

Cross-border Identities – a narrative approach to migration experiences

Central European University, July 22 – August 2, 2002

Course Directors: Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda

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Course Syllabus

as of 29 April 2002

WEEK 1, July 22 - 28

July 22, Monday

9.30 – 10.30 Introduction of Participants

10.30 – 11.00 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: Overview over the course.

Explaining the course content, highlighting its structure and intention.

Clarifying organisational questions and information.

11.00 – 11.10 break

11.10 – 12.50 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda

Introductory discussion I: What is identity?

Small group discussion (max. 6 participants) based on a short extract around identity issues from an interview which is analysed later on, aiming at activating everybody's knowledge, curiosity and participation.

12.50 – 14.00 LUNCH

14:00 – 15:30 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda

Introductory discussion II: How do we get another person known?

Guided role plays in two groups focussing on listening and re-telling what another person has said about an experience from her/himself. The exercise aims at letting the participants better know each other, and as a first introduction to the interview training following next day. The question of relations between 'Narration' and 'Experience'/'Reality' can be touched in a pre-theoretical way.

15.30 – 16.00 break

16:00 – 17:00 library tour

17.00 – 19.00 time for reading and preparing texts from the reader for next day's discussions.

Reading assignment: refreshing text no 1 – 3 from the reader distributed in advance

19:00 – 22:00 reception

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July 23, Tuesday

9.30 – 10.30 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda

The concept of biography and narrative identity

In a one hour lecture with a short break in between the social construction of biographies is highlighted. Different concepts of identity are presented and discussed focusing on the question how the integration of social and personal change, different and shifting belongings and relations to 'others' is conceptualised in the different approaches.

Handout and overhead.

Textbasis: Text 1-3 from the reader

10.30 – 10.40 break

10.40 – 11.50 Participants discussion on the presented concepts and on the text 1-3 from the course-reader in small groups (max. 6 persons), aiming at developing conceptual questions on the relation between biography and identity.

11.50 – 12.00 break

12.00 – 12.50 Computer Lab Tour (CEU)

12.50 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 14.50 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda

Introduction into the techniques of narrative interviewing

Lecture about the principles (open conception, eliciting narratives, giving space for 'gestalt'-processes) and the techniques (the structure of the interview in three parts, the form of asking, active listening) of narrative interviewing.

Distribution of a detailed handout. It entails all relevant elements of the method in a structured overview, helping to keep orientation during the following part of practising every element separately.

Textbasis: Text no 4 – 6 from the reader

14.50 – 15.00 break

15.00 – 16.50 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: Interview training I.

Practice of the technique of narrative questioning.

In two subgroups the specific technique of eliciting narratives via a specific way of asking (avoiding 'why', 'when', 'what'-questions which address descriptions and argumentations) is practised in role plays.

16.50 – 17.00 break

17.00 – 19.30 Internet 1 (CEU)

Reading assignment of the day: refreshing text no 4 - 6 from the reader distributed in advance

July 24, Wednesday

9.30 – 10.00 Questions from the day before

10.00 – 10.40 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda

Interview training II. The initial question

Discussion of the principles and consequences of the initial question, which is framing the narrative thematically as well as in terms of the time period which is asked to be narrated.

Handout with different possibilities of formulating initial questions.

10.40 – 10.50 break

10.40 – 11.10 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda

Interview training III: Active listening

Presentation and discussion of the techniques of active listening (Thomas Gordon): non-verbal 'active listening' and verbal paraphrasing, aiming at supporting streams of narration and avoiding 'blockages'.

Handout about typical 'barricades' in communication.

11.10 – 12.50 Practice of the techniques of active listening in trios (= small group of three persons) in which the role of the 'story teller', the 'active listener' and the 'observer' are carried out by every participant. Afterwards discussion of the experiences in two guided subgroups.

12.50 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 15.50 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: Interview training IV

Guided role play of a realistic interview situation in two subgroups using all trained elements.

15.50 – 17.00 time for individual work (e.g. reading in the library, or preparation of an interview, etc.)

Reading assignment of the day: refreshing text no 7 - 10 from the reader distributed in advance

17.00 – 19.30 Internet 2 (CEU)

alternatively: time for conducting an interview

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July 25, Thursday

9.30 – 11.00 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: Introduction into the hermeneutic case reconstruction based on narrative life-story interviews

Presentation of the principles (sequentiality and abduction) and procedures of case reconstruction (analysis of biographical data, thematic field analysis, reconstruction of the case history, micro analysis, comparison of the life history and the life story) with discussion.

Distribution of a detailed hand out. It entails all relevant elements of the procedures of analysis in a structured overview, helping to keep orientation during the following part of practising every element separately.

Textbasis: Text no 7 – 10 from the reader

11:00 – 11.20 break

11.20 – 12.50 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: Biographical data analysis of an interview with a migrant

Building and testing of hypothesis concerning the generational, time and family contexts of the life of one interviewee as well as on his action strategies, and turning points.

Work in trios. The results are gathered in the whole group.

12.50 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 15.30 Teaching Methods (CEU)

15.30 – 15.40 break

15.40 – 16.20 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: The Sequentiality of life narratives

Presentation and discussion of formal (linguistic) elements which structure a (life) narrative in a sequential order. Exemplary demonstration how the 'sequentialisation' of an interview can be extracted based on the introduced formal and linguistic categories like turn taking, theme shifting and shifts between narration, description and argumentation.

Work in the whole group.

16.20 – 16.30 break

16.30 – 19.00 Teaching Methods Workshop (CEU)

alternatively: time for conducting an interview

July 26, Friday

9.30 – 11.00 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: Thematic field analysis

Based on its 'sequentialisation', the initial narrative of an interview is analysed by building and testing hypothesis concerning the thematic, interactive and linguistic structure of the told story. The question is to be answered, in what way and with which (manifest and latent) intention the interviewee is structuring the story from a present time perspective and in the interactional context of the interview.

Work in two subgroups.

11.00 – 11.10 break

11.10 – 11.40 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: Reconstruction of the case history

In this step of analysis the past perspective of relevant experiences is explored by analysing text passages relating to a specific event which are extracted from the whole interview. The question is to be answered here, in what way an interviewee has experienced an incident, event or constellation in the past, and how this experience might have changed until the present.

Lecture on the procedure of this step and demonstration of an example.

Work in the whole group.

11.40 – 12.50 Roswitha Breckner and Júlia Vajda: Concluding discussion on the interrelation between life history and life story of the same interview

Practise based conclusion of all steps of analysis and building or summarising a so-called 'case hypothesis'. The question should be answered here, what relation between the sequence of lived through experiences (the life history) and their presentation and structuration in a present life story can be detected in this case.

Work in two guided subgroups.

12.50 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 15.00 Roswitha Breckner: Picture analysis

Lecture on principles and procedures of picture analysis. The participants should get an insight in basic theoretical questions of picture analysis (as the relation between 'picture' and 'text', 'picture' and 'reality', 'picture' and their interactional contexts), in which the methodological principles of a specific method of foto-analysis are based. These are shortly presented and demonstrated with an example.

Handout and overhead.

15.00 – 18.00 Field trip

evening hours

In the field: practising narrative interviews with migrants. Individual interviews with pre-selected interviewees in Budapest

'Written' assignment of the first week:

- a conducted interview fixed on tape.
- Transcription of the first five pages (if possible, the whole initial narrative)
- Extraction of biographical data

WEEK 2, July 29 – August 2

July 29, Monday

9.30 – 11.00 Júlia Vajda and Roswitha Breckner

Small group consultations on the conducted interviews

11.00 – 11.10 break

11.10 – 11.40 Introduction of the new instructors

11.40 – 11.50 break

11.50 – 12.50 Martin Peterson: Identity concepts in literature I

Lecture with discussion about the emergence of identity concepts in drama in the context of cross-border experiences since Ibsen until World War II.

12.50 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 14.50 Martin Peterson: Identity concepts in literature II

Lecture about the emergence of identity concepts in literature in the context of cross-border experiences after World War II.

14.50 – 15.00 break

15.00 – 16.30 Martin Peterson: Discussion with participants of the texts 11 - 13 from the course reader and personal consultation.

Reading assignment of the day: refreshing text no 11 – 13 from the reader distributed in advance

July 30, Tuesday

9.30 – 11.00 Lena Inowlocki: Experiences of 'Displaced Persons' and Jewish Traditionality in more generational families in Germany

Lecture on general aspects of the concept of 'Doing "Being Jewish" and the Constitution of "Normality" in Families of Jewish Displaced Persons'.

Presentation and discussion of results from own case examples.

Work in the whole group.

11.00 – 11.20 break

11.00 – 12.50 Lena Inowlocki: Conducting analysis of cases

Work on the characteristics of the migration experience of Displaced Persons after World War II and their impact on biographies and family histories using material prepared by participants (especially their conducted interviews from the previous week)

Work in small groups

12.50 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 15.30 Lena Inowlocki: Conducting analysis of cases

Work in small groups, aiming at gaining hypothesis on the biographical meaning of Jewishness, Migration and Traditionality.

Summarising the results in the whole group.

15.30 – 15.50 break

15.50 – 16.50 Lena Inowlocki: time for personal consultation

Reading assignment of the day: refreshing text no 14 – 15 from the reader distributed in advance, reading text no 19 - 21

July 31, Wednesday

9.30 – 10.20 Mirjana Morokvasic - Müller: Forced migration and mixed marriages in former Yugoslavia

Lecture with participant discussion, focusing on the gendered impact of the forced migration during the war in Yugoslavia.

10.20 – 10.30 break

10.30 – 12.50 Discussion of case examples of forced migration

Work in small groups on the characteristics of forced migration and its gendered impact on the histories of those concerned, based on material generated from the participants in the first week.

12.50 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 14.50 Mirjana Morokvasic-Müller: Transnationality – new patterns and concepts in migration and its research

Lecture with participant discussion. The currently most prominent concept in migration research is critically examined and discussed, aiming at opening the discussion for the great variety of migration processes.

14.50 – 15.00 break

15.00 – 16.00 time for personal consultations with Júlia Vajda, Roswitha Breckner, and eventually also Mirjana Morokvasic-Müller

16.00 - time for individual or small group work on case analysis and/or reading in the library

Reading assignment of the day: reading text no 22 - 23

August 1, Thursday

9.30 – 10.20 Júlia Vajda: Jewish Migration from Budapest to Vienna in the 1990ies

Lecture on general characteristics of Jewish migration from Hungary after 1989 with case examples.

10.20 – 10.30 break

10.30 – 11.20 Roswitha Breckner: Migration from Romania to West-Germany before 1989

Lecture on the general characteristics of east-west migration during the Cold War with case examples.

Both lectures aim at enlarging the perspective and knowledge on different migration processes and their characteristics (differences between voluntary or involuntary migration; differences and commonalities in the move from an 'eastern' to a 'western' country before and after 1989, and between a Jewish and non-Jewish social and historical context; the different impact on the biographies and identities of those concerned).

11.20 – 11.30 break

11.30 – 12.50 Discussion of case examples of Jewish and East-West migration

Work in small groups on characteristics of Jewish and East-West migration before and after 1989 based on cases interviewed and prepared by participants.

12.50 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 14.50 Comparative discussion with all instructors:

Similarities and differences in biographical patterns and identity issues in the presented migration processes.

Work in the whole group.

from 14.50 Time for individual work, e.g. for the preparation of presentations the next day and the written assessment.

Reading assignment of the day: refreshing text no 16 – 18 from the reader distributed in advance, reading text no24 - 25

Written assignment of the second week: analysis of a case of migration (single or group work)

August 2, Friday

9.30- 10.20 Presentation and discussion of the results of the participants

Interview analysis, scene play, photo-collage and –analysis

10.20 – 10.30 break

10.30 – 11.20 Presentation and discussion of the results of the participants

Interview analysis, scene play, photo-collage and –analysis

11.20 – 11.30 break

11.30 – 12.50 closing session.

12.50 LUNCH

