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Answer3a

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Discussion on the ZKE-Questionnaire

1 Introduction

The research-team ZKE is one of the partners in the Grundtvig-Project “Domestic Violence Met by Educated Women” (DVMEW). The team is working on a questionnaire and an assistance program. The questionnaire is expected to give hints how to prevent or to reduce domestic violence. That means: With the help of the questionnaire the team identifies main problems in an empirically described group of women. The basis for an intervention is the success of the research team’s 6 year program for teaching boarding-school pupils in case of domestic violence (cf. KROPE ET AL. 2002). The team describes its Grundtvig-activities in a weblog under <http://zkewomenprojekt.files.wordpress.com> and invites for a discussion. On Wednesday, 11th of December 2013, the Slovenian partners distributed a text entitled “Two comments on the questionnaire.”. The full text is in new format literally quoted as chapter 2. The ZKE-team answers in chapter 3, 4 and 5.

2 Two comments on the questionnaire.

1. The questionnaire is based on the methodological constructivism of Küno Lorenz, however, it does not include social constructivism, which emphasizes, as one of the most evident socially constructed categories, the **gender** (as the socially constructed category) and the **feminist view** of the gender. Consequently the view of the violence against women, which includes the concepts of **social power** and **patriarchy** (together with gender-specific socialization and gender roles), is omitted. And yet, that is of key importance to be able to understand violence against women!

The definition of violence against women which was used as a starting point for the questionnaire does not consider the existing definitions of DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, acknowledged by European institutions, such as the European Commission, or, in the wider perspective, international institutions, such as the WHO and the UN, etc. It does not consider feminist views and definitions. It does not consider definitions used by non-government organizations active in this area.

For example:

The European Union defines ‘violence against women’ as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" As probably the most common form of violence against women, domestic violence is a high priority for the EU (source:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_344_en.pdf, 20. nov. 2013).

The Slovenian Association SOS Help-line for Women and Children - Victims of Violence is very keen that the questionnaire is changed in the way to reflect the above-mentioned bases, views and definitions. The Association SOS Help-line cannot afford to participate in a questionnaire, which would put its reputation at home and abroad at stake.

2. Some reflections on the questionnaire:

- What about women who are divorced or live alone, although they have experienced violence? Only heterosexual women living in a partnership seem to qualify for the questionnaire. Can this reflect a true situation?
- The question of interpretation: the meaning of the possible answer "It didn't occur to me at all." should be clear in advance.
- What if a woman no longer asks questions presented in the questionnaire? Maybe she used to, but not anymore, or she may be frightened into silence.

Interpretation of possible answers seems narrow and really problematic to me. Interpretation can be very subjective.

At the same time the word "why" presupposes that the woman defends herself or that she may be provoking new violence: it can be interpreted as a provocation.

It would be good to discuss all these details and to clarify their interpretations. It is probable that authors of the questionnaire have already compiled a set of interpretations which however have not been presented. Consensus should be achieved also in that part.

3 The Methodical Constructivism

The Slovenian partners confront two paradigms, the feminist view and the Methodical Constructivism. The relationship between these approaches is described below.

The German magazine DIE ZEIT published many articles on prostitution in the last two months (e.g. VON BAR 2013, CASPARI 2013, SCHULER 2013, SCHWARZER 2013, VON USLAR 2013). The authors observed extreme differences in the handling of prostitution for example in Sweden, Germany and France. But the most astonishing impression is the fact that not infrequently one and the same approach of argumentation can lead to opposite conclusions. Especially on the basis of a feminist view the question, whether prostitution means violence against every woman, is sometimes answered with “yes, of course!” and sometimes with “of course not!”. This observation leads to examine the feminist view. What is a reliable basis for our acts? What are the limits for our reflections?



Let us go further back. In traditional scientific programs the problem of a rational foundation of science is unsolved. The sociologist HANS ALBERT describes the difficulties regarding the rational basis of science with the term „Münchhausen-Trilemma“ (ALBERT 1975, 11-15, 183-210). Accordingly every attempt to establish science has three equal problematic alternatives. The first one is the regressus ad infinitum with a never ending chain of arguments. The second unacceptable alternative is the vicious circle, in which sentences occur as their own reasoning foundation. Thirdly, problematic as well is the dogmatic start of a science, where arguments in the very beginning are meant unnecessary. The insecurity about the foundation questions the results, procedures and aims of traditional science as well as of non-scientific paradigms.

The program of the Methodical Constructivism is – to come to the point – an attempt to remove these difficulties. The Methodical Constructivism is a philosophy of science, which was founded in the 70ties by WILHELM KAMLAH and PAUL LORENZEN (KAMLAH & LORENZEN 1967, second edition 1973). The constructive paradigm is represented at several German universities with different main focuses. PAUL LORENZEN specialized in methodical principles. Inter alia he developed a political sociology to enable every member of a society to articulate and pursue own interests together with all other members according to rules of a dialogue (LORENZEN 1987, 266 – 292). PETER JANICH together with his co-worker DIRK HARTMANN concentrated on the development of the “Methodical Culturalism” (HARTMANN & JANICH 1996) which enables scientists to analyze problems like violence upon a cultural background. Finally the work of KUNO LORENZ is to mention in the frame of the Grundtvig-project. KUNO LORENZ developed a “Dialogical Constructivism” (LORENZ 2009) from the focus on the dialogical principles of Martin Buber. The treatment maintains, that “only in the mirror of a relative Other it is possible to reflect upon oneself” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuno_Lorenz, 12.12.2013).

Considering the failure of traditional pre-scientific and scientific approaches constructivist scientists neither accept nor reject a paradigm, they are confronted with, but re-construct it. “Re-construction” means: For better understanding these scientists re-built the other paradigm with the help of their own methodical principles (cf. LORENZEN), on cultural backgrounds (cf. HARTMANN & JANICH) and with dialogical procedures (cf. LORENZ). During the Grundtvig-conference in autumn 2014 the ZKE-team will try to describe on the basis of the Methodical Constructivism the relationship between the ZKE-questionnaire and women’s view on domestic violence.

4 The ZKE-Questionnaire

The basis for the development of the ZKE-questionnaire on violence is the classical test theory (LIENERT 1967) after re-construction according to a constructivist theory of educational measurement (KROPE 2000).

The term of violence, worked out by PETERSEN (2001), reads in the renewed version as follows: “An interactional action is predicated as violent, if the acting interaction partner (the proponent) tries to assert his interest against an opponent, without wanting to justify this interest towards the opponent, although a justification of the action is provided on the basis of a



normative system". With " \Leftrightarrow " as definition-symbol, with " \wedge " for "and" and with " \neg " as negation-sign PETERSEN'S definition can be abbreviated in this way:

$$"V(m,w,p) \Leftrightarrow B(m,w,p) \wedge P(p) \wedge \neg D(m,w,p)"$$

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- m, w: personal variables (m/w – person 1/person 2, e.g.: m – man, w – woman),
- p: sentence variable,
- V(m,w,p): m does violence to w about p,
- B(m,w,p): m expresses p to w,
- P(p): p is a prescriptive sentence,
- D(m,w,p): m acts dialogically with w about p.

The abbreviation demonstrates the theory of the dialogue as the background of the term of violence. In a dialogue speech acts proceed between proponents and opponents according to rules. As KLARE and KROPE (1977) summarize fourteen rules for a dialogue, one can say, a person, who offends at least one of these fourteen rules, is called "violent". Every distractor (except A, E and L) declares the male partner as violent because of offending one of the rules of a dialogue in an interactional action.

The distractors are formulated as expressions of an everyday language, while the theoretical elements belong to a scientific language. The outlined relation between the theoretical level and the empirical level guarantees construct validity of the ZKE-questionnaire. The objectivity can be controlled in a later interview by use of the instruction: "Please, think back to the past month". The reliability coefficient from a pre-test, computed with the method Spearman-Brown, split-half, equal length, was $r_{tt} = 0,5708$. According to LIENERT (1967, 309) $r_{tt} \geq 0,5$ is necessary to identify a group of persons as in this Grundtvig-project.

The second paragraph of the comment-paper reflects on the ZKE-questionnaire. Reflection number one deals with the size of the ZKE-study. The authors ask about the exclusion of certain characteristics (like divorce) from the inquiry. During the conference in Kiel November 2012 there had been a discussion to include further personal details. But a Grundtvig-project is a travel-project. The European Union only pays for travelling, not for research. The ZKE-team has to work with its own low budget and therefore is forced to limit the size of the study.

The second reflection deals with problems of interpretation. The questionnaire is intended to determine central aspects of domestic violence. The results are the basis for a decision about the practicability of the assistance program, presented during the Paderborn-conference in spring 2014. Strictly related to this purpose the questionnaire is easy to interpret for a person, who considers the remarks about the objectivity, reliability and validity of the instrument. The ZKE-questionnaire for example is not developed to make statements about single persons. LIENERT (1967, 309) demands a reliability coefficient $r_{tt} \geq 0,9$ as basis for individual decisions. The analyst has to count the numbers of violent acts for each of the eight sections of violence and interpret the ranking list with respect to the limitations of the underlying test theory.

But indeed the principles for the construction lead to difficulties, if the interpretation goes beyond the narrow purpose of the questionnaire. A male partner is called "violent" if he at least offended one of the fourteen rules of a dialogue. For example for a well-founded interpretation of a set like "Why did you throttle me? - Because you are a woman" it is necessary



to examine the matching rules. Most of these rules are or can be formalized like the above formalization for the term “violent”. The dialogue rules are written in a scientific language, while the distractors of the questionnaire (“Because you are a woman”) belong to the everyday language. It is an arduous but promising attempt of interpretation following the way from the pre-scientific formulation of the distractor to the scientific formulation of the related rules. But the effort exceeds the frame of a Grundtvig-project.

The distractors A, E and L are something special. These distractors are developed to indicate that the male partner did offend not a single rule of a dialogue. Beyond it there is no possible interpretation because of a logical reason: The relation of “violent” and “nonviolent” is contrary and not contradictory.

In their reflections on interpretation the authors problematize “why”. With the expression “why” the instruction of the ZKE-questionnaire simulates that a woman and her male partner conduct a dialogue as proponent and opponent.

The translation of the distractors into the Slovenian language is a challenging task. It might be helpful to compare the German and the English version of the ZKE-questionnaire. In case of doubt there is no way but looking for help in the theory of the dialogue, on request assisted by the ZKE-team.

The third reflection of the comment-paper deals with women, who are unable or unwilling to inform on their situation. The social sciences possess a wide inventory of procedures and methods to break the silence. The question is, whether scientists are allowed to make use of these tools in any case. The agreement of the test person belongs to the ethical guidelines of an experiment. But the ZKE-team assumes from bitter experience (BUCHHEIT & KROPE 2011, KROPE 2006), that an attempt to declare the actual agreement of a test person as beyond doubt exceeds the frame of a Grundtvig-project.

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