UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI | FDV Fakulteta za družbene vede

Doctoral programme The humanities and social sciences 2025/2026

Schedule of seminar sessions:
METHODOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

There will be 7 sessions, mostly on **Mondays 5 PM to 8 PM** with few exceptions in **the lecture room 21 at FDV.**

The topics and dates are presented below.

Date	Title/Naslov	Lecturer/Izvajalec
2. 3. 3h	Etnografija v digitalnem kontekstu / *Ethnography in the digital context*	Dr. Tanja Oblak Črnič
	Etnografsko raziskovanje družbenih odnosov skozi medijske prakse in vsakdan / *Ethnography of media practices and relationships in everyday life*	Dr. Tanja Oblak Črnič
4. 3.	Sprehodi skozi aplikacije: metodološki izzivi in priložnosti digitalne etnografije / *Walking through apps: methodological challenges and opportunities for digital ethnography*	Dr. Anamarija Šiša
	Frame analysis: concept and practice	Dr. Mojca Pajnik
9. 3. 3h	Udejanjanje državljanstva in solidarnosti »od spodaj navzgor«: etnografsko raziskovanje sodobnih urbanih bojev/ *Enacting citizenship and solidarity 'from below' – an ethnographic exploration of contemporary urban struggles* Večnačinske raziskave v antropologiji / *Multimodal Research in Anthropology*	Dr. Marko Ribać & Dr. Sandi Abram
10.3.	*Methods for policy analysis*	Dr. Meta Novak
	An overview of methodological challenges in youth mental health survey research	Dr. Kuhar, dr. Bolko
20. 3.	*Possitionality in Online and Offline Ethnography*	Dr. Bojana Lobe
	Basics of qualitative data analysis	Dr. Bojana Lobe
23. 3.	*Cross-national qualitative comparative analysis (Qualitative comparative analysis – QCA)*	Dr. Mitja Hafner Fink
	Cross-national quantitative comparative analysis (International social surveys)	Dr. Mitja Hafner Fink
24. 3.	*Systematics reviews*	Dr. Katja Lozar Mafreda, Dr. Gregor Čehovin
	From Traditional Probability-Based Surveys to Contemporary Online Panels: The Cost-Error Consideration and the Related Decision-Making Process	Dr. Vasja Vehovar, Dr. Gregor Čehovin, and Andreja Praček

Basic statistical analysis using SPSS (two recorded sessions in Slovenian and in English are made available as part of Introductory Statistics lecture).

1. METHODOLOGICAL SEMINAR ON ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH METODOLOŠKI SEMINAR NA TEMO ETNOGRAFSKEGA RAZISKOVANJA Prof. dr. Tanja Oblak Črnič, FDV

TITLE OF SEMINAR IN YEAR 2025/2026: From Ethnography to Digital Ethnography: Principles and usage of ethnography methods

Ethnography is a qualitative research approach, and its main purpose is to describe, interpret and understand the shared patterns, values, and beliefs of a selected group of participants within a particular social and cultural setting. It is also a highly reflexive method, primarily focused on a specific social situation. It is based on short- or long-term participant observation and additional in-depth qualitative data drawn from personal or group interviews, oral histories, shared documents, and various visual materials.
Ethnography is the study of cultural and social phenomena from the point of view of the subjects. A prominent approach in social research, ethnography involves the analysis of participants' behaviours, practices, or experiences, as well as their relationships, localities, events, and wider social worlds. The method is also used to study groups and organisations of various kinds. Its origins are in social and cultural anthropology, but it is also widely used in other social disciplines, especially sociology and communication and cultural studies. With the prominence of digital technologies and social media, a new wave of 'virtual' or 'digital ethnography' has emerged, exploring the consequences of digital media in shaping social worlds and personal behaviour.
The aim of this set of seminars is twofold:

a) To introduce this diverse and reflexive approach to qualitative research and
b) to inform students about the main assumptions, aims and methods used in ethnographic research.

The complete set of 4 seminars with narrowly focused topics, research frameworks and data set will demonstrate its potential for analyzing diverse social, political, and cultural phenomena. Finally, the seminar aims to show the relevance of ethnography for a better understanding of the recently mediatized social phenomena in a digitalised and automated global society.

WEEKLY PLAN:

LECTURER	TOPIC	READINGS
Dr. Tanja Oblak Črnič	Etnografija v digitalnem kontekstu / *Ethnography in the digital context* Etnografsko raziskovanje družbenih odnosov skozi medijske prakse in vsakdan / *Ethnography of media practices and relationships in everyday life*	Pink (2016): Ethnography in a digital world (see below) Pink (2016): Chapter Researching practices / Chapter Researching relationships (see below)
Dr. Anamarija Šiša	Sprehodi skozi aplikacije: metodološki izzivi in priložnosti digitalne etnografije/ *Walking through apps: methodological challenges and opportunities for digital ethnography*	Duguay & Gold-Apel (2023) & Light et al (2018) (see below)
Dr. Marko Ribać & Dr. Sandi Abram	Udejanjanje državljanstva in solidarnosti »od spodaj navzgor«: etnografsko raziskovanje sodobnih urbanih bojev / Enacting citizenship and solidarity *'from below' – an ethnographic exploration of contemporary urban struggles* Večnačinske raziskave v antropologiji / *Multimodal Research in Anthropology*	Gutiérrez Sanchez, I. (2021) 'Infrastructures from Below. Self-Reproduction and Common Struggle in and Beyond Athens in Crisis'(see below) Eliott & Culhane (2017): A Different Kind of Ethnography (see below).
Dr. Bojana Lobe	Pozicioniranje v online in offline etnografiji/ *Possitionality in Online and Offline Etnhography*	Fujii (2017): Building working relationships (see below)

Literature:

Duguay, Stefanie, and Hannah Gold-Apel. 2023. "Stumbling Blocks and Alternative Paths: Reconsidering the Walkthrough Method for Analyzing Apps." *Social Media + Society* 9 (1): 20563051231158822. https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051231158822
Pink, S. et al. (2016): Digital Ethnography Principles and Practice. London: Sage.
Elliott, Denielle and Culhane, Dara (Eds.) (2017). A Different Kind of Ethnography: Imaginative Practices and Creative Methodologies. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Fujii, L. A. (2017): Interviewing in Social Science Research. Chapter 2: Building working relationships. New York: Routledge.
Gutiérrez Sanchez, I. (2021) 'Infrastructures from Below. Self-Reproduction and Common Struggle in and Beyond Athens in Crisis', in Gabauer, A. et al (eds) *Care and the City. Encounters with Urban Studies*, New York: Routledge, pp 151–161.
Light, Ben, Jean Burgess, and Stefanie Duguay. 2018. "The Walkthrough Method: An Approach to the Study of Apps." *New Media & Society* 20 (3): 881–900. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816675438.

Lecturers:

Prof. Dr. Tanja Oblak Črnič, Oddelek za komunikologijo, FDV
Assist. Dr. Anamarija Šiša, Oddelek za komunikologijo, FDV
Assist. Dr. Marko Ribać, Mirovni inštitut in Oddelek za komunikologijo, FDV
Assist. Dr. Sandi Abram, Oddelek za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo, Filozofska fakulteta
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bojana Lobe, Oddelek za sociologijo, FDV

2. Frame analysis: concept and practice (Mojca Pajnik)

This lecture introduces framing and frame analysis as conceptual and methodological tools for understanding how meaning is constructed, negotiated, and contested in texts. Drawing on interdisciplinary traditions – including discourse theory, critical policy analysis, media and communication studies, and social movement research – we explore how frames shape the contours of public meaning-making. We unpack the theoretical foundations of framing as the selection and salience of particular aspects of perceived reality, emphasizing how this process promotes specific problem definitions, causal interpretations, moral evaluations, and solutions recommendations. The lecture emphasizes the practical application of frame analysis to various types of texts such as official documents, parliamentary debates, media articles, manifestos, public appeals etc. Students will be introduced to a step-by-step methodology: how to select material for analysis; how to develop a coding framework; how to answer "sensitizing questions" to define framing components; and how to identify diagnostic and prognostic framing. Through illustrative examples, students will learn how frames act as "building blocks" of discursive reality construction. By combining theoretical grounding with methodological insight, the lecture equips doctoral students to engage with frame analysis both as a critical epistemological stance and as a rigorous analytical method for analysis of texts.

References

PAJNIK, Mojca, SCHWIERTZ, Helge, DELLA PORTA, Donatella, BERNHARDT, Franz, RIBAĆ, Marko (eds). 2025. *Framing solidarities in times of multiple crises: social movements across European cities*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. Open access: https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7

PAJNIK, Mojca, RIBAĆ, Marko. 2025. Emotional solidarity: social movements' framing of migration. *Social movement studies*. 1-18, DOI: 10.1080/14742837.2025.2470240

THIELE, Daniel, PAJNIK, Mojca, SAUER, Birgit, ŠORI, Iztok. 2024. Borderless fear?: how right-wing populism aligns in affectively framing migration as a security threat in Austria and Slovenia. *Journal of language and politics* 23(2): 176–196. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.22026.thi

3. Basics of qualitative data analysis (Bojana Lobe, 2 hours)

Qualitative coding is a pivotal process in qualitative research, involving the systematic categorization of textual data to identify patterns, themes, and insights. This method enables researchers to transform raw data into meaningful segments, facilitating a deeper understanding of the studied phenomena. By employing various coding techniques such as open, axial, and selective coding, researchers can meticulously analyze and interpret complex data sets. The process often involves iterative cycles of coding. This is essential for developing robust theoretical frameworks and contributes significantly to the credibility and rigor of qualitative research. The seminar will provide the introduction into the process of qualitative coding as described above.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage. – poglavje 8
Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* Sage Publications Ltd. – poglavje 2
Coffey A. & Atkinson P. (1996): making sense of qualitative data. Sage.

4. Methods for policy analysis (Meta Novak, 2 hours)

ENG: The purpose of the seminar is to acquaint students with the rationale and process of policy analysis, different types of policy analysis, an overview of the methodological bases for different types of policy analysis, and basic methods that can be applied to a range of public policy problems. As part of the seminar, we will learn about the basics of theoretical-methodological planning of policy analysis, obtaining relevant data, synthesizing data, formulating public policy recommendations, and the importance of involving stakeholders in the research process of policy analysis. Students will also get familiar with the literature in this field, which can further guide them in their research.
Literature:
Dunn, William N. Public policy analysis : an integrated approach » 6th ed. New York ; Abingdon : Routledge, 2018 ISBN: 978-1-1387-4383-0; 978-1-1387-4384-7; 978-1-315-18122-6 COBISS.SI-ID: 5370542 - Zapis v katalogu ODKJG » E-publication: http://nukweb.nuk.uni-lj.si/login?url=https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9781315181226/public-policy-analysis-william-dunn
Patton, Carl V.; Sawicki, David S.; Clark, Jennifer J. Basic methods of policy analysis and planning » 3rd ed. Publishing: Abingdon ; New York : Routledge, 2016 ISBN: 978-1-317-35000-2 COBISS.SI-ID: 27945475 - Zapis v katalogu ODKJG » E-publication: https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/fdv-odkjg/detail.action?docID=2193616

5. An overview of methodological challenges in youth mental health survey research (Metka Kuhar in Irena Bolko, 2 hours)

The lecture provides a brief overview of both theoretical and applied tools for the implementation of survey-based research on youth mental health in the social sciences. The first part of the lecture presents the research design and practical challenges of collecting nationally representative data on youth mental health and well-being, including the selection and recruitment of participants, measurement of sensitive topics such as adverse and protective childhood experiences, and approaches to handling non-response. The second part presents the key analytical approaches used in the project, including descriptive analyses, regression models, mediation models, and structural equation modeling, with a focus on how to align methodological decisions with research questions and limitations in real-world policy contexts. Practical guidelines for the design, implementation, and analysis of survey data on youth mental health will be offered.Reference:
KUHAR, Metka, ŠRAJ LEBAR, Tanja, ŠEMROV, Ana, BOLKO, Irena. *Duševno zdravje mladih v Sloveniji v kontekstu globalnih kriz : stanje, dejavniki tveganja in varovalni dejavniki : zaključno poročilo*. Ljubljana: [s. n.], 2025. 156 str., tabele. https://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/obremenitve/projektdokument.aspx?idp=7647&id=318. [COBISS.SI-ID 245367811]

6. Cross-national qualitative comparative analysis (Qualitative comparative analysis – QCA) (Lecturer: Hafner Fink, 2 hours)

In international comparative research, where countries serve as units of analysis, researchers often encounter the problem of small N, which complicates, if not prevents, quantitative analyses. When explaining the differences between countries regarding the observed phenomenon, the complexity of national contexts must be taken into account - the presence or specific (same) intensity of the phenomenon can, therefore, result from different combinations of different conditions. To address this problem, Charles Ragin pioneered an approach known generically as Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA). It is an approach that puts cases in the foreground (in international studies, this typically refer to countries), while also discussing causality and variables. Here, we will examine some fundamental principles of QCA and illustrate them with an example.

Literature

Ragin, C.C. (2014, 1987). The comparative method: moving beyond qualitative and quantitative strategies. University of California Press.

Rihoux, B. and Ragin, C.C. (eds.). 2009: Configurational comparative methods: qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) and related techniques. Los Angeles: Sage.

Rihoux, B. and Lobe, B. (2009): The Case for Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA): Adding Leverage for Thick Cross-Case Comparison. In Byrne & Ragin (eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Case-Based Methods (pp: .222- 242). London (etc.): SAGE.

7. Cross-national quantitative comparative analysis (International social surveys) (Lecturer: Mitja Hafner Fink, 2 hours)

Cross-national quantitative comparative analysis
(International social surveys)

Social survey data are frequently used for analysis in international comparisons. In this pursuit, social scientists face a series of challenges, all connected by a common problem: the need for data collected through international surveys to be of sufficient quality and reliability. This is crucial for enabling credible comparisons and conclusions of the analyses. Researchers, therefore, strive to ensure the equivalence and, thus, comparability of data collected through social surveys in different cultural settings. The next challenge is how to incorporate the characteristics of these cultural environments (settings), which represent complex configurations of various factors, into the quantitative analysis of social survey data. In the lecture, we will provide brief information about some main international social survey programs (e.g. ESS and ISSP) and how they attempt to ensure the comparability (equivalence) of the collected data. We will also discuss approaches for quantitative analysis in international comparisons, using examples of simple multilevel analyses of international social survey data.

Literature

Hafner-Fink, M., Kurdija, S., and Uhan, S. (2017): Social Research: From Paradigmatic Divide to Pragmatic Eclecticism. (Chapter 4: Selected problems of international social survey research: The case of the ISSP, pp: 85-106). Wien: edition Echoraum.
(Online edition: https://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/docs/default-source/zalozba/hafner-kurdija-uhan-socialresearch-from-paradigmatic-web-21jul2022.pdf?sfvrsn=2)

Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik, J.H.P., Harkness, J.A. (Eds.) (2005): *Methodological Aspects in Cross-National Research*. Mannheim: ZUMA.
https://www.gesis.org/fileadmin/upload/forschung/publikationen/zeitschriften/zuma_nachrichten_spezial/znspezial11.pdf

Jowell, R., Roberts, C., Fitzgerald, R., and Gillian, E. (Eds.) (2007): Measuring Attitudes Cross-Nationally: Lessons From the European Social Survey. London: SAGE Publications.

Schmidt-Catran, A.W., Fairbrother, M. & Andreß, HJ. (2019): Multilevel Models for the Analysis of Comparative Survey Data: Common Problems and Some Solutions. Köln Z Soziol 71 (Suppl 1), 99–128 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-019-00607-9

8. Research synthesis using systematic reviews (Lecturers: Lozar Manfreda, Čehovin, 2 hours)

The lecture will address systematic literature review as a method of research synthesis, a widely applied approach in doctoral research. Research synthesis denotes structured methods for integrating findings from multiple existing studies or sources in a systematic and transparent manner. The aim is to obtain a comprehensive understanding of a particular topic or research question, considering both supporting and opposing evidence. We will briefly present different approaches to research synthesis and then focus on systematic reviews, defined as a critical appraisal and synthesis of all relevant studies on a specific topic, conducted via a protocol-driven, replicable process of study identification, selection, and appraisal. We will present a procedure that emphasizes minimizing of bias and ensuring replicability, both necessary for assessing the reliability of the evidence base. Finally, an example of a systematic review that includes quantitative synthesis (meta-analysis) will be presented. Here, we will focus on how to define a research problem, how to approach the literature search, and how to report search methods and results (e.g., PRISMA).

Sources:

Boland, A., Cherry, G., & Dickson, R. (2013). Doing a systematic review: A student's guide. SAGE.
Booth, A. (2016) EVIDENT Guidance for Reviewing the Evidence: a compendium of methodological literature and websites DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.1.1562.9842
Böger, B., in drugi (2021). Systematic review with meta-analysis of the accuracy of diagnostic tests for COVID-19. American Journal of Infection Control, 49(1), strani 21-29. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajic.2020.07.011
Card, Noel. A. (2012). *Applied meta-analysis for social science research*. Guilford Press.
Cooper, H. (2017). *Research Synthesis and Meta-Analysis: A Step-by-Step Approach* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Čehovin, G. (2019). The contribution of meta-analysis to knowledge on survey research operations on nonresponse. Doktorska disertacija. Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Ljubljana. https://repozitorij.uni-lj.si/Dokument.php?id=176818&lang=slv

Glass, G. V. (1976). Primary, secondary, and meta-analysis of research. Educational Researcher, 5(10), 3–8. https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1174772.pdf

9. From Traditional Probability-Based Surveys to Contemporary Online Panels: The Cost-Error Consideration and the Related Decision-Making Process (Vasja Vehovar, Gregor Čehovin, and Andreja Praček, 2 hours)

Due to the escalating costs of traditional probability-based surveys (e.g., SJM, SURS), these are increasingly being supplanted by online panels, both probability-based (e.g., 1KA panel) and non-probability-based (e.g., Valicon, Mediana). Researchers, when selecting an appropriate survey research option, must balance costs, quality, and time constraints, which poses a significant challenge requiring sufficient expertise and awareness.

- First hour: The introduction will outline changes in the field of survey research (e.g., the decline of probability sampling, acceptance of low response rates, pressure to minimise costs, the emergence of online panels, and the growing role of artificial intelligence). This will be followed by a discussion on empirical studies on bias in survey estimates within probability and non-probability online panels (compared to traditional surveys), as well as on

factors influencing such bias. The lecture will also elaborate on costs, which unfortunately increase with the rising levels of required data quality.

- Second houre: This will explore in greater detail the decision-making process for selecting an appropriate survey option. The related cognitive process is undertaken by the researcher or the research commissioner. An integrated indicator of cost-effectiveness, i.e., costs per unit of accuracy (CUA), will be presented, enabling the comparison of different survey research options, optimisation of invitation strategies, and determination of the appropriate number of reminders. Other key factors, besides costs and errors, which impact the decision about research design options, will also be discussed.

Literature:

- Callegaro, M., Baker, R. P., Bethlehem, J., Göritz, A. S., Krosnick, J. A., & Lavrakas, P. J. (Eds.). (2014). *Online Panel Research: A Data Quality Perspective*. Wiley.
- Callegaro, M., Lozar Manfreda, K., & Vehovar, V. (2015). *Web Survey Methodology*. SAGE Publications. https://study.sagepub.com/web-survey-methodology
- Cornesse, C., Blom, A. G., Dutwin, D., Krosnick, J. A., De Leeuw, E. D., Legleye, S., Pasek, J., Pennay, D., Phillips, B., Sakshaug, J. W., Struminskaya, B., & Wenz, A. (2020). A review of conceptual approaches and empirical evidence on probability and nonprobability sample survey research. *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology*, *8*(1), 4–36. https://doi.org/10.1093/jssam/smz041
- Kocar, S., & Kaczmirek, L. (2024). A meta-analysis of worldwide recruitment rates in 23 probability-based online panels, between 2007 and 2019. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *27*(5), 589–604. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2023.2242202