers regarding procedure including rights and obligations during the asylum procedure (Article 10.1 Asylum Procedure Directive). The final report examines the information that asylum seekers have on the asylum procedure. In particular it details the main source of information for asylum seekers, which type of information they receive and when and how they receive it. The report also highlights those people asylum seekers deem the most useful and trustworthy sources of information. In this area, the research by FRA should help to identify the effectiveness of the information provided to asylum seekers in the different EUMS as well as to clarify the degree to which asylum seekers rely on information they receive from smugglers or members of their community, as some allegations suggest.

The second issue to be examined regards access to effective remedies as seen from the asylum seekers' perspective (see Article 39 of the Asylum Procedure Directive). The study concentrates on the asylum seekers' experiences when submitting an appeal against a negative decision by national asylum authorities. The FRA attempted to identify the main challenges that asylum seekers face when trying to submit an appeal in time.

The study used focus group discussions as the main empirical instrument in analysing both issues. The discussion groups were structured by an interview guide. The target group consisted of asylum seekers from Somalia, Iraq or Afghanistan. The study has been supplemented by individual interviews with asylum seekers as well as a closed questionnaire submitted to the national asylum authorities.

A common characteristic of the focus group discussions was the nationality of the participants. Unlike the Brain-Gain groups, which consisted of highly qualified migrants, the asylum seekers showed a wide range of education levels. Altogether, six focus group discussions have been carried out, three with men and three with women. It was important to conduct separate focus group discussions for women and men of all ages, from age 18 and up, because women and men of different ages and backgrounds experience some similar, but also some different, challenges. This can lead to a different level of access and benefit from services and resources.

Recruitment, implementation and data interpretation of such focus group discussions were affected by different problems. We will illustrate this through examples from our research projects and then present the results gained by focus group discussions.

4. Results, advantages and problems of focus group discussions in the efms research projects

4.1. Results on Brain Gain's research questions[9]

One has to bear in mind that the focus group discussions of the Brain Gain project only constituted one of many methods used to give an insight into the research field, to formulate hypotheses, and to develop the instrument for the main study.

4.1.1 Migration paths of the scientists

In terms of migration paths, we found three core groups among the participants of the pre-study. The first, students, studied in Germany and took up work afterwards. Participants of the second group were those who came as labour migrants to Germany. The third group came to Germany as family migrants.

About half of the scientists who were questioned in the pre-study were people who came to work in Bavaria, but, vice versa, this indicates that there is a great

[9] The results described in this chapter stem from the whole pilot study including the focus group discussions as well as the in-depth interviews.

potential among the migrants already living in Germany who used other migration channels like student migration or family unification. Four of the labour migrants came to Germany with a work visa and actively looked for work. The other five labour migrants did not actively look for work but used their contacts in career networks. Some of these respondents decided to follow a university professor, others were approached directly by their employer or had the position mentioned to them by other researchers. Possible gatherings for these kinds of contacts are summer schools or international conferences, but web-based networks were also mentioned. Most of the scientists stay in Germany for a short time. It seems natural for the so-called “science nomads” to migrate more or less voluntarily from job to job. Only two of these people lived longer than 10 years in Germany and both have children growing up in Germany.

4.1.2 Motives to migrate

With the instruments of the pilot study we aimed, amongst other things, at reconstructing the underlying motivation of the researchers’ decisions to migrate to Germany. As expected, the results showed us a bundle of reasons. As far as the motives behind migration were concerned, the pre-study enabled us to determine many of the variables for the questionnaire.

Different dimensions were revealed through the analysis of the interviews and the focus groups. In terms of the scientific environment, many researchers mentioned the reputation of their research society or institute and the possibility of working with prestigious scientists. Those who decided on work places specifically to advance their scientific career mentioned Germany as a leader in technology or as having a positive scientific environment for researchers. For these people, political or societal conditions do not play a crucial role in the decision to migrate. Familial or personal reasons are also considered less important than career aspects. Unsurprisingly, in terms of personal motivation the persons who came with a partner predominate. But in this context, motivations such as the desire to explore another culture or another language were also discussed. People searching for a workplace talked about how their home countries lacked perspective or restricted their chance to get a new job as an older employee.

As expected, professional networks can play a decisive role in provoking a decision to migrate. Here, working on the same topic, formerly shared work places or the mediation of contacts by scientists in the same fields of research open up new possibilities for work and can smooth the career path that leads to employment at the Max-Planck or Fraunhofer institutes. In some cases, job advertisements provoked the decision to apply for a job. In this context, the possibility to improve one’s professional profile with a position in Germany in order to improve their professional life in their home country was discussed.

Former students pinpoint their decisions to migrate to Germany to the date when they came for their studies. Partnerships between universities play a decisive role and further the argument for better study conditions in comparison to student’s home countries. The possibility to raise one’s career profile by study in Germany was also discussed. Most of the former students had not intended to stay longer then their studies lasted.

4.1.3 Migration plans

Six of the people involved in the pilot study stated a clear intention to stay in Germany. All these people live in stable partnerships, five of them with children growing up in Germany. Almost all interviewees argued that the system of time-restricted contracts subverts their intentions. This uncertainty in particular can result in an intention to leave the country soon in order to find a career outside the country. Generally, the migration plans of parents show how the priorities of a family change. Above all, the integration of the children plays the crucial role. However, even childless scientists mentioned considerations on schooling, education and upbringing of children. Generally speaking, it can be shown that scientists with children are positive about their stay in Germany. This became especially clear when drawing comparison with conditions in the U.S.

Most of the respondents showed no concrete plans for the future. This uncertainty is of course largely due to work in time-limited contracts. All eight people mentioned their intention to carry on with work in Germany for a variety reasons. Many of them discussed the working conditions at the Max-Planck and Fraunhofer societies in great detail. Scientists of the Max-Planck society were especially regretful of the limitations of their contracts. For example, one member of a focus group discussion said:

> „I mean, the science life, it is a wonder where you see an end."

Other motives to stay include the investments already made in the German language or to habilitate in Germany. Here, the obstacles to the realization of this plan imposed by the language barrier were critically discussed. Consequently, the only person who wished to migrate to another country was forced to do so due to their plan to habilitate. Four of the people lacked a clear preference but stated an intention not to return to their home countries. Instead, they considered that their professional and private future lay in Germany. Few respondents indicated a definite plan to return to their home country and those that did were limited to India. We assume that the step to move to another country means a greater step for Indians than for other people. Indian people discussed their understanding of family and family ties as a motive to return to India, regardless of whether they have children or not. On the other hand, all Indian respondents have no doubt that they will be able to start a promising career in India.

4.1.4 Factors influencing a migration decision

The focus group discussions in particular contributed to the question of what influences a decision to migrate to Germany in both positive and negative ways. Discussion of working conditions and the reputation of societies was especially lively as well as discussion regarding the quality of life in Germany. Both focus groups drew great attention to the factors that hinder a decision to migrate. These can be summarized in three groups: bureaucratic barriers, financial problems and language problems. On one hand, the problems concerning the individual's entry to Germany and the entry of family members were described in detail and on the other hand there is still a great problem in recognizing the foreign qualifications of family members. Germany's university system is counted among the bureaucratic barriers due to the implication for foreign scientists. This is also true when thinking about the lack of flexibility in wage agreements for the public services.

In the process of knowledge transfer and the success of knowledge production, the use, or not, of the German language is crucial. Discussion of the use of the German language in the workplace occupied a large proportion of the time and budget of both discussions and most of the in-depth interviews. Popular fears regarding the German language were often considered groundless. Many were pleased to find that they were able to deal with day-to-day work in English without any problems. But this is not always the case. Depending on the "culture" of the institute or the branches, it can be difficult to work without any knowledge of the German language. Here, we have to create a distinction between different disciplines. In mathematics for example, the necessity to understand German technical terms is not as significant as in law. Restrictions in knowledge transfer were cited as effecting meetings and discussions held in the German language. This waste of knowledge also refers to interpersonal relations. Of course, lacking knowledge of the German language causes problems not only at work but also in everyday life. The barrier of the German language sometimes hinders the establishment of a social life outside of work and family.

4.1.5 Integration of the migrants and working conditions

We assume that integration is one of the key factors that makes Germany attractive to highly qualified migrants. In turn, a key factor for the social integration is the German language. This is confirmed by most of the respondents but is seen as problematic due to time constraints. Social integration generally offers a highly heterogeneous picture. Unfortunately, we had to learn about discrimination experiences. Children often initiate the desire for integration. International schools seem to be a highly influential pull factor for the recruitment of scientists.

We may make a further assumption that working conditions influence the success of knowledge transfer. In fact, discussion of these conditions occupied even more discussion time than social integration. In this context, we learned a great deal about the factors affecting scientists from abroad. Generally speaking, working conditions were described in a positive way. We are now able to draw on the discussion of different variables, both positive and negative. These include the working atmosphere, the infrastructure of the institutes, the handling of working time, the workload, the compatibility of family and working life, the compatibility of working life and doctoral thesis and the situation of contracts and salary structures. Much was learned about aspects of work culture including variables such as internal organization of work, communication structures, trust in new employees, hierarchical structures and pace of work. The measures implemented by employers to achieve integration, or lack thereof, were of special interest for discussion in this context.

4.2. Results on asylum seekers' perspectives[10]

The RAXEN-study aimed to understand not only the challenges of asylum seekers during the application procedure, but also the perspectives, views and perceptions of asylum seekers via the method of focus group discussions. In the following we introduce some of the results.

4.2.1. Some facts on the access to information about the procedure

The main sources of information, as described by the asylum seekers, range from informal actors, such as family and friends or other asylum seekers in the facility, to NGOs and the asylum authority itself – depending on the particular local situation in the facility and the personal situation of the asylum seekers.

Often the official information sheets (Belehrung), which are provided by the asylum authority Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) at an early stage of the procedure, were described as the main, or sometimes only, source of information on the asylum procedure and on the asylum seeker's respective rights and duties. However, the information sheets of the BAMF were often received too late, which made it impossible for some asylum seekers to prepare properly for their asylum interview or hearing.

4.2.2. Perspectives and opinions on the access to information

We learned that most asylum seekers feel that they have been ill informed regarding asylum procedure. While some were severely unaware of the asylum procedure, others, especially Afghan men, expressed doubts that more information about the procedure would 'change anything' as the decision about their asylum claim appears arbitrary and not transparent.

The various 'main sources' differ greatly in terms of perceived quality, comprehensibility and trustworthiness. While some, especially female, asylum seekers relied heavily on assistance and information from family members, friends and other asylum seekers others described the support offers of specialized NGOs (e.g. Amnesty International, CARITAS) as the prime source of information. Only rarely have deliberate attempts been made to verify the information received in occasional, informal talks with other asylum seekers.

The so called "Belehrungen", which were mostly provided in the asylum seekers' mother tongue, were almost unanimously described as unclear, too difficult to understand and insufficient to fully inform asylum seekers about the asylum procedure. A few female asylum seekers did not understand any of the content and were too scared to ask for clarification. Moreover, illiterate asylum seekers could not understand the BAMF's written info sheets, and even well-educated asylum seekers described these info sheets as difficult to understand due to the complex language and partly odd translation.

10 The comparative reports containing the results from the 27 EU member states can be found on the homepage of FRA: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/research/publications/publications_per_year/pub_asylum-seekers_en.htm

4.2.3 Motivations and behaviour

Most asylum seekers required help to understand the content of these BAMF info sheets as well as the other documents and letters they received. This includes the translation of these documents, which is often difficult and sometimes costly to organize since a regular translation service does not exist. Assistance, including the translation, is offered by other asylum seekers or, sometimes, by family members who have been in Germany for a longer period of time or by NGOs, if there are any in the facility. As a consequence, some asylum seekers relied exclusively on the information provided by other asylum seekers since the refugee NGO was located in a city where the asylum seeker is legally prohibited to go without permission from the local authority.

Only in those facilities where specialized NGOs offer support, often assisted by a voluntary translator, the asylum seekers felt they were able to ask someone competent and trustworthy for help. However, this was only the case when the asylum seekers were aware of these offers, which was not always the case (e.g. with newly arrived asylum seekers). Legal assistance was generally not considered as very relevant in the first phase of the asylum application, but increasingly important after the first instance rejection of the asylum claim.

4.2.4 Requests and wishes for the future concerning access to information

Given these deficiencies in the degree and quality of information available on the asylum procedure, most asylum seekers called for more understandable and clear information to be provided by the asylum authority and NGOs in the early stages of the asylum procedure. Female asylum seekers especially asked for more information to be provided in their mother tongue. In addition, many asylum seekers suggested that assistance and information should be provided by independent NGOs or that these offers should be enhanced. Several asylum seekers suggested that legal assistance should be made available free of charge.

Concerning the effective remedies to appeal to a negative decision, the results of the study do not allow such a deep insight into the perspectives and opinions of the asylum seekers. Nevertheless, the study found some facts and forms of behaviour of asylum seekers:

4.2.5 Some facts on the effective remedies to appeal a negative decision

All asylum seekers whose asylum claim was rejected by the BAMF the first time received a letter informing them of the negative decision. The written decision was in German with some paragraphs translated into the asylum seekers' mother tongue. Many asylum seekers, women from Iraq in particular but also some men from Afghanistan and Iraq, did not fully understand the content of the letter initially. In the appeal procedure a lawyer assists the vast majority of asylum seekers.

4.2.6 Perspectives and opinions on effective remedies

The asylum seekers' input on the appeal procedure appears very limited once they had forwarded the requested documents to their lawyer. Some mentioned that they had signed a statement to authorise the lawyer to act on their behalf.

4.2.7 Motivations and behaviour

Due to their inability to understand the written decision, many asylum seekers sought assistance from friends and family, other asylum seekers or the NGO who would explain the content of the rejection letter, including the time limits for appeal, and tell them what to do next such as finding a lawyer. All asylum seekers managed to submit the appeal in time though most of them, especially Iraqi women, emphasized that this was only possible thanks to the assistance of family members and the NGO.

Usually family members of the asylum seeker or other refugees with the same linguistic background who posses some knowledge of German volunteer to translate during the process. In some facilities, the NGO helps with the communication between the asylum seekers and the lawyer, although the NGOs generally require the assistance of a translator. Thus the communication largely relies on other asylum seekers or refugees with a certain command of German.

Most asylum seekers found their lawyer through other acquaintances or friends, often asylum seekers or refugees themselves, or on the recommendation of the NGO who offers support to asylum seekers in the respective facility. The asylum seekers are generally able to choose their lawyer freely.

4.3. Problems and difficulties concerning the implementation: Brain Gain

Due to difficulties in the recruitment of participants, it took a long time to establish the required number of focus group discussions within the Brain-Gain project. Why was this the case? Firstly, possible participants could only be contacted via people in the institutes. This means that one must first find a person in the institute who is willing to help. Here, the support of the administrators of the Max-Planck-Society and the Fraunhofer-Society was of great help. In some cases, these contacts provided contact details for the scientists themselves. If this is not the case, communication is quite difficult since there is no personal contact with possible participants. Even when one has found the number of participants required to achieve sufficient results, there is still the difficulty of finding a time to schedule a meeting which is not occupied by other events such as conferences, deadlines, lectures, or holidays of the scientists.

In most cases, scientists, particularly those occupying higher positions, are too busy to devote up to two hours for a group discussion. We have learned that scientists in higher positions are more willing to participate in a face-to-face-interview. We make a further assumption that people of higher positions are more wary of a group situation and less comfortable with disclosing personal matters within the group.

It quickly became clear that, in contrast to the group discussions, the atmosphere of personal interviews made it easier for the scientists to talk about the reasons behind their migration, their opinions and their personal problems. On the other hand, the group discussions had the clear advantage of creating a situation where new topics could be brought to the agenda.

4.4. Problems and difficulties concerning the implementation: RAXEN[11]

The recruitment of participants for the RAXEN-study focus groups has been easy, since the official asylum institutions have supported the research team by various methods. Firstly, they encouraged possible participants and they also provided a room where the groups could meet.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the focus group discussions involving asylum seekers created some particular problems. First of all, asylum seekers are a very sensitive group in terms of social research. Due to their psychological strains the moderator has to be very sensitive to their feelings and problems. Consequently, the asylum seekers' groups were characterized by a high degree of emotional involvement. One of our moderators characterized the special situation of the asylum seekers as follows:

> "Suddenly there is somebody to talk to about all your problems, somebody from outside of the restricted world of the asylum seekers' facilities. Encouraged by discussion with like-minded people, the discussion quickly becomes emotional."

One of the greatest problems faced in the focus group discussions was the moderator's ability to keep control of the group. In comparison to one-to-one interviews, it is much more difficult for the moderator to stay on topic during the discussion. The moderator must keep the balance between minimizing intervention in order to encourage the discussion and keeping conversation on topic in order to get an answer to all their open questions. A moderator described this by saying:

> "Of course you can force the participants to stick to the subject, but this is not helpful for the dynamics of the discussion, let alone to the relation between moderator and participants."

Emotional and personal involvement provides data of depth and quality but often leads to communication problems since participants regularly speak over one another. One of the moderators stated that:

> "Sometimes we had chaotic discussions with all members talking at the same time. Additionally: babies crying, mobiles every five minutes, mealtime…"

Another problem arises due to the high expectations of the asylum seekers. Often, the moderators were confronted with political demands on the situation of asylum seekers in its entirety. This not only results in discussions lacking useful substance but also indicated that the asylum seekers expected the research group to refer their problems on to official institutions.

The moderators decided to clearly state at the start of the session that they are required to discuss a particular theme with the participants while emphasizing that they are aware of the special needs of the participants. It was vital for the success of the discussions that proper time was given to discuss the needs of the participants following the discussion. This means, that the normal time budget of such discussions had to be extended.

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11 I would like to thank my colleagues Mario Peucker and Claudia Lechner for the kind support they lended to this section by giving me an insight into the implementation phase of their research project.

The different educational levels of the participants caused another problem when conducting the groups since this negatively influenced the group dynamics. Highly qualified migrants can quickly dominate such a discussion while people with a lower qualification level tend to stay silent or to agree. The different ethnic backgrounds of participants can also create friction. The moderator must be aware of the relationship between different ethnic groups since this relationship can have a significant influence on the dynamics of a discussion.

The interpretation of the data showed that the advantage of group interaction was limited since a translator was needed. The translation of single contributions restricts a discussion and hinders the spontaneous reactions responsible for the success of a focus group discussion. Additionally, the analysis is more difficult due to the fact that translated contributions cannot be assigned to single participants afterwards.

> "With a translator you normally get summaries of contributions. As a consequence, you don't know who wants to say what and to whom? Here and there the whole group is nodding in agreement but you don't know which statement is meant."

Sometimes, translators tend to take a too active role in contributing to the discussion. This problem is particularly difficult for the moderator to handle since they are unlikely to recognize the problem:

> "Simultaneous interpreters solve these problems but are too expensive in most cases. Normally, you have translators in the migrant group itself, knowing the background of the migrants. Here, we have the problem of not knowing whether the statements of the translator express his own opinions or whether it's an opinion of the group, but influenced."

5. Summary

Focus group discussions allow a topic to be explored and provide insight into less well-known issues or groups of people. The group atmosphere motivates participants to inspire each other and issues can be explored in a broader and more diverse manner. Furthermore, novel and previously unknown aspects, ideas and patterns can be identified. Regardless of the problems faced in implementing and analysing, we can conclude that focus group discussions combine the advantages of all qualitative research approaches. When comparing focus groups with personal interviews, we can see that the moderator is less in control of the situation during the data gathering process and that, in personal interviews, there exists a higher readiness to talk about personal matters.

Often, low costs are mentioned as an advantage of focus groups. However, if participant recruitment turns out to be difficult, costs can increase quickly. In addition, the implementation of focus group discussions requires high logistical efforts in the gathering of discussants and in choosing the location of the event.

With regard to migration research, the success of focus group discussions is highly dependent on the group composition. In groups with members from different ethnic backgrounds discussing highly emotional topics, a focus group moderator has to manage a range of possible difficulties. This was the case with the focus groups of the asylum seekers from the RAXEN project. Furthermore, the special advantage of focus group interaction was limited since a translator was needed for these groups. Discussions with highly qualified migrants are much less complicated to carry out. Here we learnt that the biggest problem is in the recruitment of participants. If one can overcome this problem, focus group discussions are an effective method for achieving insight into the migration histories of highly qualified migrants. It is advisable, however, to combine the method with personal in-depth interviews.

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II. The exploration of knowledge sharing between inpatriates and local colleagues in multinational companies. Incorporating the critical incident technique in focus group interviews

Torsten M. Kühlmann, Miriam Busse

1. Introduction

The Bavarian Research network ForMig (Migration and Knowledge) investigates how knowledge "migrates" between states and societies in conjunction with the migration of the population. Our project *"Temporary immigration: Inpatriates and knowledge ex-change in multinational companies"* concentrates on the exchange of knowledge among inpatriates and local colleagues. The importance of knowledge in multinational companies (MNCs) has long been recognized. MNCs are increasingly required to mobilize and integrate knowledge from multiple locations and individuals at home and abroad (Kogut & Zander, 1993; Reiche, 2007). However, research has shown that knowledge is difficult to transfer. Among other problems, transfer is "sticky" since the actors involved in the transfer process (senders and recipients) are rooted in different cultural and institutional contexts. Both distance and difference act as sources of friction and influence the capacity to disseminate and to absorb knowledge (Szulanski, 1996, 2000).

The international management literature focuses on the transfer of knowledge through expatriates, either during their assignment or after repatriation. Our study, however, tries to understand the role that inpatriates - host country nationals who have been moved from foreign subsidiaries to the parent company on a temporary basis - play in the knowledge sharing and knowledge creation process. We still know little of the possibilities and difficulties of different types of knowledge exchange, as conceptual work in this area is still in the early stages and little empirical research on this topic exists to date (Bonache & Zárraga-Oberty, 2008; Reiche, 2006, 2007; Szulanski, 1996, 2000).

What we learn from the research is largely shaped by the chosen approach to data gathering. The mainstream approach is to observe knowledge transfer through the responses to survey questions related to the sending and receiving of knowledge or through measurement of formal adoption practices. Our approach to knowledge sharing is more qualitative and takes into account the multidirectional, complex and under-researched nature of the phenomenon.

For our research we specifically designed a combination of a focus group interview with the critical incident technique (CIT). The focus group atmosphere encourages participants to speak freely about behaviours, experiences, opinions or values they hold allowing researchers to better understand how participants arrive at, alter and sustain their perspectives. However, the focus group interview does not actually offer the same depth of information as the one-to-one interview. In order to gather more detailed information regarding knowledge sharing encounters between inpatriates and their local colleagues we included elements of the critical incident technique in the interviewing schedule.

The remainder of the chapter is organized as follows: first we outline the basic characteristics of both explorative approaches; then, we compare focus group interviews with the critical incident technique and discuss their similarities and differences. In conclusion, we propose an integration of both methods and describe how the critical incident technique can be incorporated with focus group interviews. The benefits and the limitations associated with the integration of a group discussion technique and a one-to-one interview technique are illustrated using examples from our research. We conclude with a critical discussion of our research design and its practical implications.

2. Description of the method

2.1. Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews are characterized by three essential components: they can be applied to collect qualitative data; data is generated through interaction in group discussions; and they acknowledge the active role the researcher takes in creating the group discussion for data collection purposes (Morgan, 1996, 1998b). The focus groups consist of a limited number of participants who share similar backgrounds, interests or experiences – people who have something in common (Folch-Lyon & Trost, 1981; Krueger & Casey, 2000). During the focus group session, they discuss a predetermined topic, with the researcher aiming to uncover and understand their insights, behaviours, and customs. The focus group interviews, which may be referred to as focused discussions since the participants are engaged in a conversation and encouraged to direct their comments to other participants, are guided by a skilled moderator who moves the discussion from one question to another and keeps the interaction on topic and on schedule (Krueger, 2004). To stimulate the discussion, focus group moderators use an interview-guide containing a limited number of open-ended questions, typically ten or less (Linhorst, 2002; Krueger & Casey, 2000; for detailed information see Krueger, 1998a). Thus, participants can select the manner of their response without the discussion becoming so open-ended as to include any topic of interest (Krueger & Casey, 2000).

Several decisions about designing focus group interviews can be made by the researcher according to his specific interest. Such considerations apply to the number of participants, with a suggested range of three to twelve for a focus group interview (Barbour, 2007; Kitzinger, 1995; Larson, Grudens-Shuck &Allen, 2004; Folch-Lyon & Trost, 1981). Consideration must also be given to the number of groups included in a project. Usually, more than one group is required to provide adequate coverage (Folch-Lyon & Trost, 1981), but there is no ideal number (Barbour, 2007). Most projects consist of four to six focus groups interviews (Morgan, 1996). Another effective strategy is to conduct three or four focus group interviews for each audience category (Kruegar, 2004). The group sessions usually last between one and two hours (Kitzinger, 1995; Krueger, 1998a), and the researcher receives data from the focus group sessions in the form of "talk", which results from the conversation among participants. Focus group interviews elicit information that paints a portrait of combined local perspectives, allowing the researcher to see how it "all fits together" (Grudens-Shuck, Allen & Larson, 2004).

Formerly, focus group research was mostly confined to market research. Recently, however, it has grown in popularity as a tool for the social sciences with many applications (Linhorst, 2002). Increasingly, research designs use focus group interviews to complement other methods (Krueger, 2004). They have been used for generating hypotheses, exploring opinions, attitudes and attributes, testing new product ideas, evaluating commercials and identifying and pretesting questionnaire items (Fern, 1982). One of the most common uses of focus group interviews is in the exploratory phase of a research project (Barbour, 2007). The strength of focus group interviews is that they allow the researcher direct access to the participants' language, provide insight into the conceptual structure they use to communicate thoughts within designated topics and help the researcher to understand the way participants structure their social world (Hughes & DuMont, 1993). During focus group discussions, researchers learn about conscious, semi-conscious and unconscious psychic and sociocultural characteristics and processes across varying groups (Berg, 2006).[1]

2.2. The critical incident technique (CIT)

The CIT is a procedure for gathering specific data concerning one's behaviour in strictly defined situations. It focuses on thick descriptions of human behaviour in extraordinarily difficult ("critical") situations. There is no absolute set of rules governing this method of data collection, rather a set of flexible principles that can be modified and adapted to meet the requirements of the situation at hand. Critical Incidents (CI's) can be gathered through observation, interviews, group interviews, questionnaires and record-forms (Flanagan, 1954). Interview currently provides the main data collection tool for the CIT. Respondents are asked to describe CI's and the interviewer may request clarification or greater detail at certain points in the report (Münscher & Kühlmann, in print). In this way, events and behaviours that have been observed to lead to success or failure in accomplishing a specific task are recorded (Bitner, Booms & Tetreault, 1990). The interviewer's initial question should briefly refer to the general aim of the activity, which may be discussed more fully. The interviewee determines the selection of reported incidents. Researchers should encourage interviewee's to report CI's in as much detail as possible and to strictly follow the incidents chronological development (Franke & Kühlmann, 1985).

The CIT affords the interviewees a wide range of possible responses within the overall research framework and allows context to be developed entirely from the perspective of the respondent. The CIT is, therefore, a useful method for many research fields and since its introduction it has been applied to a wide range of disciplines (Gremler, 2004). Traditionally, it is used to collect and analyse incidents in order to determine critical requirements for effective behaviour. The data gathered can be used in various ways: qualitatively, by narrative analysis and inductive category building; quantitatively with an aim to assess the type, nature and frequency of incidents that provide important insights into general relationships; and in different combinations using other methods (Münscher & Kühlmann, in print). The CIT is especially useful when attempting to investigate a little known or little documented phenomenon or when a thorough understanding is required for description and explanation (Gremler, 2004).

[1] For a detailed description of the focus group method see Currle in this volume who provides an overview on definition, historical background, application in the social sciences, the implementation of focus groups as well as her experiences in the application of the method.

2.3. Comparison of the methods

When comparing the two methods described above, the primary distinction is the number of participants – given that the focus group interviews are conducted via the group discussion technique and the CIT is conducted as a one-to-one interview. Hence, focus group data does not, in general, offer the same depth of information as traditional interviewing styles (Berg, 2006), especially the CIT, which usually provides a high level of detail. Instead, focus groups are particularly suited to the study of attitudes and experiences and for examining how knowledge and ideas develop and operate within a given cultural context or social milieu (Kitzinger, 1995). Furthermore, in focus group interviews, the researcher is able to observe the give-and-take interactions in the group discussion that lead to spontaneous responses from the session participants, which are not applicable to one-to-one interviews (Berg, 2006). This group interaction is able to elicit richer, more sensitive data. In this sense, focus group interviews can be superior to individual interviews (Morrison-Beedy, Cote-Arsenault & Fischbeck Feinstein, 2001). While focus group interviews elicit a variety of views and emotional processes within the group context, one-to-one interviews are restricted to observing individual attitudes, beliefs and feelings (Linhorst, 2002). It is also noteworthy that one-to-one interviews are easier for the researcher to control while focus group interviews may allow the participants to take the initiative and converse amongst themselves, asking questions, expressing doubts and opinions, thus reducing the ability of the moderator to control the interaction (Gibbs, 1997).

The main characteristics of the two methods are clearly represented in the following table 1:

Table 1: *Comparison of focus group interviews with the CIT as a one-to-one interview technique (following Powell & Single, 1996, p. 503)*

criteria	**focus group interviews**	**critical incident technique (CIT)**
Number of participants	~ 6-10	1
Goal	complementing views / experiences	individual views / experiences
Level of group influence	medium / high	N/A[2]
Level of structure	low	medium
Depth of experiences	medium	deep
Range of experiences	wide	narrow
Level of moderator / interviewer involvement	low	medium

2 not applicable

2.4. Similarities of the methods / linking points

Given the differences between focus group interviews and the CIT, each method possesses its own merits and limitations. As previously mentioned, it is not uncommon to combine one-to-one interview techniques with focus group interviews (Barbour, 2007). It is equally acceptable to use the CIT as a special one-to-one interview technique in mixed method designs (Münscher & Kühlmann, in print). Focus group researchers are encouraged to apply the method best suited to them since there is no "one right way" to conduct the focus group interviews. This may include experimentation with new methods (Morgan, 1998b). Aspects of the focus group literature suggest reasonable incorporation of the CIT.

Firstly, both methods are used in cross-cultural research since focus groups are an effective means to gather information from participants with different cultural backgrounds (Krueger, 1995) and the CIT has been used to explore intercultural competence (Münscher & Kühlmann, in print).

Another similarity is the use of so-called probe questions (in more detail Krueger, 1998a). It is not uncommon for participants in group discussions to give vague or ambiguous responses. This can be intentional or a result of the speaker being unaware of the ambiguity. Here, the probe is an effective technique for gathering additional information. The probe describes a request for this additional information and is something moderators of group discussions must be aware of. Examples of typical probing comments are as follows:

- Would you explain further?
- Would you give me an example of what you mean?
- Would you say more?
- Tell us more.
- Say more.
- Is there anything else?
- Please describe what you mean.
- I don't understand (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p. 110; also Krueger, 1998a, p. 46).

Moderators are advised to use the probe a few times early in the interview to communicate the importance of precision in responses (Krueger & Casey, 2000), and sparingly in later discussion. The use of a few probes will underline the need for more detailed answers. In some cases, the moderator may also ask probe questions of the entire group, for example:

- Who else has something?
- What about the rest of you?
- I see people nodding their heads; tell me about it.
- We want to hear all the different points of view. Who else has something that might be a bit different? (Krueger, 1998b, p. 30).

A disadvantage of probing is that it is time consuming and, in some cases, unnecessary. Thus, when used without proper consideration, it can produce mountains of trivia that overwhelm the analyst. Used intelligently, however, it can provide critical insight into the participants' point of view (Krueger, 1998b, p. 30).

Questions similar to those stated above are also advised for interviewers in CIT studies, especially in interviews covering issues that the respondent has deemed self-evident:

- Who was involved?
- What happened next?
- How was the result?
- Could you explain this in detail? (Münscher & Kühlmann, in print).

Another aspect of focus group literature that facilitates the incorporation of the CIT is the discussion of the relatedness of participants. It is often mentioned that focus groups should consist of strangers, as they are likely to devote more time to explaining themselves to other members of the group. If the researcher hopes to achieve a detailed discussion offering deep insights, it is advisable to utilize this particular group dynamic (Morgan, 1998a). However, by incorporating the CIT into the focus group interviews, a similar advantage can be gained even among groups of peers by pressing for details using elements from the CIT.

2.5. Our design: Incorporating the CIT in focus group interviews

In the focus group interviews, we included elements of the CIT in two different ways. First, the focus group session is opened with a video recorded interview, which was carried out according to the CIT. Second, a question following the CIT was integrated into the interviewing schedule.

The interview had been conducted with a foreign research associate from the University of Bayreuth, according to the CIT, as defined by the following rules:

1. From the start, the interviewee has to be aware that a detailed description of the described events is expected. Since this request may seem unusual, as such a description would usually be limited to the most important facts, an explanation of the motivation behind the interview is essential. This can be emphasized by asking for clarification of all boundary conditions, even those that appear insignificant.
2. The factual description of the episode should follow the chronological development of the action. The interviewer must be clear that no non-sequential narrative is permitted. The aim of the interview should be repeated: a detailed reconstruction of the action.
3. Whenever the interviewee moves away from the intended thick description: through generalizing, evaluating, adding emotional commentary or speculating on the motives of those involved, the interviewer must intervene and remind the interviewee that detailed description, not personal annotation, is required (Franke & Kühlmann, 1985).

When preparing the video, the interviewee was asked the following question:

> "Try to think of the last situation, in which you exchanged knowledge with a German colleague. Please explain in detail how this situation occurred, what exactly happened, and the result of this situation!"

The interviewers' systematic inquiry illustrated how a detailed description of the action sequence could be obtained in context. The result was a two minute video extract from that interview, which was then used as opening stimulus in the focus group session.

The other method by which the CIT was incorporated into the focus group interviews was by directly including a question that followed the CIT logic in the course of the interview. This question is as follows:

> "Please tell me about a situation in which you exchanged knowledge with your German colleague, and which you found to be very successful!"

When the interviewee, or focus group participant, begins to describe a situation suiting the question, the interviewer, or focus group moderator, may ask for further details in order to reconstruct a detailed picture of the situation. Due to time restrictions, not every participant was asked to respond but all were primed by the answers given so that they would relay their experiences in a detailed manner.

2.6. Our experience using the CIT in focus group interviews

The inclusion of the CIT in the focus group interviews proved effective in gathering information about knowledge exchange in the companies and in stimulating discussion between participants.

The pre-taped interview shown in the focus group sessions, in which a critical knowledge exchange situation was described, proved a useful tool in stimulating discussion. Participants had the opportunity for discourse on a collective experience and all had the opportunity to discuss a 'general' rather than personal topic to begin with, which aided further development of the discussion. Through the question that followed the video, *"What kind of knowledge was transferred in this episode?"* participants had the opportunity to reflect and converse about what they had seen. By answering the subsequent question *"What other kinds of knowledge can you think of?"* the key aspects of the central research interest were clarified. This holds a clear advantage over more general opening questions, i.e. *"What is knowledge?*" since, when confronted with such a question early in the interview, participants become uncertain and cannot come to a concise definition. This is hardly surprising when one considers that scholars have been unable to offer such a conclusion for two thousand years.

During further group discussion, the situation presented in the video acted as shared experience and a common reference point. This turned out to be helpful in moments where the discussion stalled and, by reference to the initial example shown in the video, it was easy to get the discussion back on track.

The subsequent CIT style questioning, whereby participants were asked to recall a specific situation of knowledge exchange between themselves and a colleague, also prompted and supported discussion. Reflection on a specific situation made it easier for participants to answer questions concerning the factors that restrict or encourage knowledge exchange in a working environment. For other participants, the situations described by their peers aided the formation of their own ideas and reflected their own experiences, eliciting the corresponding factors.

Another benefit of the combined CIT and focus group interviews is the achievement of a better understanding of ordinary as well as extraordinary processes of knowledge sharing. When using CIT, unremarkable incidents are generally ignored while the critical, significant and memorable occurrences are reported. The conclusions drawn from the exploration of such "extreme" events may show a bias. However, this can be offset by complementing the CIT with the focus group method such that ordinary events are also recorded.

An additional advantage of the focus group is that it spontaneously facilitates discussion of topics that might be considered sensitive. This is due to the encouragement participants receive from less inhibited members of the group to consider experiences which may deviate from mainstream norms.

3. Discussion

By incorporating the CIT into the focus group interviews, the advantages of one-to-one interviews and group discussion complement each other and work to mutually offset each other’s weaknesses.

This combination of CIT and focus group techniques allowed us to gather complementary information regarding our research interest. As mentioned before, both methods are effective for application to intercultural research. The focus of this research is on the exchange of knowledge between people with different cultural backgrounds. As with the wider concept of “knowledge”, knowledge exchange is a topic as vague as it is broad. Therefore, the experiences and insights of the individual are as valid as the divergent perspectives that arise among a group or even in the exchange between different groups. Through the described method we gained individual, real life experience as well as observing the contrasting records from different members of a group or from entirely different groups. The broad spectrum of information gathered using this specially designed method will provide the data necessary to develop a framework for describing knowledge sharing between inpatriates and their local colleagues in multinational companies.

In any research project, a primary challenge for the researcher is to determine which method is most appropriate for the research interest and target group. Therefore, there can be no optimum method or technique applying to all situations, such as a method consisting solely of group discussion or one-to-one interviews. “We will never know what respondents *might* have revealed in the ‘privacy’ of an in-depth interview, but we do know what they were prepared to *elaborate and defend* in the company of their peers” (Wilson, 1997, p. 218). Our approach endeavoured to overcome the restrictions and limitations of the individual methods – focus groups and CIT. For example, in the focus group discussion sessions, we could not provide the ‘privacy’ of a one-to-one interview technique, yet we were able to overcome some typical restrictions of the group discussion method, achieving higher detail than is usually possible.

From the focus group interviews conducted, we were able to conclude that group dynamics prompted participants to share their experiences. Participants who observed similarities between their experiences and those of their peers would find it easier to discuss these experiences with the group at large while those views and experiences which differed within the group prompted discourse regarding these alternative perspectives. The preliminary results suggest that a combination of CIT and the focus group interview technique provides a promising insight into everyday practice and the constituents of reality.

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III. "In Germany, I've never expected something like this to happen!" [1] - Studying Knowledge and Narratives of Migrants on Their Way to Europe

Delia Nicoué

1. Introduction

This paper is a methodological account of the research project "Dynamic Worlds of imagination – Learning Processes, Knowledge and Communication among Young Urban Migrants from Eritrea and Ethiopia". The research project, located at the Chair of Anthropology at the University of Bayreuth, is part of the research network on "Migration and Knowledge" (ForMig) funded by the "Bavarian State Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts". The aim is to understand migrants' experiences, perceptions of the world and their habits in dealing with the world. Thus, it opens up a perspective on the composition of the life-worlds and knowledge applied to social action as conceptualized in the phenomenological work of Schütz and Luckmann (1979) and in the sociology of knowledge by Knoblauch (2005). The contents and habitual features of the knowledge involved in everyday life are explored in terms of the multi-stop migration of Eritreans and Ethiopians in order to observe their emergence, transformation and communication in regard to situational social action in the various socio-cultural and legal environments of the countries that migrants cross. To illustrate the multi-layered processes of learning, we will refer to the narrative of life experiences and to elements of the narration that point out growing awareness and expectations of the putative host countries. The sequence of crisis and disillusionment is identified as resulting from the discrepancy between the extent of knowledge that is "taken for granted" and experiences contrary to this. When researching a migrant's social experience and the transformation that occurs in the illusive social and life-worlds (Schütz & Luckmann, 1979), one must gain an insight into situational processes as well as into communication channels and the different communities in which migrants are participating.

In this paper, two case studies will illustrate the migration's context and explore the narratives of migrants as they describe their perception of different places and the social environment they encounter. The first example refers to an Eritrean refugee in Nuremberg (Germany) and his description of the discrepancy between expected western, humanistic values and the reality of the refugee camp in Nuremberg. The second case is of a young Ethiopian housemaid in Istanbul and refers to a typical newcomer crisis and the prospect of a better life in what is imagined to be "Europe" in this specific stage of the migration.

In the attempt to examine the changing contents of knowledge among migrants within different stages, milieus and social fields, qualitative research methods are implemented such as the narrative interview, including a biographical approach, combined with participant observation. These are used to determine the mi-

1 Mikael's quotation in an interview in Nuremberg, February 2009

grant's views and narratives, their interpretation of social reality and their collective shared imaginations and everyday routine.

By exploring the representation of the experiences in these narratives, I will focus on the link between changing life-worlds and the significance of the migration at its different stages on the road towards the desired destination. The paper draws on fieldwork that has been, and is still being, conducted in Bavarian cities such as Nuremberg, Bayreuth, and Munich as well as in Istanbul among asylum seekers, refugees and former migrant domestic workers. Due to the fact that the research has been conducted in different locations, it is important to consider recent approaches to methodological strategy concerning multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995). This article draws attention to the value of narratives in dealing with the illusive contents of knowledge and the imagination of migrants especially in the context of what Collyer (2010) characterized as "fragmented migration". This is broken into a number of stages and involves varied motivations, legal statuses and living and employment conditions (Collyer, 2010, p. 275).

2. The methodological multi-local paradigm

The multi-station migration, described by Treiber and Tesfaye as a "step by step" migration (Treiber & Tesfaye, 2008), draws on the mobility pattern and experiences of young urbanites from Eritrea and Ethiopia. These countries at the Horn of Africa are both currently known as countries of emigration due to political and social factors such as conflict and poverty. Important emigration trends from both countries, especially in the case of the immigration to Sudan, have been observed since the era of the political crisis in the Eritrean-Ethiopian federation in the late 60s and under the Marxist-Leninist Dergue Regime from the mid 70's on (Kibreab, 1987, pp. 19f, p. 71). Drought and famine, the downfall of the Mengistu regime in May 1991 followed by the secession of Eritrea from the "regional hegemon" (Iyob, 2000, p. 660) and the border war in 2000 (Gilkes & Plaut, 1999; Negash, 2000) again caused the displacement of many thousands of Ethiopian and Eritrean nationals to neighbouring countries, as well as to European and North American countries. Young migrants head hopefully to the First World in an open ended and life threatening journey, crossing the desert in the hands of smugglers and human traffickers and crossing oceans on boats. They often leave behind them a life of economic stagnation, hardship and political crisis under the authoritarian regimes of their countries. Their key motivation is the prospect of a life in the First World, the ideal goal for which they are prepared to tolerate any hardship and peril in their journey across the borders of continents (Treiber & Tesfaye, 2008, p. 289). Preferred destinations in the migrant's imaginary First World are countries of Northern Europe or North America, whereas migrants do not expect to obtain anything from African or Arab countries nor from Southern and Eastern European countries (ibid.). This state of mind and collective imagining of a hierarchy between Northern and Southern countries is constructed and communicated through information and images that the mass-media broadcast. The "realities of having to move or the fantasies of wanting to move" addressed by Appadurai (1996, p. 34) with regards to the features of global cultural flows, indicates the meaning and influence of the images of globalization and mobility that are circulated and that trigger new expectations and subsequently shape options and concepts of life.

Thus, the exploration of methodological approaches to multi-local paradigm will help to see the connections between places and the transformative experiences that take place in different localities, in which patterns of individual and collective experiences can be identified. The aim of this research is to show how these migrants' experiences shape their imagination, expectations, identities and habitual knowledge in space and time.

The transformation of worlds of imagination and knowledge and their communication refers to conditions which are, to a certain extent, a matter of the acknowledged increasing of "long-distance social and cultural interconnectedness" (Hannerz, 1998, p. 236). The concept of transnationalism is an attempt to take account of the experiences of the so called transmigrants (Glick-Schiller et al., 1997) whose connections, activities, network building and patterns of life transcend national boundaries and geographical areas, creating and maintaining ties between home and host societies (ibid.). Riccio (2001) examines the patterns of social relation in the transnational network practices of the Senegalese in different localities by stressing the importance of local context in the transnational community. His comparative analysis of the transnational network of Senegalese and Ghanaians in Italy (Riccio, 2008) reveals the different way that the two communities of nationals try to establish transnational social fields.

The "spatial turn" (Falzon, 2009, p. 4) influences many research designs in migration studies by drawing on spatially dispersed fields such as home and host societies. It also highlights the patterns of social fields, networks and mobility between two cultures and societies. With this in mind, a methodologically constructed multi-sited ethnography may be attempted in order to enlarge the scale of analysis by featuring strategies to track connections, associations and putative relationships (Marcus, 1995, p. 97), which specifies the research mode of "following people" for the purposes of moving migration studies (Marcus, 1995). The multi-local project is a response to the complexities of migration movements across borders and the diversity of the trajectories characterized by transit spaces, hubs and focal routes (Etzold, 2009). The focus, then, should lie not only on sending and receiving countries but also on the multiple sites, realities and social spaces of the localities in between.

The research project discussing migration and the learning process of Eritreans and Ethiopians making their way towards the North covers the typical stations and locales about which potential research fields are constructed. Here, a team of anthropologists begin their research in selected sites along the path of the migration. The construction of the field and the analytical procedure both use techniques drawn from the theoretical sampling in "grounded Theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 2008). These techniques are applied to relate and track back the hypotheses formed in earlier stages where the dynamic process of knowledge production and transformation can be witnessed *in situ* under specific local, legal and socio-cultural structures. Bavarian cities are considered as places of permanent or provisory arrival and represent a piece of the mosaic of this large-scale research design. This design also encompasses the fieldwork from earlier migration stages such as Istanbul, Khartoum and Addis Ababa.

When short-term fieldwork is undertaken, and fragments of the migrants' complex experiences collected, great difficulty and methodological dilemma are encountered. Critiques of this methodological and analytical model acknowledge these problems and put special emphasis on the lack of depth and the limitations faced in capturing volatile and multifaceted social processes within the scope of the research practices applied in the multiple sites. By acknowledging the limitations of the methodological model one can observe the limitations of what is often assumed to be a holistic method and understand the arbitrary nature of the delimited fields (Candea, 2009). Thus, there is a need to take compensation solutions into account through relevant complementary publications and to establish a fruitful network with local cooperation partners. Besides this, the “native’s point of view”, the biographical narratives, statements and contextually rich interpretations gained via participant observation will constitute the core of current analysis.

3. Tracing migrants’ knowledge in narratives

In order to overcome the limitations of quantitative research in migration studies, Findlay and Li (1997) draw on the peculiarity of qualitative data collection in migration studies and place particular emphasis on the autobiographical narratives used to investigate the value systems embedded in peoples every day routines and in individual identity (Findlay & Li, 1997, p. 38). The authors identify a so-called “seed” of migration within the life history of migrants from Hong Kong. This “seed” is considered a meaningful factor in determining the entire life course of the individual (ibid.).

“A useful starting point for qualitative research on migration issues is the recognition of human beings as pro-active, socially embedded intentional agents who influence and are influenced by the social worlds in which they are located.” (Findlay & Li, 1997, p. 34).

However, narratives also form a significant text genre in anthropological research. Narratives have turned out to be significant and used as methodical instruments in social science when Labov & Waletzki published in their 1967 article *Narrative Analysis: Oral Versions of Personal Experience* the theoretical fundamentals, appropriate notes and guidelines for the elaboration of the “narrative interview” (Rosenthal & Fischer-Rosenthal, 2000, p. 458). According to Rosenthal and Fischer-Rosenthal (2000), the concept of shared collective meaning allows us to comprehend the narrative of the life experiences of others when they are communicated as narrated facts and processes (ibid., p. 457). Therefore, methods of participant observation are considered to be of use in accessing specific spheres of meaning within the migrants’ social reality. These can then be used as prerequisites for the understanding of narrated phenomenon. This has occurred within ethnographic observation and basic fieldwork practices in Bavaria and in Istanbul. These practices include participation in the everyday life of participants in migrants’ neighbourhoods, in the asylum seekers camps, internet cafés, shopping centres, churches etc. The observed fragments of the migrants’ life-worlds provide the inspiration for questions and prepare the more structured narrative interviews.

In his comprehensive work on “Qualitative research interviewing” Wengraf (2002) gives an account of the potential of narrative techniques to understand the notion of norm and knowledge. These techniques are a “complete account” in which one can identify, among other constitutive components, indicators for evaluative assumptions (Wengraf, 2002, p. 116). Wengraf, therefore, considers biographical narratives as statements that “present to the researcher embedded and tacit assumptions, meanings, reasoning and patterns of action and inaction” (ibid.).

Narratives, as a text genre, are appropriate when applied to the exploration of how individuals make sense of the specific constituents of their reality as shaped by the transformative phenomenon of migration. To reconstruct the patterns of the migrant's action and experiences we have to look for:

> "… narratives of efforts for the realization of personal plans, interaction with institutional and societal rules and demands, biographical experiences of powerlessness and weakness, phases of rapid and unforeseeable change and biographical ruptures and the multi-dimensional relations between events, societal influences, meanings, representation, decision making processes and the continuing struggle to formulate and maintain a sense of biographical coherence over time [...]" (Iosifides & Sporton, 2009, p. 102).

That is to say, migrants repeatedly face situations in which the barriers and obstacles caused by bureaucratic and societal rules challenge their own abilities and their capacity to act in context. Disruptions, contradictions, incoherent motivations and rationales are constantly present within the process of migration experienced by the surveyed individuals. In her 2007 article on narratives in the context of forced migration research, Eastmond details how the stories of Migrant's experiences can be used to understand how they rationalize their past experiences and determine how to progress (Eastmond, 2007, p. 251).

These variations in migrants' biographical experiences form the basis for the analysis of an action theory in the context of the migration. According to Schütz' and Luckmann's (1979) theoretical approach to social action, which is based on the inter-subjectivity in a specific life-world, individuals refer to common schemes of references (Schütz & Luckmann, 1979; Schütz, 1944) for social action in a given socio-cultural context. The migrant is a "stranger" (Schütz, 1944) who carries their understanding of everyday life into new environments. Faced with discontinuity and disruption in their life, the biographical narratives of the migrant may reveal how a crisis of meaning arose when they encountered new social environments. New and unfamiliar environments challenge old understanding and skills acquired in other contexts and situations. This occurs, for example, when moving to a new social environment after the regular or irregular border crossing into a new socio-cultural context as well as into a new legal environment. The migrant is therefore continually involved in the modification and adjustment of their schemes of references. Arrival in a new environment leads to the development and testing of new knowledge as well as new and useful abilities and skills that are required for everyday life. These will help, above all, to manage the legal or illegal existence of the migrating subject. Fundamentally, practical problems have to be solved on arrival. These may include information about accommodation, employment, contacts for planning the next station and methods for dealing with the local administration and the police. These elements are communicated in personal encounters, by phone, by means of mass-media and participation in the migrants' fluid transnational communication environments[2]. Furthermore, growing expectations and claims influence the perception of the world and the specific location. This leads to the classification of different parts of the world in a hierarchy, considering factors such as social and cultural values as well as living standards.

Moreover Schütz and Luckmann emphasise the biographical articulation of knowledge and the social embedding (Schütz & Luckmann, 1979, pp. 126f) of in-

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[2] Furthermore Rebstein, Rabl and Schnettler address in this volume specific communicative milieus which are considered as a provider for migrant' knowledge in context of a receiving country.

dividual experience under the influence of structures. Ethiopian and Eritrean migrants share knowledge and experiences through their involvement in collective social milieus in which they are linked by a high level of internal communication and a shared vision of life (*Existenzform*) (Schulze, 2005, p. 174). In these milieus exist multiple subdivisions, which are organized according to features such as affiliation of origin, languages, status and trajectory of the migration, for example those who worked as housemaids in the Middle East.

The biographically constituted stocks of knowledge (Schütz & Luckmann, 1979, pp. 145ff) will structure the perceptions, actions and aspirations of migrating persons. In this way, the collective life-worlds and the subjective experience of the migrant define a duality which characterizes the concept of habitus in Bourdieu’s social theory (Bourdieu, 1984). Narratives can, therefore, serve as an expression of the interplay of the collective horizons of meanings and the individual perceptions and practices. Hence, this analysis suggests the premise that narratives create knowledge about the migrants path through life but, most importantly, communicate the circumstances, milieus and environments in which specific knowledge is acquired, communicated and acted upon.

4. Narratives and the rationale “on the road”

This chapter will focus on the patterns within migrants’ narratives and explores those moments of life related to the accomplishment of a migration project. The epistemological issue of how to deal with narrated experiences in the context of migration has been acknowledged and addressed by Eastmond (2007), who points out, following Bruner’s study of 1986 on “experience and its expressions”, the dynamic interplay between the experience and its expression. The analytical distinction between these elements results in the consideration of life narratives in four main perspectives. These are: *life as lived* (flow of events), *life as experienced* (subjective perception of events to which meanings are ascribed), *life as told* (as results from the description of events to a particular audience) and lastly *life as text* (the product of the researcher’s interpretation and representation) (Eastmond, 2007, p. 249). The concept of “life as told” will be understood in the context of meaning that is ascribed individually or collectively to experiences (Ibid.). The interviewees express particular experiences (facts) which they have evaluated under the influence of moral concepts or cultural and religious values. This raises the issue of the importance and significance of collectiveness in the conception of experience. This aspect of perception and expression of experience has been encountered, for instance, within the Bavarian sample group where individuals with an evangelical background tended to express their precariousness state by adopting a positive attitude towards these handicaps.

The concept of “life as told” further describes the way individuals adopt a view of experiences and conditions they may not have encountered directly. These narratives are based on shared knowledge on their life condition rather than personal experience. Experiences involving maritime journeys, social or cultural features of local societies, encounters with the police or state officials of a specific country will be described without necessarily being based on the “life as lived”.

By examining the structure of the narrative and the semantic strategies of the narrator we can observe how the participant relates to their life experience and which parts of the experience they consider to be meaningful. The attempt to understand the migration process and the rationale of action and decision making with the goal of establishing a life in the “north” frames the analysis of the survey in Nuremberg and Istanbul where two young migrants from Ethiopia and Eritrea tell the story of their migration. Rumours and valid interpretations of others will influence the processes at work during moments of hope, expectation, disillusionment and crisis. This will be discussed with the goal of identifying what justifies the undertaking of a journey filled with unpredictability and jeopardy.

In his analysis on the mobility of young Ivorian migrants Bjarnesen (2009) uses the concept of *hope* for the "understanding of aspiration in "subjunctivity" (Bjarnesen, 2009, p. 121) to better capture the uncertainty and unpredictability of an individual on the move and to show how migrants envision their future in order to make it happen under these conditions (ibid.) The author brings the concept of hope in line with the concept of *social navigation,* making it an analytical concept that tries to describe "the practice and the intersection between agency, social forces and change" (Vigh, 2009, p. 420) when individuals muddle through difficulties and uncertain circumstances. "On the road", migrants taking irregular routes to Europe face unpredictable situations in which their everyday survival depends on how they find accommodation, how they afford living costs and the cost of counterfeit travel documents for illegal border crossings, and how they escape police control in the city and at the border. Their survival also depends on what they know about the details of asylum policy in the countries they encounter. A migrant setting out from their home country may possess sufficient information and skills to cope with life "on the road". Nevertheless, the chosen migration route is likely to be paved with unpredictable events of varying degrees of difficulty depending on geographical location and the stage of the migration. This leads to a sense of discontinuity and liminality, both in space and time, characterised by the switch between a state of relative normality and one of great difficulty, which calls for adaption and routinization. In future stages, acquired skills and understanding become routine, which makes future challenges easier to overcome.

The migrants' perception of difficulty and hardship are classified according to their place within the larger world. This perception is defined by a geographical understanding based on socio-political and cultural ideas of Southern and Northern nations. This perception and understanding of North and South allows individuals to place themselves in countries such as Sudan, Libya or Egypt where hardship is considered more acceptable and expectation is consistent with reality.

In the following, two migration routes and experiences will be compared focusing on how the experiences of migrants from two different social backgrounds, Eritrea and Ethiopia, reflect the process of learning and the communication of knowledge specific to migrants in a state of mobility.

4.1. Telling disruptions in life-worlds

Mikael[3],

In my research in the cities of Bavaria (Bayreuth, Nuremberg, Munich) I have mainly been dealing with migrants in social and religious contexts such as those found in asylum seekers camps, Ethiopian orthodox and Pentecostal churches. In an Ethiopian orthodox church in Nuremberg, I was introduced to a young sacris-

3 Mikael is the anonym name of an Informant in Germany to whom contact have been established since the beginning of 2009

tan who could help me in my investigation due to his reputation among the asylum seekers who have been in Zirndorf (the main refugees' redistribution facility in Bavaria) as someone experienced in issues concerning the journey from Eritrea to Germany. He is known for his ability to struggle through the hardships of his dangerous odyssey through desert and sea. Mikael, a young Eritrean in his thirties, spent seven years of his life in the military service. This is an obligatory national service for the collective development of the newly independent state Eritrea. Mikael has undergone the formative and transformative experience of national service that Kibreab (2009) characterizes as forced labour. It has been established by the liberation party EPLF/PFDJ as a continuity of the ideology of the thirty year long liberation struggle which gave birth to the ruling nationalist ideology and prompted allegiance to the call for mobilization, development and defence (Kibreab, 2009; Redeker Hepner & O'Kane, 2009, pp. ixf). Many young people who, like Mikael, are conscripted to service outside of Asmara, have to leave their families and relatives for an open ended tour of national service to promote national identity and social solidarity (Treiber, 2009, p. 95; Kibreab, 2009, p. 43). After finishing high school and qualifying in account management, but not obtaining the certificate that should be handed out after national service, Mikael was conscripted to fight at the front in the Ethio-Eritrean border war (1998-2000). The expected demobilization after the war has not been implemented. The Eritrean government extended the national service to an indefinite service in May 2002 (Kibreab, 2009, p. 44). Mikael is part of the generation of conscripts who became aware of their hypothecated life and future similar to that of the young urbanites "trapped in adolescence" (Treiber, 2009) who have to cope with the uncertainty and disappointment of a postwar ideology of development and nation building. He experienced seven years of training and military service under the harassment of senior officers who terrified him with the prospect of unjustified discipline. Treiber described the mobbing of younger recruits "warsay" (Tigrinya word that means "my heir", "my followers" for young recruit in the national service), (Treiber, 2009, p. 95) by EPLF's cadres and leaders as professional brutality, lacking any respect for individual human life and retaining the anti-intellectualism inherited from the guerrilla era (Treiber & Tesfaye, 2008, p. 282). Young people often respond with desertion and emigration to escape the dead-end of national service, where frustration and humiliation are exacerbated by the impossibility of realizing ones dream of a career and family life. The driving force that propels Mikael to seek a new life abroad is vision of life shared by him and several others who together organized their desertion and escape from Eritrea.

Khartoum is the first important link in the chain of stations on the journey. It was the first station in the story of his irregular migration in which he spent just three weeks. Khartoum offers economic prospects and opportunities for the organization of the next step. Khartoum appears to be a gathering place for a diverse population of migrants, life "in limbo" as an unregistered asylum seeker is perceived as the first step towards the freedom of a new life as an Eritrean emigrant. Their place in the new social order is dependent on having contacts with Sudanese and other nationals in the local trafficking industry. Mikael and the others rented an apartment in the house of an influential Sudanese officer to guarantee safety in case of arrest and other chicaneries by the police. To avoid being identified by spies of the Eritrean government, alternate identities are used. The migrants must keep a low profile until the necessary formalities, such as a new passport, are completed and the financial means offered by relatives all over the world make the travel to the next station, Al Kufrah in the desert south east of Libya, possible. Mikael insists that the main factor governing the success of the migration is adequate knowledge of the next step before departure. Vital information must be communicated via phone or other electronic communication from people who have previously passed through the next station. Most important, in his opinion, is the ability to act on schedule and to be able to take risks when needed.

Part of a recorded interview that has been translated from German to English shows how Mikael recalls his experiences en route by following the chronological evolution of the narrative as he moved from place to place. His story progresses through Sudan, Libya, Italy, France and Germany as well as cities and focal stations such as the border city Kassala (in eastern Sudan), Al Kufrah, Benghazi, Tripoli (in Libya), Sicilia, Crotone and Milan (in Italy) before heading to Paris and Calais in north west France in order to reach England. In the course of his story the details of his life in military service, the monotony of life with no future prospects is immediately followed by his arrival in Italy, omitting his journey between Khartoum and Sicilia. His description of his problems, the motivations behind his migration and his fear of encountering the same dead ends and poor living conditions in Italy indicate the basis for his belief that England, but not Italy, offers the prospect of a better life. Italy is not consistent with what he imagines to be life in Europe. The quotation below is an extract from an interview four years after his arrival in Germany:

> M: "... but ***the worst*** **was when I arrived in Italy**. I asked myself why I come to Italy? Because *it is the same problem*. I have to solve my problem, but ***in Italy there is the same problem****, in Europe*. [DN: How far?] It is quite the same. For Example I have seen in Italy what my friends told me, they have been there before me. They have been in Italy. In internet, emails and with the phone, I got to know them some days before. I saw it also when I arrived in Italy. For example, **they don't have any accommodation**, they apply for asylum and they give them one or two years stay permit and then after the formalities they just go on the streets. They sleep on the street, they eat twice a day in Caritas and then **they take a shower twice a month**, they have a card and so on, they have the possibility to shower in Caritas every two weeks and so on. Women and men it is the same. This is even **the worst, the worst on top of that**. I told to myself the problem has not been solved when I came to Italy." (Mikael in Nuremberg, February 2009, emphasis added)

This conversation shows a clear, emphatic desire to expose the "problem" and the claims he tries to illustrate with examples. He based his argument on those pieces information he considered to be true. This knowledge is conveyed through communication with predecessors who support his statements and fears regarding the unacceptable living conditions in Italy. These conditions are considered improper for a European country. Still, the extent of his information about the bureaucratic procedure for asylum seekers on arrival in South Italy includes precise details of the procedure and its consequences for the African migrant. His own experiences seem to be inseparable from experiences interpreted from predecessors and constitute a shared narrative. He seems to have been sufficiently informed before his arrival in Italy. His concerns about the critical legal situations and the poor living conditions of migrants have been addressed by the detailed description he has been given. The experiences of those who have passed through this stage and the rumours that circulate regarding the standard of living in South Europe are communicated through such means as phone, email and electronic chat rooms. International channels such as CNN bring together the elements that constitute his worldview, perception of different places and the standards he expects. West and Northern Europe have become a synonym for human rights. The idea of security and better life conditions in Europe has obviously shaped his dreams and spurred his emigration.

In the context of the sociology of knowledge, as mentioned above, recurrent sentences in the interview such as "The worst was", "even the worst" work together to signal the rift which occurs when expectations or the knowledge migrants have taken for granted does not match the reality they encounter. This happens repeatedly when Mikael refers to circumstances in which his knowledge regarding humanitarian value systems, which sustained his expectations, is revealed to be contrary to the reality he experiences. When talking about his time in the central admission facility in Nuremberg-Zirndorf, he describes a level of disappointment that was not present when encountering life-threatening hardship during the crossing of the Sahara from Khartoum to Libya. The prison-like accommodation, disrespect, the lack of dignity given to internees, reluctance in the protection of individual security in such a high-security facility have been perceived as non compatible with the internalized ideas of humanitarian idealism that are the most famed value of west European countries.

> M: "… in *Zirndorf I didn't have any experience*, that is, that is such a thing with these long interviews, it is with stress and so on. The place is not so clean, too. The place was a bit too... it stinks, the building stinks, it has been built so long ago and so on. Different asylum seekers from different countries have been there. And again and again there is also struggle with one another, fighting and so on, because especially these east Europeans, the Russians, the Azerbaijans, they drink too much alcohol and they actually do fighting. And they come to our flat and then, I have been to the hospital one time, because they have hmm... beaten me up, they have been too many and the Eritreans haven't been there too, they have been somewhere else. I have been alone. **And what was worse**, the doors don't have any lock, it was always open, twenty four hours it's open. Somebody can enter and they … and that has been like this. **I find that the worst**. [DN: One could well think that the worst has happened on the way...] Yes but in desert or sea, one is prepared, yes you accept it, it comes, you are between life and death and one accepts it. But when if it happens in Germany, **I never expected** something like this to happen!" (Mikael in Nuremberg, February 2009, emphasis added)

Besides these, the significance of the self evaluation of situations and shared knowledge about places and countries seems to determine options and alternatives for action that have been identified as being biased towards informal or non legal ways in acting upon a situation. This attitude is a reflection of the habits developed from dealing with African bureaucratic institutions. Informal methods of coping with formal regulations are considered to be a valid alternative when other methods appear to be ineffective. The following statement from an informant expresses the perception that this method is successful, though they are aware of its regional limitations and validity. *„In Germany, I don't know how to say it. In Germany it is quite euh… to do illegal things is impossible, you have to give up all your tricks."* (Mikael, February 2009)

Nevertheless, the informant was offered a refugee stay permit four months after their arrival in Nuremburg. His success in achieving a positive outcome in such a short time has resulted in his "case" becoming well known in an environment where the majority of asylum seekers commonly experience a long wait "on sufferance". He went on to a new job, training in logistics and transport, but still lives and works as a cleaner while continuing to shape his expectations of how his life will change in other “northern” countries.

4.2. Sarah[4]

During my field research in Istanbul in the late summer 2010 I met with Ethiopian migrant domestic workers en route for Greece. I will present the case of a 23 year old woman who came to Istanbul three years ago but did not succeed in crossing the border to Greece. She then resumed her work as a domestic employee in Istanbul. She has worked in Syria as a live-in domestic worker under contract with specialized agencies in four different families for one and a half years before she recognized the possibility of better wages as a free migrant worker in Damascus or Greece. This perception is formed from information filtering from Greece, which shapes her expectations. The export of Ethiopian housemaids to Arab countries has been a tradition since the Ottoman Empire and, thus, is well established. This is acknowledged in the economic history of Ethiopia, in which historians drew on the economic relationships of the former Christian kingdom with moors, Turks and European traders (Pankhurst, 1980).

Sarah's decision to become a domestic worker in Arab countries reflects a common feature in the lives of young women from economically weak rural or urban environments. The current tradition of the migration of labour in the form of housemaids (de Regt, 2008; Kebede, [o.Jahr]) represents an alternative for young people to planning their own future. This is particularly relevant for the less educated. Bernal (1997) addresses the ways in which rural Sudanese labour migrants try to forge modern identities in the course of encounters with global Islamic culture and modern Islam in Saudi Arabia. Similarly, the rural and urban Ethiopian population has been incorporated in the global economy and in the labour economy of Arabic countries. Connection with the global economy and western world can be achieved via a work contract and visa for employment on the Arabic peninsula. Young people have often been driven by the necessity to be productive for their family and relatives and to satisfy their own longing for a western life style. This is achieved by sending money and luxury goods back home, even if the returnee has not necessarily advanced their social position. The precarious situation faced by those returning to their home with little money to begin a new life and without any governmental assistance often leads to a decision to go back to the Middle East for further employment (Kebede, [o.Jahr], p. 37).

The informant in Istanbul, whose biography is depicted above, returned back home with the intention of visiting her relatives after almost five years abroad. She left in September 2010 with an immense amount of luggage, a cargo shipment and three specially selected photo albums taken in the luxury home of her Arab and Turkish employers. She travelled home with a passport and identity bought from another co-migrant with the expectation of returning to Turkey as soon as possible. Istanbul is known as a complex transit zone with an extensive market for forgeries and fraud (Tsianos et al., 2009, p. 4). The traffic of forged travel documents among the undocumented immigrants in Istanbul is sustained by the demand created by changing legal statuses of former migrant workers in the region. Most of the housemaids interviewed ran away from their employers who keep their passports to secure their stay until the end of the contract. How-

[4] Sarah is the anonym name of an Informant interviewed in Istanbul.

ever this measure doesn't prevent them from running away in order to escape the strenuous workloads and the mental and physical abuse of their employers. Occasionally, workers may run away simply to search for a better job.

Furthermore, the onward western migration of former labour migrants via Turkey can be conceived as a strategy to achieve further social mobility. Since the mid 1990s the number of Africans arriving from countries such as Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo is on the rise (Brewer & Yükseker, 2009, p. 650). This is related to Europe's migration regime as well as Turkey's geographical position as a way-station to the European Union. In this context, Turkey currently plays a decisive role in the illegal transit of migrants coming from Asia and Africa. Istanbul is a megacity and offers considerable economic prospects, especially for transit migrants such as the housemaids who continue their journey to the EU. Ethiopian migrants enter Turkey with the primary intention of continuing to Greece or registering for resettlement in a UN refugee program. These former domestic workers in the Arabic Peninsula thus extended their migration with the hope of getting a better life in the EU or finding their way to America through the UNHCR's resettlement program.

The following interview's sequence in Sarah's story displays the reality of the employment of unskilled young women in Arabic household:

> S:"I have telephone number [of the agency] I tell them it is so hard for me, because with the children, and take care of children and house keeper and everything she gave for me. It was a big house also and I don't know how to work, that time. Then I ask, they give me permission to leave that house, they call them, they drop me in the office. Again I change house, some house. It was hard, in that house also there are Muslims they ask me to be Muslim. Because of that only we start, I stop [in] that house because of sharia, you must cover yourself, I don't accept it." (Sarah in Istanbul, August 2010)

As she recalled her early days in the world of domestic employees, she spoke of the difficulties she faced in fulfilling her employer's expectations and demonstrating the skills necessary for the job. Lack of experience, unfamiliarity with a new world and a modern household with complicated appliances and cleaning agents as well as the work ethic expected of expatriates requires these employees to quickly learn how to perform their task. The fact that the workforce dispatched to work under these conditions are largely unprepared and untrained is recognized by the Ethopian government. It's response is to institutionalize this largely illegal practice and the organization of pre-departure training and orientation sessions on the risks of labour migration and the conditions to be expected in the receiving countries by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) (USDS, 20105). Besides practical skill, the cultural knowledge and skill required to work in the world of Islam constitute additionally required knowledge which handicaps everyday interaction.

Social networks help to provide the information needed for social and geographical mobility. Sarah managed to get into contact with an Ethiopian woman despite the restriction of contact with the outside world typical of live-in domestic workers. One can speak with mentors and advisers who will take responsibility for helping newcomers who are being exploited by their employers. "Freeing" a compatriot seems to be a common practice. Sarah's narratives relate to public gathering places such as shopping malls or call centres, where women exchange their experiences, compare their situations and look for better possibilities. Communication in physical environments dominates over the use of virtual communication means including Email, Messenger, Skype or Facebook. This results in limiting the building and sustaining of virtual social networks.

Thus, it is the so-called mentor who has organized the escape and border crossing to Istanbul. Once in Istanbul, there was an obvious disparity between her memory of the comfort and regulated work schedule during three years of employment in the middle class social and cultural environment, commonly called "*Madam House*"[5], and the reality of living conditions for migrants in Istanbul's ethnically segregated migrants' neighbourhood. In Istanbul, the reality of irregular immigrants and the particular living conditions migrant's experience call for an adjustment of the new environment within a new stage of learning.

> S: "When I come also it was so hard because I live contract place it means they are rich people, **you live good, everything is clean.** When I come *here*, I surprise when I see this kind of house, the people, how they live, even they don't eat they don't have money to eat and just they sleep. When they sleep, don't think they are happy or something, they don't have to eat that's why they are sleeping to get to finish the time, time will go. That's **why they are sleeping**, when I come the people are sleeping. Morning nine O'clock I reach here I ask them they are sleeping I ask them what happened. I don't know because when I work *there*, morning 6:30 we wake up, we drink our coffee already we start to do something. *Here* they are sleeping. I ask them what happens, we sleep we moving night time, now we sleep. **I think something bad**, you know, what they are working night time and day time they sleep, why? **This question one week more than one week I was crying which kind of place I come. My life is finish already, I say**. Then I call to my family I don't know just if they can get ticket for me and to go back". (Sarah in Istanbul, August 2010, emphasis added)

While talking about the astonishment she felt in the new world of Turkey she describes the inactivity and monotony of life as an African migrant in Istanbul. This was the most striking observation I made in the first days of my fieldwork in August. Although this occurred during the Muslim fasting period of *Ramadan,* one can see that the inactivity, long hours of sleep during the day and hours devoted to surfing in internet café's was not only the result of the fast but also a consequence of the unemployment that occurs due to the restrictive politics of asylum and migration for non-European migrants (İçduygu & Kirişci, 2009, pp. 15f). Consequently their illegal bureaucratic status excludes them from the formal labour market and from access to governmental social assistance. Daily life is defined by the wait for the next, informal, employment possibility and the next payment allowing them to afford the next stage of the journey.

The changes that appeared so acute during the first few weeks after her arrival, as Sarah describes it above, indicate the disruption in this part of her life. In response to this crisis of meaning, she uses her life in her homeland and the familiar routines of a well organized daily life in the "clean" and organized social environment of Damascus as a reference on how to cope with the new situation. The crisis experienced on arrival is lessened by inclusion in social networks and local milieus in the neighbourhood of the Somali, Sudanese and Eritrean migrants. These milieus are important, not only as a provider of social resources and useful information, but also as a vehicle for the justification of migration. This can be

[5] „Madam House" is a common term used by the domestic worker to designate the work place in private household, where they are committed to care and cleaner jobs. Women as responsible for household matters are therefore the first reference person in this employment's constellation.

described by the principles of hope, endurance, courage, acceptance of life in poverty and the uncertainty experienced by individuals sharing this hardship in the precarious conditions of migrant life. So the experienced co-migrants, who are represented by Sarah with “they”, already internalized this discourse with its comforting role, which is reproduced it in communication with the newcomer.

> S:”How you come here then again you go back to your country why? Just wait a little bit maybe it will change, the life, **they** say. I say, I wait, I try to work somewhere. Like this, a week like 100 $ they give you. I don't know. Then ... but I was thinking to go to a... Europe, it's better.” (Sarah in Istanbul, August 2010, emphasis added)

In fact, Sarah abandons the idea of crossing the Aegean Sea to reach Athens after a fatal accident involving her best friend who could afford to pay a smuggler. This tragic event on the boat journey persuades her to give up her illegal path to Europe. Her experience as a housemaid, knowledge of English, Arabic and Turkish helped her to integrate into the labour market for domestic workers in Turkey. She also registered for asylum in the UNHCR-Office in Ankara. However, her homesickness and the emergence of the possibility of trading goods made in Turkey superseded waiting for a decision on the asylum application. Back at the beginning, Sarah is negotiating new methods of leaving Ethiopia.

5. Conclusion

Qualitative research and the exploration of narratives in migration studies is a way of assessing and understanding a migrant’s experiences within changing life-worlds and, therefore, identifying meaningful patterns of social relationships and social action in the migration processes.

Migrants communicate, share experiences and try to make sense of the precariousness of their situation and their repeated experiences of liminality and disruption. The rationale sustaining their tenacity becomes clear when considering the narratives on the “holy goal” imagined to be at the end of the journey. One learns to cope with and accept the unacceptable and life-threatening conditions that characterize specific stages in Africa and the Middle East or dangerous journeys with insufficient means of transport. This acceptance is dependant on the difficulties encountered being in accordance with one’s expectations and one’s knowledge in this stage.

Notwithstanding the fact that semantic categories of adverse conditions and disillusionment unfold in these narratives, the classification of places and societies drives them towards the assumed goal.

The narratives of newcomer crises and the disillusionment migrants experience partly based on the shared imaginations in their home countries and on the way to Europe reveal collective illusions formed in specific life-world.

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IV. Communicating Knowledge across Language Borders – "Moderating" as a Communicative Form at Bilingual Social Events among Spanish Speaking Migrants in Bavaria

Bernd Rebstein, Marlen Rabl, Bernt Schnettler

1. Introduction

Gatherings (Goffman 1961) are social situations in which participants communicate face-to-face. They can be more or less formal, may include a larger or smaller audience and typically evolve following a predetermined schedule. Its purpose may vary, so may its implementation. However, in either case, participants act and react in each other's immediate presence. This social realm – the "interaction order" in Goffman's term (1983) – constitutes a level of social organization *sui generis*. Studying it in its own right contributes to an improved understanding of the mechanisms of social integration. Nonetheless, it requires particular attention to the details of the on-going action and interaction, focusing on how several communicative modalities work together. Qualitative video-analysis (Knoblauch & Tuma 2011; Heath et al. 2010) as a recently developed instrument for social research is especially fruitful for studying complex social interaction and gaining in-depth insight into unknown social worlds. Following an interpretive approach, this study focuses on social gatherings organized in the context of Spanish-speaking migration in the urban areas of Bavaria. We study the social forms and communicative genres by which knowledge is being distributed both within the migrant population and between migrants and the resident population. When scrutinizing these processes, we pay special attention to the interplay of various communicative modalities, including speech, body movement, gesture, posture, deixis etc. in order to identify the expressed forms of knowledge.

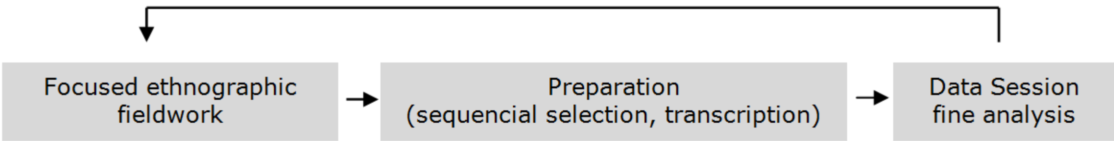
2. Videography and Genre Analyses

Our methods are part of a developing field in qualitative social research that deals with audio-visual data recordings of "naturally" occurring social situations. Methods for analysing social interaction with video have received substantial input according to microscopic analytical approaches based on Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis (Heath et al. 2010). In our project, the analysis aims to describe the patterns of communicative action. Therefore, we conduct ethnographic field research using the method of "focused ethnography" (Knoblauch 2005a). The core data is in the form of recordings of naturally occurring situations (Silverman 2005). This method (Knoblauch & Tuma 2011) emphasises the ethnographic aspects of video analysis. With this practise, we are especially interested in the situational aspects and the ethnographic background knowledge.[1]

[1] Focused ethnography concentrates on communicative, situationally and temporary limited field stays, that are audio-visually tape-recorded in order to enable subsequent analysis. Thereby, the researcher tries to survey natural contexts that could have taken place in the same way without his attendance. In addition to the technical documentation and the conservation of communicative contexts, the researcher has the status of an observer in the field. Accordingly, he composes field reports and searches for background information by asking the performing agents. Subsequent

Sociological genre analysis (Günthner & Knoblauch 1995) provides detailed descriptions and analysis of communicative action. In theory, "communicational problems" can be managed with communicative genres that are solutions to specific problems in the social stock of knowledge. Therefore, these solutions can be seen as highly important for the stability of a culture. Communicational genres are consolidated linguistic patterns that provide specific solutions to communication problems (Luckmann 1988). They act as mediating instruments between social structures and the knowledge of the individual as well as providing material for the *communicative construction of reality* (Luckmann 2006). For these reasons, communicational genres form the institutional core of social life (Knoblauch 2005b).

Figure 1: Iterative Research Process applied in Video-Analysis



Focused ethnography, as used in this project, is part of an iterative research process. To generate the data we follow a theoretical sampling method, which systematically selects similar, deviant and contrasting cases. Each case – a naturally occurring event in the context of migration – requires extensive and time-consuming preparation as well as the practical involvement needed to realize the audio-visual recordings. Once the data has been taped, we begin initial analysis of the raw material. The observation of recursive patterns in the audio-visual recordings allows us to select particular short sequences for further analysis. This selection is one of the critical parts of the research process. It is tailored for the general research interest (in this case: looking for sequences relevant for communicating knowledge) *and* the recursive patterns that might emerge from the material itself, independent from our pre-established research focus. Video-analysis is, not exclusively but for the most part, a method of discovery. The selected sequences are transcribed, prepared for analysis, inspected and discussed in extensive data processing sessions. As we progress, these findings help us to choose further sequences from the data set and continue on to the next step in the method.

3. Communicating migrants' knowledge in staged events

Consider the following sequence from our sample. The discussion was recorded during an arranged information meeting that took place under the auspices of the »Latin-American theme week«, celebrated on a regular basis each year in Nuremberg (http://www.lateinamerikawoche.de). A broad alliance of groups and associations involved with the Latin American community organize a series of events, including charity and fund-raising meetings, public rallies and lectures as well as cultural exhibits and performances. These are designed to inform, entertain and raise political awareness of Latin America. The organizers work alongside a broad alliance of civic associations and church-based organizations along with representatives from public administrations who deal with migration issues.

analysis of this data takes places in regular data analysis sessions.

The event we will focus on here took place in the evening and lasted about two hours. Throughout this period, two women sit on stage behind an elevated desk decorated with posters and deliver a speech to an audience of between twenty to thirty listeners. The speech as a whole deals with the subject of the current political, social and economic situation in El Salvador. The particular extract we will focus on, addresses the political role of communal radio stations in this country.

Image 1: In this staged event, the German-speaking female moderator (M) is performing consecutive translation for the Spanish-speaking activist (A). The video extract of the analysed sequence can be accessed at: www.soz.uni-bayreuth.de/de/videoanalysis

Maria, the manager (M) of a local Bavarian aid organisation for Central and South-America, moderates the event. Maria had been previously living in El Salvador for two years. She acts as a translator for the activist's speech. This is delivered by Angela (A), a Salvadorian woman and activist for the radio station, who is exclusively Spanish-speaking. Angela is the central protagonist of this event, representing a "voice from Latin America".

Angela's slow and clear pronunciation allows Maria to understand, memorize translate and reproduce each part of Angela's speech. However, her speed and articulation may also be due to her attempts to adjust to a mixed audience of both native German and Spanish speakers, some of whom do not understand Spanish. Although only Maria and Angela have verbal parts in this sequence, it seems clear that this is not a dialogue between the actors on stage, but a *triad* of communication. Both interact verbally with each other not only in front of, but directly addressing the audience. This audience is the third component of the exchange and the main recipient of the communicative activities on stage. Furthermore, both of them have the specific purpose of "informing" the audience (in contrast to other events we have been recording, in which persuasive or ludic elements may dominate). In order to successfully communicate their meaning, it is imperative that they achieve unity between what Angela intended to communicate and Maria's translation.

The following sequence is initiated by Maria who speaks in well-articulated Spanish. In this 26 second-sequence, Angela and Maria talk extensively. Angela is speaking Spanish and Maria is speaking German as a translation of each part for the benefit of the audience. After finishing her sentence, Angela signals Maria to start the translation with a short pause. Maria will immediately begin her translation. Consider the first part of the original speech delivered in Spanish:

Transcript 1a: sistema democrático

1 A: en el salvador las radios
in El Salvador comunal radios

2 comunitarias se le(s) ve como
are seen as

3 los medios opositores (-) ah:
opposing media

→ 4 (.) al sisTEMA demoCRATico
against the democratic system

5 que hay en el salvador (-)
established in El Salvador

The sequence above (cf. transcript 1 “sistema democrático”) is an example of the recursive communicative phenomenon observable in our data, which will now be described in detail. In terms of speech content, Angela is alluding to the heavy criticism community radio stations are facing in her home country without, however, specifying *who* is attacking them. In line 2, she chooses a passive voice when describing this criticism: “in El Salvador, communal radios are seen as opposing media”, emphasizing the fact that these radio stations were opponents to the established “democratic system” in El Salvador, an ironic statement given the deficient state of democratic development in El Salvador and the denunciation of those who allegedly fight for democratic improvement as “opponents” (line 3). The “democratic system established in El Salvador” (line 4) is rhetorically working as a *contradictio in adiecto.* Angela emphasises this, making it stand out from the rest of her speech. The irony is expressed through a special pronunciation distinct from standard Spanish (in Spanish, words are in principle “llanas”, i.e. pronounced on the second last syllable). In line 4, she raises the tone of her voice and puts special emphasis on two words: “sisTEMA demoCRATico” by exaggerating the expected prosodic contour.

However, the expression of this irony is barely apparent to the German audience without additional explanation. Consider the way Maria immediately translates the following sentence into German:

Transcript 1b: Quotation marks

6 M: hm (-) und ((caughs)) das problem ist auch das
the problem is also that

7 in El SALvador eigentlich so kommunale radios
in el Salvador such comunal radios

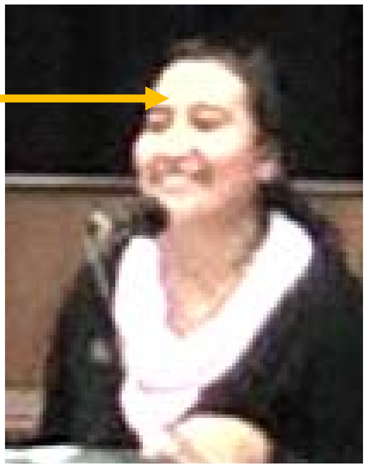
8 immer als oppósiTION gesehen werden zum
are always seen as opposition against

→ 9 demokratischen (.) an´ =in anführungszeichen
the democratic *in quotation marks*

10 demokratischen system in el salvador
democratic system in El Salvador

The translation starts in line 6 with a delay marker combined with a micro-pause, followed by a paralinguistic expression (coughing), and the sentence finally starts with a problematization ("the problem is"). Note that all four of these elements are absent in the Spanish original and therefore constitute additional *contextualization devices*. These contextualization devices are designed to provide the audience with the necessary information to enable them to understand the meaning of Angela's statement. The transcript already allows us to see the minute details of the interaction. However, the way in which the whole process of communicating relevant "knowledge" is performed by the participants only becomes clear when examining the interplay of verbal and visual conduct, especially the role body language plays in the interaction. This is used in order to enrich the speech with additional elements that help the audience to understand not only the denotative, but also the subtleties of the connotations of Angela's "message".

Score extract 1: Expressing irony

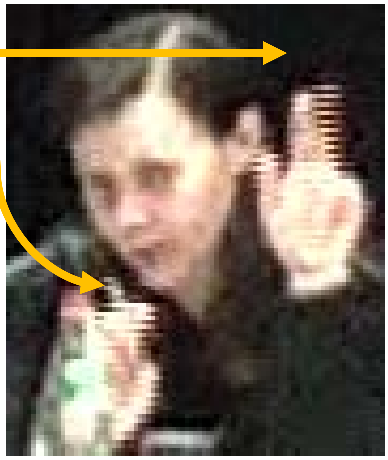
verbal interaction	Gesture and facial expression	
...al sisTEMA demoCRATico que hay en el Salvador	glances in audience direction and smiles	

Inspecting video sequence 1 in detail (www.soz.uni-bayreuth.de/de/videoanalysis) reveals some surprising results. After "medios oppositores" (line 3, transcript 1a), Angela leaves a micro pause, followed by "ah:", another signal of delay. This pause operates as a break for further consideration and is followed by the two specially emphasised words: "sisTEMA demoCRATico". The functional meaning of this apparently inappropriate accentuation becomes obvious the moment we consider, as well as the verbal interaction, the prosodic and gestural elements involved (cf. score extract 1):

Angela expresses this through pauses and emphasis. She accompanies it with a quick smile at the audience. It is the *simultaneous combination* of lexical, prosodic and mimic elements that produces this communicative form and expresses the intended irony. In other words, her smiling reframes her words, indicating that they should not be taken literally and are intended ironically. Thus, anyone who listened only to the apparent meaning of her words might completely misinterpret her meaning. Although Angela provides additional cues to show her intended meaning through her facial expression, non-Spanish speaking members of the audience might be unaware of or still not able to understand the full meaning of her message. They may simply be confused by the apparently contradictory meanings of the verbal and the mimic modality. Consider how, in the following section, Maria attentively responds to the need to reframe and contextualize Angela's speech:

Score extract 2: Translating irony

Verbal interaction	Gesture and facial expression
... zum demokratischen (.) an´ in Anführungszeichen demokratischen System in El Salvador	glances up and symbolises quotation marks with both hands



As the video shows, Maria is doing the "translation-work". This translation-work, however, is not a mere transmutation of information from one language into another. Simple sender-receiver information models usually disregard the most important features of the communication, which has to be scrutinized according to the sequential, moment-by-moment unfolding of events including all the simultaneous actions in all communicative modalities. Focusing on the complexity of human interaction by identifying typical and recurrent communicative forms allows further empirical insight into the microstructures of how particular communicative processes work. Therefore, we have to pay special attention to the ways in which those who interact utilize a particular communicative form and combine communicative elements from various modalities.

In the sequence above we can see how Maria orchestrates her words with facial expressions and how this combination operates. It is the "orchestration" (Schnettler 2006) of several communicative modalities that results in a particular meaning. After saying "demokratischen" (transcript 1b, line 8) Maria interrupts her speech for a moment, and then starts to interpret the irony Angela has implicitly expressed through a verbal and gestured performance (score extract 2). Note that the translation-work she is performing entails the transformation of a certain piece of information - the *ironic nature* of the Salvadorian "democratic system" – from one modality to another. In this situation Maria does not only rely on her mastery of language. She also draws on contextual knowledge regarding the specific historical and current socio-political situation in El Salvador. She may be considered a specialist since she has lived in the country for two years and has been paying particular attention to the news from that country. This specialist knowledge not only qualifies her to moderate this event. In this situation, she can draw on it, enabling her to reinterpret the irony for the sake of the audience who do not, in general even if some are exempt, have the opportunity to draw on similar expertise.

This sequence effectively demonstrates Maria's knowledge that El Salvador does *not* have an established democratic system since she is able to interpret the subtlety of Angela's words. Maria's use of her specialist knowledge in interpreting Angela's performance makes her true meaning accessible for the German speakers in the audience. The discovery of a particular orchestration embedded in a larger sequence is known as "moderation". Analysis of the internal structure and the interaction not only uncovers its functional utility in terms of "translating" one piece of information from one place, situation, etc. to another. As the analysis demonstrates, knowledge production and communication is not only an activity archived through interaction. By the way in which the performance is realized by the actors, they are continuously reshaping, reinterpreting and adding new elements to the process of "knowledge communication".

4. The interactional organization of moderating

As shown by the above analysis of the audio-visual data and the data gathered from many public social events, moderation plays an important role in the process of communicating knowledge. Frequently, in a number of analysed sequences, moderation forms part of a predesigned performative arrangement, especially prominent in staged events. The communicative setting in which moderation occurs can be identified as an *interactional triad*, which consists of the audience, the performers and the moderator. This communicative setting is fundamentally asymmetrical: *Members of the audience* can be characterized as primarily listening and observing. Throughout our data, sequences in which the audience were granted the opportunity to participate actively in the main exchange were comparatively rare. In all cases, this participation only partially took place and was usually scheduled towards the end of the event. Nevertheless, the spectators are a crucial part of the moderation triad, since the performance is intended for them and meaningless in itself.

In this communicative triad, the *performers* play the role of "experts". Their task is to communicate their specialist knowledge so that it can be understood by the audience. Their performance is closely related to the main topic of the event. Consequently, their activities are dominant within it, both in terms of duration and intensity. The *moderator* plays a subsidiary part. He introduces, frames or brings the interaction to a close. Regardless the overall purpose of the event (to inform, to entertain, to solve problems; cf. next chapter for details), moderating is concerned with the opening and closing of the event, the introduction of the programme and information on its progress, the presentation of guests and the introduction of the remaining performers.

Indisputably, moderation is a general communicative feature found in all sorts of events, not exclusive to migration contexts. In our data sample however (for details, see above) we identify specific elements related to migration. This case is significantly different with regard to the communication situation in which the moderation operates. Due to the language barrier between the Spanish-speaking radio worker, Angela, and the mostly German-speaking audience, Maria cannot address the audience directly. Her moderation does not simply serve the purpose of politeness or simply pleasing Angela as the events main protagonist. Maria's moderation is a necessity, an actively designed and performed communicative activity, which is vital for the success of the event. Therefore, Angela speaks slowly and clearly enabling both the moderator and the Spanish-speaking individuals in the audience to understand her. Our research in similar contexts shows that foreign language speeches are especially reliant on specific gestures and mimes.

As shown in the example, moderation accomplishes considerably more than a literal translation. In order to meaningfully translate the irony, Maria uses prosodic markers (delay signals and emphasized pronunciation), gestures and facial expressions. But even the identification and application of all of these characteristics does not guarantee an adequate interpretation. This is only achieved using Maria's knowledge regarding Angela's social, cultural and political context. In addition to the correct interpretation of Angela's performance, it is important for the moderator to "read" the audience and infer its knowledge of context and understanding. Only then is Maria able to provide the required contextualization. Accordingly, Maria's role can be summarized as a *cultural mediator* between performance and audience.

5. Moderation as reflected in popular manuals

Based on our data, we have, so far, analysed some of the internal and interactional characteristics of moderation as a communicative form and identified the moderator of our sample as cultural mediator. With the purpose of taking a first step towards observing the external structural elements, we briefly consider the broader aspects of moderation as reflected in popular communication manuals. Moderation is currently used as a synonym for "processual design" (Seifert 2003: 75). Seifert points to the connection between the etymology of "moderation" and "temperance". He claims that two main uses of the concept have recently become significant. One for denoting a form of communication frequent in the context of mass-media and another for naming a particular social technique (Geißner 1993: 57f.). In media contexts, entertainment moderation is distinguished from journalistic moderation. The predominant purpose of moderation in the context of entertainment is to build "rhetoric bridges" (Seifert 2003: 75ff.). In contrast, the purpose of journalistic moderation is to produce information for an interested audience (ibid.).[2]

[2] Seifert distinguishes between three types of moderation according to the dominating communicative purpose shaped after the three fundamental rhetoric functions and called: entertainment (*Unterhaltung)*, information (*Information)* and problem solving (*Problembearbeitung)* moderation. Entertaining moderation serves to build rhetorical bridges. Examples can be found in festivities or celebrations (direct moderation) or quiz programmes broadcast on television, radio or on the internet (indirect moderation). Informative moderation takes place on roadshows such as readings (*Leserforen*) or even talk shows. For the open communal space these can be social gatherings of clubs (*Vereinsversammlungen*), for the private familiar space divorce mediations (*Scheidungs-Mediation*) or family therapy sessions. Workshops for con-

However, if understood as a social technique, moderation takes place in social contexts such as family therapy as well as in operational, organisational or public municipal development. There, its purpose is to mediate between the diverging views, efforts and desires of competing actors in in pursuit of reconciliation (Seifert 2003, 78). In similar contexts, Ziegler (1992) describes the desirable qualities of the moderator in the idiom of popular science. According to his statements, a “good” moderator is incorruptible and influential, has competence and a social reputation. As a “moderate” personality he must have the ability to sympathise with others in order to act “decisively”, motivate, animate and guide his audience (ibid., 227f.).

However, our video analysis illustrates important differences in the features reported by the literature as relevant for a successful communication. The dominant, pre-set topic of the event is of relevance here. The execution of moderation varies according to the setting. If this setting is characterized by an informative purpose, as in our example, the priority is the accurate and thorough communication of knowledge to the audience, to which the moderator must contribute. In contrast, during a panel discussion or a public debate, the elements of control and moderation are dominant. In an entertaining event the telling of anecdotes or jokes may appear in moderation.

Examining the model sequence reported above allows us to further differentiate between moderation patterns and moderation forms. Whereas *moderation patterns* are the structural components of moderation in a specific communication form, *moderation forms* describe the ways in which these patterns are utilized in and through the interaction. A moderation pattern may include a welcome followed by an introduction of the topic of the event. The moderation form, however, can vary if, for example, the moderator uses certain types of expression or chooses to implement elements of the moderation pattern befitting the activity.

The analysis shows that the question of “best practice” must be considered for communication patterns in the context of moderation in migration. Unlike conventional guidebook literature on the subject of presenting and moderating, our analysis does not answer the question of what type of moderation is most appropriate. Neither do we primarily strive to determine the criteria of communicative success. Instead, we are searching for the answer to the more basic question of how communicative activities operate within a particular situation. Accordingly, a high-resolution chronological analysis of its development illustrates the internal mechanisms by which the particular communicative form of moderation works in this context. Combining the results obtained from both analyses – videographic microanalysis enriched with ethnographic contextualization – allows us to describe outcomes that may also be used for more applied purposes, such as informing communication practices in migration contexts.

Besides the risk of the moderator misunderstanding the performance, there is also the danger of them misjudging the audience’s knowledge. The latter can place restrictions on communication, for instance, when the moderator disregards necessary contextualisation. Or, in the opposite case, the “over-contextualisation” of an already well informed audience might be conceived as inappropriate, superfluous or even patronising, resulting in a bored or even irritated audience.

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flict-solving are examples of moderation taking place in the organization or business domain.

Our analysis of the audio-visual data is still underway. It would therefore be premature to draw final conclusions at this point. However, the results of our study so far seem to confirm the interpretation that the communication of knowledge in migration settings depends on certain performance prerequisites. Our analysis also indicates criteria for successful moderation and cultural mediation in the migrational context. Our future efforts in this project intend to collect and consolidate the findings of communicational patterns in the context of integration.

Comparison with other cases has shown that the accomplishment of this communication pattern for knowledge transmission depends on how the communication triad is used. Successful “transfer” of knowledge is, however, always dependant on the moderator’s ability to recognize these capabilities and to adapt his moderation to them. Further study of the relationship between the event design and the on-going performance ability of the triad-members is still required. Our analysis aims to understand whether the moderation pattern varies according to the context, and if so, how.

6. Research on knowledge and migration

Video-analysis of situated interaction is an expanding area of research. Numerous studies exist today, mainly in the fields of science, technology, education or communication research. Within migration studies, however, video-analysis is a new tool. Therefore, in this section we will discuss the broader methodical implications of our research. We argue that our interpretive approach allows us to study migration from a novel perspective. Current research on migration focuses mainly on the dynamics of migration processes themselves (Pries 2001, 12, 32; Han 2005, 69; as an outstanding example see Delia Nicoue’s multi-sided approach to this issue). Our analysis is focused on a sociological perspective grounded in the new sociology of knowledge (Berger & Luckmann 1991/1966). It concentrates on the social situations that emerge from the dynamics mentioned above, which become particularly important in certain situations of “contact and motion zones” where migrants and members of the resident population interact. We call these situations “intercultural situations”.[3] Interaction in these situations is structured according to the typical differences in knowledge between “strangers” and “locals” (Schütz 1944). Our analysis of the face-to-face communication in migration situations draws on previous ethnographic research in the *small social life-worlds* of ethnic communities in Germany and its integrative and segregative aspects (Zifonun 2010, 2008; Zifonun & Cındark 2004). This is particularly relevant in relation to the communicative patterns than can be found in the context of integration.

With this perspective, we try to raise awareness of non-regular migration. Largely unnoticed by the majority of the German public, a recent and significant shift has occurred in the evaluation of migration, in both economic and in political respects. Today, political leaders and representatives from private enterprises and firms constantly praise the potential of migrants. This is because those in power are realizing that migrants might provide the resources required to fill the gaps

[3] Soeffner & Zifonun (2005) argue that social differentiation should not be conceived as a only product of internal dynamics and social processes within our society but as being decisively influenced by *transnational*, *global* forces from outside. Social situations are shaped by what the authors describe as structural “interculturality”.

that the demographic decline is leaving in welfare, social security systems and the labour market. Migration need not be stopped any more but must still be controlled and governed.

This paradigm shift induced a number of political demands, including calling “highly qualified professionals” from abroad, promises to improve educational opportunities for young immigrants and the recent appeal to harness the labour potential of the immigrant citizens already settled in Germany who have not yet been integrated into the job market. These citizens are often very well educated, but possess qualifications and skills that are not officially recognised by German authorities and institutions. Counteracting this “brain-waste”[4] in order to benefit from the reservoirs of unused faculties and resources these migrants possess seems to be one of the most important challenges for the future of our society, which faces remarkable demographic change and an increasing lack of professionals.

The projects of the Bavarian Research Network Migration and Knowledge (ForMig) are dedicated to exploring the potential of migrants in Bavaria. Their research is carried out from their particular disciplinary angle using complementary methods, both quantitative and qualitative. Each individual project, however, aims for more than just the identification of unused and economically valuable “cultural capital” (Bourdieu 1983, 53ff.) in order to allow it to be utilized. Above all, they intend to examine the knowledge of migrants, focusing on the “mechanisms” of its transfer and the creation of new knowledge in the host society (ForMig 2009). Beyond the specific academic contributions of each discipline to migration research, the network hopes to counter a flawed view of migration and integration in the German public and media by providing a differentiated description of its research results.

Our project “Communicating Knowledge in Social Gatherings: Focused Ethnographic Data Collection and Video Analysis of Migrant Knowledge” contributes to the network by allowing communicative activities to be differentiated and understood in the context of migration. Our questions are: How is knowledge communicated in public and semi-public events? What symbolic and ritual forms of communication are being used in these performances? The data is examined according to what (1) is being communicated by whom (2), how (3), and for what purposes (4). In this process, (1) is not relevant to context, but only to the object (stock of specialist knowledge) of the knowledge transfer. Most important, however, seem to be the properties of the agents (2) who determine the communication structure (3) themselves. In the example above, both the properties of the agents and the communicational structures have been reconstructed accordingly in order to provide results on the communication structures of their particular communicative form. According to the sociological concepts the new sociology of knowledge serves to elaborate (Berger & Luckmann 1991/1966; Schütz & Luckmann 1973, 1989), knowledge should not be defined in positivist terms as an external category. Knowledge is both individual and social: individual in the sense that it is indispensably tied to personal experience, competence and performance; and social because its distribution, objectification, validation and legitimization are bound to social interaction processes. It is obvious that knowledge does not exist separately from society. Empirically, knowledge can

4 See Englmann & Müller (2007) comprehensive study about the obstacles migrants face when searching for recognition of their foreign qualifications in Germany.

only be studied in terms of communication, taking into account all communicative modalities, such as verbal, gestural, facial and postural expressions.

The framework of our research determines the field in two ways. On the one hand, it is localised to the Bavarian region and the urban centres of Munich, Nuremberg and Augsburg, on the other hand we focus mainly on Spanish-speaking contexts. Within Bavaria, these three cities show a high percentage of migrants in their population.[5] Within those borders, we have collected an extensive body of real-life video data including 24 open social events. Thematically, these events include cookery and language courses, musical and cultural festivals, readings, intercultural open air events and festivals of national-historic content.

7. The communicative environment

The remaining chapters of this article will discuss knowledge and migration within the research context including reference to further methodological and theoretical properties. Referring to our on-going data analysis, we have discussed the special role of the recursively occurring communicational structure, observable in the field, described as moderation. In this process, we look for the specific ways in which this structure solves communicational problems (Ulmer 1988, 20), especially in multilingual settings, and the relation of this structure to the *communicative environment*. A definition of this environment will be given below.

From a sociological perspective, our research focuses on communication in naturally occurring contexts in the region that is the recipient of migration. We are not primarily concerned with the process of migration itself, but rather with the resulting forms of public social gathering that are observable as outcomes of the diverse migration into our country. The migration process in its macro-societal dimension can be understood through recently developed approaches such as the cumulative causation concept (Massey 1998) or the theory of transnational social spaces (Pries 1996, 2001).

With our research, we refer to the typology of “migrant social worlds” (Soeffner & Zifonun 2008) and phenomenological tradition. Here, the environment is understood as a shared stock of social knowledge, routines and patters of interaction. In general, the borders of an environment are drawn where shared assumptions, common interpretations and actions are no longer employed and expected behaviours are not fulfilled (ibid. 120). The communicative environment we have mentioned is understood as an addition to the five environments (migration environment, segregation environment, assimilation environment, marginalization environment, and intercultural environment) typified by Soeffner and Zifonun (2008: 120ff.). The core of this environment is established by the public gatherings of people who aim to combine sociocultural or political contexts from different parts of the world in one place. During these events a substantial part of the typical “communication within” (Schulze 2005, 174) takes place in an especially concentrated form. Related to this environment are those members of migrant groups, migrant and cultural associations, private and local political organisations who regularly participate in sociocultural and political activities during public events. Similar to the intercultural environment, we understand these agents as

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[5] The average percentage of citizens with migrant background in Bavaria is 19.4%, but it is much higher in these three cities. In Munich it reaches 35.2%, in Nuremberg 38.3% and in Augsburg even 39.4% (2010).

egalitarian amongst themselves but *unlike* the intercultural environment, the communicative environment includes a special interest in the communication of the thematic differences found in the events. What is unusual is that the interaction of those foreign to the environment in these events is especially prevalent in this environment.

In many cases, the events we are studying are (co-)organized and directed by groups and associations within the communicative environment that can be counted as providers of origin-specific “migrant knowledge”. Migrant knowledge can be understood as a stock of specialist knowledge that emerges from different socio-cultural experiences, matters of cause and gained skills. This type of knowledge is expressed through forms of communication that define this difference. This means that what is common knowledge in one place becomes specialist knowledge in another (Kissau 2010, 360). As well as migrants that have their social origin in a specific region, non-migrants can be counted as holders of this stock of specialist knowledge. This can be the case when they are permanently located in the communicative environment (t. ex. as family members) or have intense experience in the respective region of origin. One result of our research that effects migration theory is that the label “migrant association” should be restricted in its use. We are discovering that these associations not only play a crucial role in the process of integrating migrants into the host society, as has been noted earlier (Heitmeyer), but also constitute zones of “cultural contact” themselves. All the groups we have been examining were not exclusively composed of one ethnic group, nor did they exclude particular members. As well as people with a migration background, we always find people from the host country participating in these events. Among these participants are family members (partners, children of migrants) and those who frequently participate, both with and without migration experience, and are interested in the subject of the particular groups. Regarding migration theory, the associations we are studying are not only important because of their role in identity-building within the diaspora (Lehmann 2001, 169), or as mediators and bridges between home and resident culture (Cappai 2000). Both are undeniably important functions with reference to the maintaining of the traditions of their emergent society in the receiving society. More importantly, they represent a specific place in modern societies, not hidden in the backyard of modernity, but at its forefront. They create spaces of intercultural interaction in which its members interact not only through the exchange of knowledge but create areas of contact to provide optimum conditions for innovation and the creation of new knowledge. Therefore, our experiences in the research praxis provide a strong argument for the integrative character of these events within the communicative environment. Therefore, the results of our field research also provide some information about integrative contexts.[6]

8. Conclusion: Social events as spaces of communicating variety

Communication in the communicative environment is determined by structural factors, such as the origin of content and its spatial and temporal realisation while the communication is also dependent on the present subjects and their relationships with each other. There exists a wide range of open social events in

[6] Integration must not be conceived as result of a process but – following the idea of socialisation – as a process itself that emerges from continuous mutual interaction (Soeffner & Zifonun 2008: 118).

Spanish-speaking contexts. This includes, for instance, Cuban cookery lessons, Spanish Christmas song performances, a Mexican mariachi ensemble concert, stage plays, presentation of children aid projects and a recital by a well-known Argentinean writer.

Despite thematic differences between each event, the analysis reveals the common, comprehensive communication structures on which we focus. Basically, this setting can be described as being located between two poles on a dichotomous scale. The first pole signifies the informal *ad hoc communication* that appears in the spatial and temporal frame of the event. This form of face-to-face communication varies in location, time frame and personal awareness. Furthermore the communication is decentralised so that it is not accessible to all of the visitors to an event. The second pole defines strictly formalised interactions, e.g. performances that are locally bound and cover a specific theme. This pole is realised within a well defined personal frame and a limited amount of time. The contents of this performance are not only known beforehand by the organisers but also by the visitors. This pole also shapes the official frame of the event. As “focused communication” (Goffman 1961), these contexts are structured in terms of a stage performance (such as a planned and practiced band gig, a presentation or an authors reading) and as such are inherently accessible to each and every participant.

The presentation of formal communication in the field is recursively implemented as a triad. Participants are (1) the performers, who communicate specific knowledge while performing, (2) the audience, who receive this performance and (3) subjects, who act as mediators between both groups. These mediators we call moderators according to our results as demonstrated above. As we have shown, this role is not only an embellishment of the event, but an essential part of successful communication. The success of communication at formalized events within the communicational environment is achieved and influenced by these moderators through their expertise and knowledge of multilingual contexts. As a matter of course, moderators can fail in their task due to various reasons (cf. pp 8-11). However, as this on-going analysis shows, there is the possibility of determining the structure and requirements of successful communication in migrational contexts. This can lead to better recognition, integration and understanding of migrants in the receiving countries concerned.

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Appendix

Forschungsverbund Migration und Wissen (ForMig)

The Research Network Migration and Knowledge consists of 10 research institutions (both university and non-university) in Bavaria. It is funded for three years by the Bavarian State Ministry for Science, Research and Culture (StMWFK). ForMig's target is to provide top-level research on the topic of migrants' knowledge, mechanisms of knowledge transfer and, based on this, possibilites of generating new knowledge.

Authors

Miriam Busse

Miriam Busse is Research Associate at the Chair of Human Resource Management and Leadership, Faculty of Law, Economics, and Business Administration, University of Bayreuth, Germany. She studied Business Administration at the University of Bayreuth (specialization: human resource management; organization & management). Diploma in 2009. Member of the research network "Migration and Knowledge (ForMig)"; research project: "Temporary immigration: Inpatriates and knowledge exchange in multinational companies".

Edda Currle

Edda Currle is Senior Researcher at the european forum for migration studies (efms), institute the University of Bamberg, Germany. She studied library and information science at the FH Bibliothekswesen, Stuttgart. Diploma (FH) in 1990 and political sciences and economics at the Otto-Friedrich University of Bamberg and the University of Leipzig. Diploma in 1996. Member of the research network "Migration and Knowledge (ForMig)"; research project: "Brain Gain? Patterns of immigration and career of foreign researchers in Bavaria".

Torsten M. Kühlmann

Torsten M. Kühlmann is a full professor in the Department of Law, Economics, and Business Administration, University of Bayreuth, Germany. He teaches human resource management. Spokesman of the research network "Migration and Knowledge (ForMig)"; research project: "Temporary immigration: Inpatriates and knowledge exchange in multinational companies".

Delia Nicoué

Delia Nicoué is Research Assistant in the "ForMig" project: "Dynamic worlds of learning: Knowledge and communication of young urban migrants from Eritrea and Ethiopia" and PhD-student at the Chair of Anthropology, University of Bayreuth. She studied German Literature at the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin and at the University of Paris 8 Vincennes - Saint Denis in France where she received a Magister Artium in Literature Studies in 2003. She completed a MA in African Studies at the University of Bayreuth in Germany in 2010.

Marlen Rabl

Marlen Rabl is a Student Research Assistant at the Chair for Sociology of Culture and Religion in Bayreuth and in the “Formig” project “Communicating Knowledge in Social Gatherings: Focussed Ethnographic Data Collection and Video Analysis of Migrant Knowledge”. She studied Cultural and Religious Studies at the University of Bayreuth and the University Panthéon-Sorbonne Paris I, finishing her Bachelor of Arts in 2011 and is going on to study Religious Studies MA at Lancaster, United Kingdom, from October on.

Bernd Rebstein

Bernd Rebstein is a PhD-student at the Chair of Sociology of Culture and Religion at the University of Bayreuth. He studied Sociology, with Psychology and Politics as minor subjects, at the University of Augsburg. Magister Artium in 2008 with an empirical study of ‘Elderly Care Nurses from Poland – Multiple Inequalities’. Since September 2009 he is a Research Assistant in the ForMig project: “Communicating Knowledge in Social Gatherings – Focussed Ethnographic Data Collection and Video Analysis of Migrant Knowledge at the chair of Sociology of Culture and Religion” in Bayreuth.

Bernt Schnettler

Bernt Schnettler is Professor of Sociology at the University of Bayreuth. He has undertaken studies on communicative genres. Recently he has become especially interested in combining detailed sequential analysis and hermeneutic interpretation for analysing focused video data. His research on knowledge communication, dissemination and visualization is based on the neoclassical sociology of knowledge, further developed closely with colleagues from the TU Berlin and the UCM Madrid. Bernt Schnettler is working in several national and international scientific associations, including the European Sociological Association’s RN “Qualitative Methods” and the German Sociological Association’s RN “Sociology of Knowledge”.