NEW RESEARCH METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FOR DOING FIELDWORK IN ORGANIZATIONS

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METHODOLOGY OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH – THE EXAMPLE OF RESEARCH PROCEDURE, METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

**Research Procedures**
1. Fieldwork
2. Survey
3. Comparative Research

**Research Methods e.g.**
1. Biographical Method
2. Experiment
3. Case Study
4. Action Research

**Research Techniques e.g.**
1. Interview
2. Survey
3. Storytelling
4. Observation:
   - participant or non-participant
   - NVPO
   - Shadowing
RESEARCH`S METHODS AND TECHNIQUES IN ORGANIZATION – CHARACTERISTICS OF FIELDWORK:

- study human behaviours in natural conditions of their daily life
- researcher is closer to real world conditions
- researcher has a contact with respondents for a long time
- it is the best way to discover the particular information required
- data, researchers and methods triangulation
RESEARCH`S METHODS AND TECHNIQUES IN ORGANIZATION – THE EXAMPLE OF FIELDWORK

- Own research on organizational cultures, social relations and cultural differences in Polish and foreign enterprises operating in Poland
- Research conducted in 2008-2009 and 2011-2012
A RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONS – SPECIFICITY OF COMPANY

- Research conducted in a natural work environment
- In-depth knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation (including an understanding of subjective meanings and symbols)
- The possibility of using different methods and techniques – increased the accuracy of research
A RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONS – RESEARCH DIFFICULTIES:

- obtaining consent to do research
- access to data
- reluctance to speak about company
- working time of company
- type of company (e.g. production company)
- the issue of safety at work
NEW APPLICATION OF SOME METHODS – ACTION RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATION
It is essential to understanding people in a company.

Help in coping with problems as definable as respondents see them (respondents also decide on how to fix these problems, it is not only impose by the researchers).

It is not problem-solving in the sense of trying to find out what is wrong, but rather a quest for knowledge about how to improve.

Different scale of participation of respondents in the research.
The study of organizational culture by a questionnaire OCAI of Cameron and Quinn

Research is aimed at diagnosis (the image of culture) and also project of cultural change e.g. in the situation where organizational culture is inadequate to the socio – economic conditions.

The practical advantage is the project of cultural change and the construction of specific intervention techniques for cultural change.
# PART OF QUESTIONNAIRE OCAI
## (ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dominant Characteristics</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Preffered</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of personal information and features.</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>The organization is a very dynamic entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick out their necks and take risks.</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>The organization is very results-oriented. A major concern is getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement-oriented.</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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ACTION RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONS – THE EXAMPLE OF DOING ACTION RESEARCH

- Management and employees participate in the research
- Respondents determine how the company should look like in the future by negotiations
- It's easier to make changes in company when project of these changes is created by members of the company and researchers
ACTION RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONS – RESEARCH DIFFICULTIES

1. Organizational barrier, e.g. in the Polish conditions:
   a) long and costly research
   b) difficulties associated with reluctance to participate in research
   c) difficulties associated with reluctance of entrepreneurs to get involved in management of the company
   d) insufficient awareness of the impact of organizational culture on functioning of the company
ACTION RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONS – THE EXAMPLE OF DOING ACTION RESEARCH

2. Cultural barriers:
   a) doing research in the culturally different companies (foreign companies in Poland)
   b) problems with the study of values, meanings, symbols, associated with the possibility of understanding and proper interpretation of them, e.g. in foreign companies
NEW APPLICATION OF SOME METHODS – COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY IN ORGANIZATIONS
COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY IN ORGANIZATIONS

- Characteristics of collective case study:
  - to study a phenomenon, population or phenomenon factors
  - we research several cases
  - cases are selected for a better understanding of the phenomenon or making theoretical generalizations (there are not generalizations about particular population)
Research on organizational cultures of Polish (including the ex-state Polish enterprise) and foreign companies operating in Poland:

a) research conducted in 2008-2009

b) used several research techniques: unstructured interview, survey, unstructured observation and analysis of documents
FORM OF CASE STUDY – COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY – THE EXAMPLE OF DOING COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY

c) Studying several cases I improved my knowledge of organizational culture (to identify the elements of culture, including identification of similarities and differences of cultures of these companies)
IMAGES OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES OF THREE COMPANIES OPERATING IN POLAND

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<tr>
<th>Low Salary Diversity</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
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<td>Employees can oppose management</td>
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<td>Company is like an extended family</td>
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<td>Many relations are not formalized</td>
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<td>To obey formal procedures</td>
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<td>Rules can disobey</td>
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<td>Care of social relations in firm</td>
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<td>Employees involve in their job</td>
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<td>The most important values is loyalty to company</td>
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| High Salary Diversity | | | | | | | |
| Employees are afraid of opposing management | | | | | | | |
| Company is divided of many genres | | | | | | | |
| All relations in firm are formalized | | | | | | | |
| To disobey formal procedures | | | | | | | |
| To obey rules (absolutely) | | | | | | | |
| Care of carrying out employee’s responsibilities | | | | | | | |
| Employees do not involve in their job | | | | | | | |
| The most important values is interest/good of employees | | | | | | | |
NEW TECHNIQUES FOR DOING FIELDWORK IN ORGANIZATIONS
NEW TECHNIQUES FOR DOING FIELDWORK – STORYTELLING IN ORGANIZATIONS
NEW TECHNIQUES OF INTERVIEW – STORYTELLING

1. It is based on an analysis of narratives of respondents:
   a) analysis of interview – an emphasis on stories of respondents life
   b) analysis of company`s myths
Narration in the interview - the history of employee career:

"(...) After a vocational school at age of 16 I came here as a turner. I worked as a turner for 3 years. Then 3 years later I was transferred to the milling machines, where I worked for 8 years. Later I became a foreman in factory (...), and later I became manager and I was there for 4 years. Now I have been a manager for 4 years and I manage a team of 200 people" [production manager, the foreign (ex-state Polish) company]
NEW TECHNIQUES OF INTERVIEW – THE EXAMPLE OF STORYTELLING IN COMPANY

Narration in the interview - creating the corporate image:

„People constitute a company (...) In my opinion, employees are value added of company, absolutely” [production manager, the Polish company]

„This company differs in that it weathered, one of these old companies. At one time this company was bigger than now, it employed about 600 people. Do you see this office block? At one time they had plan for building one floor more” [employee, 66 years, the foreign company, ex-state Polish company]
NEW TECHNIQUES OF INTERVIEW – THE EXAMPLE OF STORYTELLING IN COMPANY

- The analysis of myths - myths of work and functioning of the company during the period of real socialism in Poland and myths of foreign investors.
NEW TECHNIQUES OF INTERVIEW –
THE EXAMPLE OF STORYTELLING IN COMPANY

- Creating corporate image – impact on perception of company by employees, rivals and potential clients
- It can be a tool of implementation of various organizational tasks such as creating an organizational culture, changing management in organizations
- It can also be a tool of recomposing the mission and vision of the company
NEW TECHNIQUES FOR DOING FIELDWORK - SHADOWING IN ORGANIZATIONS
NEW TECHNIQUES OF OBSERVATION – SHADOWING

- Constant follow the chosen respondent, e.g. to accompany the employee at work all day
- Identification of phenomenon and behaviours (they are often unconscious) or scale of these phenomenon and behaviours
- To know about the natural environment of respondents and the factors impacting on the behaviours and opinions of respondents
- It can influence on the respondent`s behaviours - he knows that is observed (this effect can be offset e.g. by time of observation)
NEW TECHNIQUES OF INTERVIEW – THE EXAMPLE OF SHADOWING IN COMPANY

- Research on Polish enterprises - observation of the employee will conduct for 7 days (the length of observation will impact on the respondent behaviours)
- The researcher enters into the role of a newly recruited employee of HR Department (scheduled for August 2011).
- As a result, we will preserve the natural (and unconscious) behaviours at work (restricted or lack of impact of the researcher)
NEW TECHNIQUES FOR DOING FIELDWORK – NON-PARTICIPANT VIDEO OBSERVATION IN ORGANIZATIONS
NEW TECHNIQUES OF OBSERVATION – NON-PARTICIPANT VIDEO OBSERVATION

- Carried out in companies with a digital camera system
- Registration natural behaviours (not declaration) of the respondents – they do not know that they participate in research (the issue of research ethics)
- Analysis of the natural behaviours (unconscious behaviours as well)
NEW TECHNIQUES OF OBSERVATION –
NON-PARTICIPANT VIDEO OBSERVATION

- The video recording is ready to analyze research material (we do not create new tools of data collection)
- We can measure such facts as: the profile of respondents (age, sex, clothing), time spent in specific areas
NEW TECHNIQUES OF OBSERVATION –
THE EXAMPLE OF NON-PARTICIPANT VIDEO OBSERVATION IN COMPANY

- The observation made in the Polish company this April
- We observed workers of production department for 5 days
- We observed: a way of fulfilling respondent`s professional duties, behaviours toward co-workers, formans and managers (including non-verbal behaviours)
CONCLUSIONS

1. Research effects – cognitive advantages:
   - to learn about human behaviours in their natural environment (reducing the impact of the researcher)
   - to know employee opinions about the functioning of the company and possibly their ideas of improving their company
CONCLUSIONS

2. Research effects – practical advantages:
   - possibility of designing changes involving the members of the company in research
   - opportunity of improving communication within the company
   - possibility of involving employees in the process of change, problem solving, improving the functioning of the company
   - possible impact on the integration of employees at various levels with the goals and mission of the company