

Conference Report:

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**Sixth Annual Meeting of Qualitative Psychology "Generalization in Qualitative Psychology"**. Velden, Austria, October 21-23, 2005, organized by Philipp Mayring, Eva Brunner (University of Klagenfurt, Austria), Mechthild Kiegelmann, Leo Gürtler and Günter L. Huber (Center for Qualitative Psychology, Tübingen, Germany)

**Key words:**

qualitative research, qualitative psychology, research design, methodology, generalization, workshop, methods, psychology, networking

**Abstract:** This conference report gives an overview of the 6th Annual Conference of the Qualitative Psychology Initiative held in Velden, Austria from 21-23 October, 2005 sponsored by the Center for Qualitative Psychology (Tübingen). Only in its sixth year, the conference has already become a tradition and was once again attended by researchers from a wide variety of professions and different countries. This year the conference focused on the subject of *generalization* in qualitative psychology and looked at different ways in which generalization can be handled in qualitative research in psychology. This conference report aims to convey an impression of the conference as a whole, to situate it within the context of psychological research and to point towards current issues and trends in qualitative research that are related to generalization. The individual presentations are first briefly summarized in this context, but are also presented again in greater detail in the [Appendix C](#).

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## 1. Overview

The [Center for Qualitative Psychology](#) (CQP) has been organizing an annual conference on central issues in qualitative research in psychology for the last six years. The conference aims to promote a continuous discourse and further develop qualitative methods in psychology, while at the same time providing a forum for an international and interdisciplinary exchange between researchers with varying levels of qualifications (KIEGELMANN, HELD, HUBER & ERTEL, 2000). Previous conference reports were already published on FQS (GÜRTLER, 2003; GÜRTLER & GAHLEITNER, 2004; GAHLEITNER & GÜRTLER, 2005). [1]

The conference was attended by participants from various countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Lithuania, and Australia) and with a wide range of disciplines represented. These included the subdisciplines of general psychology, social psychology, clinical psychology, organizational psychology, educational psychology and the educational sciences. [2]

To begin with, the issue of generalization was illuminated from different angles in three main presentations. Each of them was discussed in subsequent plenary sessions. The individual lectures dealt with various aspects that are related to generalization. The topics covered *single cases and an overview of generalization in social research* (Philipp MAYRING), *type formation* (Günter L. HUBER), and a more reflective lecture dealing with the question of *what qualitative research do we as researchers actually want?* (Julia NENTWICH & Pascal DEY) [3]

Further talks focused on empirical as well as theoretical work around the main theme of generalization. These lectures and discussions took place in several small groups and parallel sessions. The last morning plenum was dedicated to drawing up a resume and preparing future plans for the forthcoming annual conference in 2006 and joint networking. [4]

This report gives an overview of the conference and the topics of discussions that took place. Following an introductory review of the Center for Qualitative Psychology, some details of the content and discussion of the three key note lectures will be given. The individual presentations made in the working groups will then be summarized and related to the main topic of the conference before a short discussion at the end of the report. For more details on the conference program please see [Appendix B](#); the abstracts of the individual sessions are given in [Appendix C](#). In [Appendix A](#), interested readers will find a small selection of references that are almost solely dedicated to the topic generalization. [5]

## 2. The Center for Qualitative Psychology (CQP)

In her introduction, entitled the "Center for Qualitative Psychology: Past, Present and Future," Mechthild KIEGELMANN of the University of Tübingen (Germany) gave some insights into the development and fundamental vision of the Center for Qualitative Psychology. The original ideas were to promote qualitative research methods in psychology, lively exchanges between researchers from different countries and a broad spectrum of subdisciplines, and networking between different research projects both within Germany and beyond its borders. [6]

The range of qualitative research methods employed at the Center has been kept open for a wide variety of approaches. Main topics of the previous conferences were the *role of the researcher* (KIEGELMANN, 2002), *research questions, methods of data analysis* (KIEGELMANN & GÜRTLER, 2003), *research design* (GÜRTLER, KIEGELMANN & HUBER, 2005), *mixed methodology* (MAYRING, HUBER, GÜRTLER & KIEGELMANN, 2006), and *ethical considerations in research*. Another point is dedicated to overcoming the polarization between qualitative and quantitative research and to establish sustained networking links with other institutions such as FQS or the [Institute for Qualitative Research](#), located in Berlin. [7]

From the start strong emphasis was laid on the exchange between experienced and up-and-coming academic researchers. This idea was expanded to include special time slots for dissertation and diploma thesis consulting during conferences. Some researchers even suggested giving awards for diploma or doctoral theses although not everyone supported this idea. The publication of the annual conference proceedings were assured by the commitment of the [Ingeborg Huber publishing house](#). It is now to be continued in co-operation with international publishing houses and there are also plans to deepen the exchange with Forum: Qualitative Social Research as a platform for debates on interdisciplinary and relevant topics that can also be controversial. The next conferences will be held in Riga (Lithuania) from 20-22 October 2006, this time together with the Special Interest Group (SIG) no. 17 *Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Learning and Instruction* of the [European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction](#) (EARLI) and in early spring 2007 in Berlin. [8]

## 3. Key Notes

In his lecture entitled "On generalization of single cases," in accordance with the theme of "Generalization in qualitative psychology," Philipp MAYRING, from the Institute of Psychology and Center for Evaluation and Research Consulting of the University of Klagenfurt (Austria), offered a systematic overview of generalization. MAYRING pointed out that the possibilities for generalization are highly dependent upon the objectives of the research, its results and the context in which they are to be put to use. He assigned different forms of generalization to different research objectives: universal laws as the objective of quantitative, positivist-oriented research, the establishment of regularities, context-specific or time-dependent and medium-range statements, descriptions, exploratory

qualitative studies and specific process research designs—each as specific for special fields of application. [9]

The possibility of generalizing is to a great extent determined in advance by the sampling procedure employed: From full sampling and selection by statistical chance, with which the more positivist designs and forms of generalization are possible, through large-scale samples to different forms of theoretical sampling which allow argumentative generalizations such as theory generation with Grounded Theory, inductive-deductive procedures of content analysis, the establishment of typologies, as in reconstructive research, comparative case or documentation analyses to single case research at the opposite end of the spectrum. Different methods are frequently combined. Typical cases, extreme cases and contrasting cases offer different opportunities and forms for generalizing from representative and frequently occurring cases. Longitudinal studies that examine a single case over a long period of time with different phases of intervention offer further ways of deriving generalized conclusions. [10]

In MAYRING's view, one danger of qualitative research is that the claim to generalizability is greater than actually justified by the research results. However, qualitative research nonetheless offers a broad spectrum of possibilities for generalization which should be suitably exploited. Stepwise theory-led procedures for theoretical sampling and correct assessment of the generalization possibilities when selecting a research design are important milestones. Qualitative single case research enables the researcher to obtain greater insights into patterns of subjective interpretation and action than is possible with quantitative designs. Likewise, single case research is not only suitable for selected individual cases, but its results can also, in its respective context and if suitably justified, be generalized to other situations or persons and be used as a basis for statements on a wider field of application. The generalization must be justified theoretically by the sampling procedure, and as a consequence of the methods of data analysis. MAYRING's concluding considerations point towards the preference of a gradual transition between the two paradigms which, as will be seen later in this report, can be criticized from the perspective of postmodernism. [11]

MAYRING's lecture gave the participants a good overview of the subject of generalization in different research designs and ways of implementing it in both qualitative and quantitative research. Nowadays, at least for a substantial part of the scientific community, it is quite clear that qualitative research should not be measured by exactly the same set of criteria that are used in the quantitative domain (e.g. FLICK, 1987; BIRKHAN, 1992). However, recent discussions activated by a shift towards mixed methodology (TASHAKKORI & TEDDLIE, 2002) may help to foster or initiate controversial discussions that many researchers had thought were already closed. It would therefore also seem reasonable that the criteria employed to determine the quality of research within qualitative approaches differ, too. The methods of investigation and analysis and the overall research questions are heavily intertwined and thus it is not possible to talk in terms of *clear* criteria without taking the whole situation into consideration. At this point, qualitative research may greatly benefit from the concept of

*plausibility*, a term which was specially developed by the mathematician PÓLYA (1967) and is very popular in probability theory (JAYNES, 2003; STUDER, 1996). Probability theory combines qualitative as well as quantitative aspects and can be seen as an equivalent logic of reasoning among other forms such as induction, deduction, and abduction (STUDER, 1996). Then the question would not be one of generalization to a population, but rather a matter of drawing conclusions and making decisions if the information is incomplete or uncertain by making use of all available information. [12]

It remains an open question as to whether qualitative research in the social sciences should not be measured by other criteria and not merely with those prescribed by quantitative research. On the other hand, one may ask whether these other logics would in fact be able to bridge the gaps or whether new divergences would not thus be created. MAYRING favors a gradual transition between the two paradigms. It may also be an effective way to specify precise areas of application for methods and their respective quality criteria for research questions. One reason in favor of that argument is the fact that many research questions do not require any mixing (either of methods or trials to generalize results). Rather, they depend on the correct application of a single method and research strategy. This depends on the case, but it may be much more intelligent than trying to mix if mixing is not appropriate to the research question. Some approaches such as Objective Hermeneutics even see this as a must. Obviously, divergences do not seem to be a problem as long as they can be identified, and paradoxes and contradictory positions foster fruitful discussions instead of inhibiting deeper understanding. However, they are valuable in so far as they help to clarify the discussion, since where there are additional perspectives one's own argumentation needs to be worked out more precisely to attain new insights. [13]

In the next main lecture on the subject of "Generalization by formation of qualitative types," Günter L. HUBER from Tübingen University (Germany) explored generalization from the perspective of type formation. To exemplify his position, he began with an overview of the well-known types of reasoning: induction, deduction, and abduction that all cover different aspects of generalization. [14]

As a procedure of the process of qualitative data analysis, induction can be used to investigate specific characteristics of a single case to assign a single case to a group of related cases. In the latter instance, conclusions are drawn from specific cases selected for or accessible to the analysis and generalized to other, comparable cases. Here, of course, the general problem of qualitative generalization is involved, namely that the conclusion remains vulnerable to attack owing to the fact that only a limited number of cases can be investigated. However, this is not a problem of a few cases but of most cases of the subjective theory and underlying assumption of a researcher that large numbers of cases are necessary to come to some kind of meaningful conclusion. This is mainly rooted in orthodox statistics and its basic assumption of the asymptotic normal distribution which requires a minimal number of cases to justify the application of (almost) any statistical procedure. Comments on MAYRING's keynote (see

above) already contained the argument that orthodox statistics is not the preferred method of choice in every case and may even be totally unacceptable. On the other hand, the opposite argument can also be found, namely the position that only a few cases, if properly analyzed, are necessary to cover a whole research field. To name an example, Objective Hermeneutics holds such a position. This shows that induction based on large samples is just one way of generalization among many. [15]

According to HUBER's explications, one way of substantiating the generalization theoretically, but empirically based, is to use *logical minimization* by means of Boolean operators (RAGIN, 1987). This requires further strategies like permanent comparison (GLASER & STRAUSS, 1979) of case characteristics within and between cases and a proper sample procedure. [16]

HUBER illustrated this alternative strategy of creating qualitative types with the example of a study on training programs for teachers. He showed that this procedure is another means of arriving at qualitative types. However, the strategy also has its own specific strengths and weaknesses. Curiously, its strengths are at the same time its weaknesses: mainly dichotomization. Dichotomization (logical TRUE and FALSE) is the essence and brings to the surface the main characteristics that play a dominant role for the sample (cases, characteristics). A drawback is consequently the loss of the grey hues, the small things between the lines that cannot be covered by dichotomization. For such questions, fuzzy logic approaches and fuzzy Boolean nets to handle uncertainty precisely may point towards a realistic option to handle this issue more effectively. [17]

The Boolean approach to attain generalization is also possible if the theoretical and empirical work is at an early stage. Then, generalization evolves gradually in line with the sampling process and certainly then, generalization is more a process of saturation than a fixed final stage. [18]

The exemplified procedure reveals logical causality. This must not be confounded with causality in the real world. But the method allows multiple comparisons, meta-analyses and the discovery of relevant characteristics independently of large or small numbers of cases. In this sense, it is highly fruitful for not just heuristic research goals. Boolean algebra is always a good choice if it is the case one is searching for typical cases in contrast to uniqueness and for explicitly considering characteristics of the context and the relationships between cases and variables. [19]

In the final plenary lecture entitled "Generalization and beyond: What qualitative research do we want?," Julia NENTWICH and Pascal DEY from the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) tackled the subject of generalization from a social-constructionist point of view. Taking the recent identity-building around the notion of "Qualitative Research" as their starting point, they went on to discuss two particular binaries being constructed in this process. Their first concern was to highlight the continuous construction and reification of the binary between quantitative and qualitative research which tends to trade on a hierarchical

relationship that operates to the disadvantage of the qualitative camp. By virtue of concrete illustrations, the presenters delineated how *quantitative* is habitually associated with attributes such as *scientific* and *rigor* whereas *qualitative* is often forced into a minority role where it is appointed a status that is close to *non-scientific*. [20]

The second binary NENTWICH and DEY elaborated upon was according to the idea that qualitative research should be qualified as *scientific* in order to discriminate *research* from *non-research* which risks hampering innovative thinking and developments. Trying to construct the identity of qualitative psychology by establishing it as *rigorous research*, for instance by drawing on positivist, i.e. quantitative criteria such as generalization or by drawing a line between it and the arts and literature, will confine the limits and our understanding of qualitative research. The two binary constructions were subsequently reflected upon against the backdrop of feminist theory to show that both the binary between women and men and that between qualitative and quantitative assign women and qualitative research to subordinate roles. According to the speakers, it has become necessary as a result of this state of affairs to dissolve the hierarchical relationship and to reconstruct the respective binary. However, this ambitious and challenging task can only be realized by the individual researcher, because the action that leads to discrimination takes place within the mind of an individual. This mirrors the importance of *third* versus *first person methods*, whereas first person methods such as self-observation are desirable for multiple reasons, e.g. personal development, self-reflection, realizing wisdom about one's own thoughts and actions, and so on. [21]

Going beyond the discussion of the quality of criteria such as those required for generalization, NENTWICH and DEY shed light on some postmodern calls for reflection on the notion of "good science" and the quality of criteria. Transcending the limits of conventional understandings of "science" and advocating a view of "research" as the art of "making knowledge," they argued for a "politics of difference," for a diversity of styles and tropes within qualitative research. This, they suggested, would cross-fertilize the field and develop a more inclusive identity for Qualitative Psychology that operates outside the well-known binaries. In conclusion, they asked what kind of research and science we could and should construct and support if we cease to bow to the demands of the orthodoxies of quantitative research such as those that govern generalization. According to NENTWICH and DEY, qualitative research should no longer be conceived of as a mere supplement to its quantitative counterpart, but should, creatively and imaginatively, develop its own criteria. In short, the feeling of inferiority does not in fact come from the quantitative domain, but is a personal as well as collective process of constructing reality. And qualitative research is responsible for the construction of this reality. [22]

NENTWICH and DEY's arguments stimulated further discussion on the subject. On the one hand they called for a departure from the rigid dichotomy between the two paradigms, qualitative and quantitative, while on the other they demanded that qualitative research becomes clearly independent from the quantitative

paradigm and develops its own quality criteria for the qualitative sphere; although they did not offer any concrete alternatives. They thus distanced themselves from MAYRING's proposal that the transition between the two paradigms should be gradual, but remained caught up in a contradiction. Contradictions have always some origins and those between qualitative and quantitative surely can be traced back to at least the kind of language, as NENTWICH and DEY remarked. Language itself is far from being precise enough to be able to distinguish the paradigms. To give a brief example: the qualitative researchers often quantify and quantitative researchers need qualitative interpretation to manage the various transformations between theory, empiricism, and statistics. [23]

NENTWICH and DEY draw on notions from the feminist movement, some of whose new paradigms were designed as alternatives to male ideologies. If we follow this idea through, we see that within the feminist debate it also remains an open question as to whether the perspective of difference can actually help to abolish the power gap or whether emphasizing difference does not rather actively re-establish different forms of power phenomena or even establish a category that fits exactly into the old power constellations. Here, as is often the case, an unsolvable contradiction arises and the question is what productive means of implementation do not continue or re-constitute the all-pervasive structures of power and knowledge in diverse ways, but counteract them. This issue was brought up again in the ensuing discussion. [24]

#### **4. Workshops**

In the workshops the issue of generalization was considered from the perspectives of different sub-disciplines. Rudolf SCHMITT from the University of Applied Sciences Zittau/Görlitz (Germany), Social Science Department, looked at the subject of generalization from the point of view of "possibilities of generalization in systematic metaphor analysis," while Sabine LEHMANN-GRUBE, an educational psychologist from the University of Hannover (Germany), dealt with the issue of generalization within the field of "subjective theories." Jeannette BISCHKOPF from the University of Berlin (Germany) demonstrated "the use of autobiography in qualitative research" for generalization in two examples from research. Inge HERFORT from University of Vienna ((Austria) discussed competence for international co-operation, taking co-operation between Austrian and Hungarian small and medium enterprises as an example. [25]

Leo GÜRTLER from the University of Weingarten (Germany) looked at "resilience factors derived from single case analyses and their potential to identify general resilience mechanisms." Also, viewing the subject from the perspective of clinical psychology, Eva BRUNNER from the University of Klagenfurt (Austria) talked about "adolescent heterosexual risk-taking and its determinants" in a study using mixed methods, while Julia MARKNER and Silke Birgitta GAHLEITNER (both from the University of Applied Sciences Ludwigshafen, Germany) presented a single-case study on "youth welfare services and problems of borderline personality disorder." [26]

In a block strongly oriented towards educational science, M.C. DOMINGUEZ and Antonio Medina RIVILLA (both from the UNED/Spain) focused on the issue of "the design of intercultural educational materials and teacher training." Tiberio Feliz MURIAS and M. Carmen Ricoy LORENZO (both from the UNED/Spain) presented material on the "curricular design of the practical training as a generalization process" and on "the professional competences of the education in the technological resources." [27]

## 5. Final Remarks

In the ongoing debate about the quality of research, qualitative research will not be able to avoid dealing with the issue of how results and insights can be generalized. The general perception in research remains clear: the more general an insight, the greater its significance as long as generalization does not diminish the validity of the results for special, rare, and extreme cases. In the presentation of results to the non-scientist through the popular media, small scale studies are seldom seen as convincing as large studies. However, even if we approach the matter from a quite different angle, namely that of applicability to practice, we are repeatedly confronted with the necessity of transposing the results of research to wider contexts in a comprehensible fashion, though, frequently with a degree of complexity that cannot be accessed by quantitative approaches with their requirement to operationalize. [28]

Another question arises as to whether it is not nonetheless possible to leave the level of hierarchy, which is structured by the relationship between quantitative and qualitative research and in which quantitative research still claims a clear hegemony within the academic sphere. Exploratory studies not only have a broad field of use, but also enjoy a certain recognition in numerous fields of psychological research. But qualitative research is not necessarily bound to be just exploratory—far from that! Furthermore, one may claim that the roles can be changed, too: large numbers of cases serve for initial exploratory research and to proceed then to selected single cases for a better understanding of the ongoing processes. Process research is gaining in importance and seems to remain the domain of qualitative research in many areas of application. On the other hand, time-series, latent models, and multi-level approaches become more and more popular. Process research is also gaining in importance and remains the domain of qualitative research in many areas of application. Nonetheless, the overall structure of the relationship between the two paradigms may not change substantially in the next few years. The great importance of qualitative methodologies to remain independent and autonomous, also in regard to the issue of generalization, was again stressed. [29]

MAYRING's presentation conveyed more the impression of gradual transitions between the two paradigms. In contrast, NENTWICH and DEY expressed the opinion that qualitative research in the social sciences should not be measured against quite different criteria from quantitative research on principle, but did not offer any concrete alternatives. However, a variety of valid criteria for qualitative research do exist. Still, the questions as to why qualitative research needs a

quantitative paradigm to develop identity and why the difference and separation needs to be so heavily emphasized remain unanswered. [30]

By searching for an identity, which, of course, will undergo constant change, qualitative research must free itself from two major limitations that come from within and are completely independent of any other paradigm. Both have to do with generalization as well as all other topics related to methods. First, when practicing qualitative research one should not be anxious or fearful to use concepts, methods, and strategies that were originally rooted in the quantitative domain as long as they are appropriate for qualitative goals. Second, one should drop all concepts, methods, and strategies that are deeply rooted in the qualitative domain where they are not appropriate for the qualitative goals of interest. This requires considerable courage, discipline and self-awareness. In psychotherapy, the term *disrespectfulness* is used by CECCHIN, LANE and RAY (2005). They do not use it with a negative connotation. Rather, with this term they honor the human potential to perceive different angles, to act accordingly, and to realize goals in unexpected and unconventional ways. The authors try to demonstrate their position by various dead ends from psychotherapy where a solution was only possible after letting go of certain but persistent world views, routines, subjective theories, and habits. It is necessary to overcome our main routines if they are not helpful. In this sense we have to ask the serious question as to whether generalization is really necessary to answer a research question. Or—to put it in much more positive terms—what are the actual indicators for a concept like generalization? [31]

NENTWICH and DEY draw on phenomena from the feminist movement, some of whose new paradigms were designed as alternatives to male ideologies. If we follow this idea through, we see that within the feminist debate it also remains an open question as to whether the perspective of difference can actually help to abolish the power gap or whether emphasizing difference does not rather actively re-establish different forms of power phenomena or even establish a category that fits exactly into the old power constellations. Here, as so often happens, an unsolvable contradiction arises and the question is which productive means of implementation do not continue or re-constitute the all-pervasive structures of power and knowledge in diverse ways, but counteract them. We should be also aware that such distinctions are not the result of a goal-oriented activity based on rational choice and free will, but rather a result of socialization, personal preferences, emotional states and many more influences, some of which we are not aware of. Contradictions and diversities can be investigated by their impact on power and social interaction and resulting research strategies and also how these terms are used in political and social encounters. To repeat one argument from above, diversities and paradoxes are always a rich source for personal and collective development. [32]

The conference focused on different ways of viewing the generalizability and applicability of the insights gained by qualitative research across different situations and areas of research; thus, allowing the development of a perspective that does not automatically measure the quality of qualitative social research

against criteria set by quantitative research. In this view, the phenomenon of generalization can be accorded its own development within the frameworks of different epistemologies. Each of these different epistemologies has something to offer to each of the others, which could open up new creative pathways. However, to date there have been no satisfactorily developed proposals for completely independent criteria for forms of generalization for qualitative research that are subject to a different kind of epistemology. It must be remarked that probability theory and its possibilities for quantifying qualitative information by means of precise mathematical statements was not even mentioned at the conference and it is rarely mentioned in qualitative research. [33]

It is therefore necessary to clarify in each case which forms of generalization are derivable, and when, instead of using quantitative methods unthinkingly or viewing qualitative research as a supplement to be added to quantitative designs by way of a preliminary or afterthought. As dichotomous as the research community is, there are already a wide range of transitions between the two forms of research that allow individual researchers to position themselves where they wish. However, it seems that most discussions (on design, methods of analysis, and generalization) lead back to the fundamental theme of *quality* and its valid indicators. [34]

This by no means solves the issue of the epistemological and pragmatic criteria of qualitative research in psychology. Yet, if different modes of approach are developed this could help not only to expand the range of possible options open to the researcher for generating knowledge, but also specifically to stimulate a new search for ways of defining the quality of qualitative social research and for pathways that are different from those of quantitative approaches, without widening the gap between the two even further. This could, in turn, lead to proposals and contributions to the discussion on generalization as an issue of qualitative psychology, and also on quality criteria in this field in general. At this point, we have not even mentioned systemic thinking, system theory, synergetic or chaotic views on the problem, all of which can be described as being non-linear, unexpected and different. This could, in turn, open up a totally different line of argumentation centered on the relationship between qualitative and quantitative, which could be quite vociferous. [35]

## Appendix A: A Small Selection of Readings that Reflect on Generalization

- Baskerville, Richard (1996). Deferring generalizability: Four classes of generalization in social enquiry. *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems*, 8(2), 5-28.
- Colorado State University (Ed.) (1993-2006). *Overview: Generalizability and transferability* (with bibliographic notes). Available at: <http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/gentrans/> [Date of Access: 05 22, 2006].
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- Kelle, Udo & Kluge, Susann (1999). *Vom Einzelfall zum Typus. Fallvergleich und Fallkontrastierung in der qualitativen Sozialforschung* [From single case to typology. Comparison of cases and contrasting cases in qualitative social research]. Opladen: Leske + Budrich.
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- Schwandt, Thomas A. (1996). Farewell to criteriology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 2(1), 58-72.
- Smaling, Adri (2003). Inductive, analogical, and communicative generalization. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(1). Art. 5. Available at: [http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/2\\_1/html/smaling.html](http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/2_1/html/smaling.html) [Date of Access: 05 22, 2006].

## Appendix B: Conference Timetable

### Friday, Oct. 21, 2005

until 18:00	Arrival
18:00-19:15	Dinner
19:30-20:00	Plenum: Introduction of participants and their projects
20:00-22:00	Plenum: Dissertation counseling by Günter L. Huber, Mechthild Kiegelmann, and Philipp Mayring

### Saturday, Oct. 22, 2005

08:30-09:00	Welcome and opening
09:15-10:00	Plenum: Kiegelmann, Mechthild: <i>Development and future of the Center of Qualitative Psychology</i>
10:00-10:30	Coffee break
10:30-12:00	<b>Session 1</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayring, Philipp: <i>On generalization of single cases</i></li> <li>• Huber, Günter L.: <i>Generalizing by formation of qualitative types</i></li> <li>• Nentwich, Julia &amp; Dey, Pascal: <i>Generalization and beyond: What qualitative research do we want?</i></li> </ul>
12:00-12:30	Open discussion
12:30-14:30	Lunch / Break
14:30-16:30	<b>Session 2</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schmitt, Rudolf: <i>Possibilities of generalization in the systematic analysis of metaphors</i></li> <li>• Lehmann-Grube, Sabine: <i>Generalizations on Subjective Theories</i></li> </ul>
14:30-16:30	<b>Session 3</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gürtler, Leo: <i>Resilience factors derived from single case analyses and their potential to identify general resilience mechanisms</i></li> <li>• Brunner, Eva: <i>Adolescent heterosexual risk taking and its determinants: A study using Mixed Methods</i></li> </ul>
14:30-16:30	<b>Session 4</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domínguez, Concepción Garrido &amp; Medina, Antonio: <i>Integrated methodology: From self-observation to discussion groups to design intercultural educational materials and teacher training</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feliz, Tiberio &amp; Lorenzo, Carmen Ricoy: <i>From the feedback about the resources to the improvement of the curricular design of the practical training as a generalization process</i></li> <li>• Lorenzo, Carmen Ricoy &amp; Feliz, Tiberio: <i>The professional competences of the education in the technological resources</i></li> </ul>
16:30-17:00	Coffee Break
17:00-18:30	<b>Session 5</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markner, Julia &amp; Gahleitner, Silke: <i>Youth welfare services and problems of borderline personality disorder: conceptual suggestions from the perspective of the client—a single-case analysis</i></li> <li>• Herfort, Inge: <i>Inter-cultural competencies for transnational co-operation between middle-European small and medium enterprises (Austria, Hungary)</i></li> </ul>
17:00-18:30	<b>Session 6</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bischkopf, Jeannette: <i>The use of autobiography in qualitative research: Two examples</i></li> </ul>
18:30	Dinner
20:00-22:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dissertation counseling (2)</i></li> <li>• Social networking (open end)</li> </ul>

### Sunday, Oct. 23, 2005

08:30-10:00	Plenum
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future formal organization of the CQP</li> <li>• Cooperation of CQP and EARLI's SIG #17 meeting 2006</li> <li>• Joint research projects: Topics and funding</li> <li>• Joint activities at conferences</li> </ul>
10:00-10:30	Coffee break
10:30-12:30	Final Plenum
12:30	Lunch and Departure

## Appendix C: Short Versions of the Abstracts

- Kiegelmann, Mechthild: *Development and future of the Center of Qualitative Psychology*

Seven years ago the idea of creating a network for those who engage in qualitative psychology grew into specific plans and eventually into the founding of the Center for Qualitative Psychology. At the sixth workshop of the Center, we will have the opportunity to strengthen the Center by creating a new organizational structure, to review the past developments and to create a vision for the future.

### Session 1

- Mayring, Philipp: *On generalization of single cases*

Single case analysis seems to be the most important design in qualitative oriented research, because a case study can answer different research questions and allows one to attain different aims like exploration, description, and causality. But at the end of the study, the problem of generalization of the results is always present.

The lecture tries to give an overview of different possibilities of generalization in single case designs. These are falsification of hypotheses, building descriptive catalogues or to look at the context. Results should be generalizable in dependence on the similar contexts. Further necessities are a theory based strategy for sampling and the contrast with rare, extreme, and unusual cases.

- Huber, Günter L.: *Generalizing by formation of qualitative types*

A fundamental question in qualitative studies is how to analyze data to maintain an openness for particular aspects of the phenomena under study which were not expected in advance or can be deduced from theory. A qualitative inquiry should result in a coherent list of findings. Neither deductive nor inductive approaches or combinations of both fulfill these conflicting expectations. Abductive reasoning was discussed recently as a solution, which seemed to promise the formation of types from single case data. However, critiques of this application of abduction demands alternative solutions. The lecture will discuss the problem and illustrate "logical minimization," based on simple Boolean algebra, by means of empirical data as an alternative to generate qualitative types.

- Nentwich, Julia & Dey, Pascal: *Generalization and beyond: What qualitative research do we want?*

The aim of this session is to challenge the claim of generalization from a social constructionist point of view. Here, knowledge is nothing objectively given, but subjectively constructed in a specific context. Therefore, it is no longer generalization researchers should strive for but context sensitivity. Discussing alternative notions of scientific knowledge will give some food for thought about new research criteria for

qualitative research. Finally, the authors turn the topic of the workshop around asking, what kind of research and science would qualitative (psychology) community construct if qualitative research would stop worshipping the claim of generalization?

## Session 2

- Schmitt, Rudolf: *Possibilities of generalization in the systematic metaphor analysis*

Public opinion in the scientific community assesses the interpretation of metaphors (SCHMITT, 2000) in interviews and other documents partially rightly, that these interpretations depend strongly on the subjective influences of the interpreter and the poetic fortune of the interviewed subjects. Generalized interpretation is rather possible if several prerequisites are given (e.g. everyday metaphors are taken into account more strongly than poetic pictures in the analysis). These prerequisites seem to be complied with in systematic metaphor analysis, a derivative of cognitive linguistics (LAKOFF & JOHNSON, 1980). The lecture represents central assumptions of cognitive linguistics, sketches the action of systematic metaphor-analysis and introduces a typical metaphoric pattern of social-integrated alcohol-consumption.

Schmitt, Rudolf (2000) Notes towards the analysis of metaphor. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum Qualitative Social Research* [Online Journal], 1(1), Art. 20. Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/1-00/1-00schmitt-e.htm> [Dates of Access: 04 16, 2005].

Lakoff, George & Johnson, Mark (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Lehmann-Grube, Sabine: *Generalizations on Subjective Theories*

The Research Program Subjective Theories (RPST, GROEBEN & SCHEELE, 2000) proposes different forms of aggregation for the generalization of individual subjective theories, mostly based on content analysis and numerical aggregation. This form of generalization faces several problems concerning the question of how to take into account the often complex argumentative structures of individual cases and how to represent a valid inter-individual superstructure. LAUCKEN's (1982, 1989) differentiation of trans-subjectively agreed on knowledge offers a promising approach to abstract from individual cases towards more general knowledge structures. Corresponding to the method of type-formation, LAUCKEN reasons that induction needs to be verified by external sources. Empirical data from subjective theories of teachers will be used to demonstrate the procedure and the benefits of its use.

Laucken, Uwe (1982). Aspekte der Auffassung und Untersuchung von Umgangswissen [Aspects of the conception and analysis of common sense knowledge]. *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Psychologie und ihre Anwendungen* [Swiss Journal Of Psychology And Its Applications], 41(2), 87-113.

Laucken, Uwe (1989). *Denkformen der Psychologie* [Forms of thinking in psychology]. Bern: Hans Huber.

### Session 3

- Gürtler, Leo: *Resilience factors derived from single case analyses and their potential to identify general resilience mechanisms*

Resilience factors and mechanisms of recovery from drug addiction appear to be of little to politicians. However, methadone, heroin, and other pharmacologically-based programs receive financial and political support to a greater extent, although these methods are not better or cheaper than abstinence-oriented programs. Therefore, it is important to find action processes that support ex-addicts to stay clean from hard drugs, to understand individual addiction habits, and to apply those findings on whole (sub) populations. First results of a single case study (n=5 à 3 catamnestic interviews) will be presented. The data will be analyzed by means of sequential analyses of objective hermeneutics. Concluding remarks will supply arguments supporting the assertion that the findings are not limited to the small number of cases.

- Brunner, Eva: *Adolescent heterosexual risk taking and its determinants: A study using mixed methods*

The study examines adolescent heterosexual risk taking behavior and its determinants by use of a mixed methods design. Existing Austrian surveys that analyze sexual risk taking have been reviewed and reanalyzed. In a second step, expert interviews have been conducted to highlight the preventive landscape in Austria and to discern epidemiological facts. The analyzed results will be sent to the interviewed experts to confirm the interpretations. Another investigation examines perceived benefits and costs associated with condom use among adolescents. A group of 175 adolescents were asked for their opinions for and against condom use. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively to reveal subgroup differences. The results represent the basis for the construction of a comprehensive questionnaire exploring adolescent sexuality and sexual risk taking.

### Session 4

- Domínguez, M. Concepción & Medina Rivilla, Antonio: *Integrated methodology: From self-observation to discussion groups to design intercultural educational materials and teacher training*

The project was carried out with the support of about 20 teachers and researchers. As a base act an innovative model of teacher training as well as the design and development of transformable educational materials. The teacher training model is linked to the integrated design of educational means, to intercultural complexity and reflection about the methods and techniques more suitable for showing the adaptation of these training methods to the innovative

design of materials. On the methodological part, self-observation, observation groups, debate groups, analysis of materials, and activities of research were chosen for investigation. The analyses show that self-observation of the design of the material and the collaborative work among teachers are essential for their formation and the transformation of inter-cultural communities. This method has been improved considerably by the use of debate groups and document analysis.

- Feliz, Tiberio & Lorenzo, Carmen Ricoy: *From the feedback about the resources to the improvement of the curricular design of the practical training as a generalization process*

This article analyzes the process of curricular improvement starting from specific data and information collected by the requested or occasional feedback. We focus on the process of improvement of the resources used in the practical training of the social educators in Distance Education. We state that this process of improvement is based essentially on qualitative strategies of generalization, starting from concrete information and modifying the general design.

- Lorenzo, Carmen Ricoy & Feliz, Tiberio: *The professional competences of training in technological resources*

This session analyses the sources to professional design competencies. It is suggested that this process is not a simple description of the profession, task, or workplace but rather integrates the improvement processes as well as the foregone development guidelines. The competencies of the educators in technological resources are used to analyze the process of general definition of a profession beginning with concrete data and perspectives. This process outlines a strategy of qualitative generalization for a general definition of the professions.

## **Session 5**

- Markner, Julia & Gahleitner, Silke: *Youth welfare services and problems of borderline personality disorder: Conceptual suggestions from the perspective of the client—a single-case analysis*

Until today there have been uncertainties concerning how to deal with patients who show symptoms of borderline personality disorder. This investigation of the development of treatment concepts for borderline clients in therapeutic youth residential groups is based on the literature on care for youths with emotional instability. Criteria for successful treatment are developed using clients' statements in problem-centered interviews analyzed using content analysis. In the evaluation section of the study the subjective perspective of the client is presented, the following discussion explores the commonalities and differences between the results and existing research. Two decisive areas of concentration are developed for concrete application in the inpatient children and youth programs. Although taken from one case, the data offer a rich spectrum of material.

- *Inge Herfort, Andreas Weiss & Martin Mühlberger: Inter-cultural competencies for transnational co-operation between middle-European small and medium enterprises (Austria, Hungary)*

Data from interviews done in the context of co-operation between small and medium enterprises in Austria and Hungary are analyzed by content analysis. The goal of the study is to contribute to the definition of inter-cultural competence profiles for the establishment, founding, and implementation of co-operation. This should act as a starting point for multiple advices on the development of competences. Additionally, the results are also useful to make statements in the broader spectrum covering business and co-operation between European nations. Several principles will be demonstrated to ensure the generalizability of the new insights (e.g. maximal variation of cases on relevant dimensional characteristics, permanent comparison of cases, and linking the empirical results to theory).

## Session 6

- Bischof, Jeannette: *The use of autobiography in qualitative research: Two examples*

In this lecture, using autobiography at different stages of the research process and as the actual material for analysis is addressed. Autobiography as representation of social realities can guide research interests and provide the researcher with a greater understanding of the field and the phenomena. An example from trauma recovery is presented: ten autobiographies of former political prisoners of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) were read as a common ground for a subsequent interview with the authors to help establish the relationship between the researcher and the research participants. Autobiography can be used as a way to approach the field, formulating research questions and establishing research relationships. Autobiographies can also be the actual research material. An example from coping with depression will be discussed that also shows the requirement to have contact to the authors.

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