



Faculté des sciences économiques, sociales et politiques

ESPO

SOC2135

Research logics

[15h] 2 credits

Teacher(s): Bernard Francq
Language: french
Level: 2nd cycle course

Aims

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- situate the various research logics developed by sociology by putting them in perspective in relation to a range of intelligibility schemas employed in sociology;
- re-situate the genesis of the data that sociologists choose to work on;
- differentiate, on the basis of the research topic, how much work goes into facts, attitudes and representations in constructing an objective, or studying a problem;
- have a better appreciation of the linkages to be implemented in sociological research.

Main themes

Organisation of a path aimed at drawing students' attention to three key factors of the work of a sociologist:

1. the relationship with "ancestors" (or founding fathers), with a view to understanding some of the cumulateness of know-how, and of the problems that this cumulateness raises;
2. in line with Max Weber and Norbert Elias, the need to keep one's distance from a scientific spirit shaped by the model of natural sciences to highlight entry through the mental space of the investigation;
3. the focus on at least three necessities (the construction of the objective, the morphological approach, and the central position of field work).

Content and teaching methods

Content

- Putting the "methodological holism-individualism" debate into perspective.
- The differences between four factors (i.e. the language of variables, field work, epistemological vigilance, and sociological intervention).
- The need for semantic work on the construction of the objective.

A statistical view of sociology based on the approach adopted by M. Halbwachs..

- The multi-dimensionality of the research method: problems of writing, style and topics.

Methodology

Session 1: Analysis of the terms of the "methodological holism-individualism" debate and beyond.

Sessions 2 and 3: Analysis of research logics and updating them.

Sessions 4 and 5: A comparison of the different ways of constructing an objective; analysis of Passeron's position on the notion of mental space in research.

Session 6: An analysis of the demands of the morphological approach.

Session 7: An analysis of different kinds of sociological writing (e.g. monographs, investigations and essays) and of topical representations of ways of reasoning.

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

Pre-requirements: Attendance at this course must be preceded by preparatory courses in Sociology, or equivalent (i.e. a basic grounding in sociology).

Assessment: Students will be asked, in groups of three or four, to present the texts that constitute the course back-up, to analyse them by re-situating them in their context, and to carry out critical reflection on the various logics mobilised by sociological work. The examination will involve the presentation of original (written) work on one of the aspects of the course.

Support: A syllabus divided into the seven sessions, and consisting of 24 texts.

Other credits in programs

SOC21	Première licence en sociologie	(2 credits)
SOC22	Deuxième licence en sociologie	(2 credits)