

**A report on a session of a thematic group  
“Re-discovering grounded theory. Forty years of the research practice”;  
the session taking place within the confines  
of the 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Social Science Methodology  
organized by the International Sociological Association,  
Italy, Naples, September 1-5, 2008.**

On September 1-5, 2008, in an academic centre Campus di Monte Sant’ Angelo of Università di Napoli “Federico II” in Italy, the 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Social Science Methodology organized by the International Sociological Association was held (ISA RC33 – Logic and Methodology in Sociology).

Within the confines of the Conference a number of thematic groups were organized. They were attended by scientists representing different scientific backgrounds from around the world. Polish sociologists were also among the organizers of a number of thematic groups. Among the most distinct groups which focused on quantitative sociology was a thematic group “Re-discovering Grounded Theory. Forty Years of the Research Practice”. It was attended by many acknowledged qualitative sociologists and was organized by professor Krzysztof Konecki (University of Lodz, Poland). The group appeared to be a perfect occasion for its attendants to exchange their experience and initiate many discussions around the subject of sociological research conveyed according to qualitative methods. The fortieth anniversary of the grounded theory methodology foundation was the main motive behind the group’s meetings. On this occasion five sessions devoted to various aspects of the theory’s application in the scientific practice were organized.

Within the confines of the thematic group “Re-discovering Grounded Theory. Forty Years of the Research Practice” during five sessions that took place on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 19 papers were presented. Sociologists from international academic centres (e.g. from Germany, Poland, Canada, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium) gave their speeches.

During the first day, (Wednesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>) there were three thematic sessions. During the first one entitled “Foundations of GT” chaired by professor Krzysztof Konecki one could

listen to papers of: Joerg Struebing (University of Tübingen, Germany), Basile Zimmerman (University of Geneva, Switzerland), Luca Ghirotto (University of Trento, Italy) and two representatives of Polish sociology, Ireneusz Krzemiński (University of Warsaw) oraz Irena Szlachcic (University of Wrocław). The presented speeches posed as a very interesting and inspiring introduction to a discussion on theoretical bases of the grounded theory methodology and their meaning for the later development of the mentioned methodological specialization. The readers paid a lot of attention to showing in their belief crucial problems that were inevitable when applying GT in scientific research. The discussion referred also to the way computer programming assists the process of the analysis of qualitative data and mentioned what possibilities such an examination gives to researchers.

On Wednesday there was another session entitled “Application of GT in Sensitive Contexts” chaired by professor Krzysztof Konecki. Along with a Canadian sociologist, Jason Luckerhoff, three representatives of qualitative sociology from the University of Łódź (Poland) gave their speeches: Piotr Chomczyński, Izabela Ślęzak and Dominika Byczkowska. The speakers aimed at sharing their experience from their usage of the grounded theory methodology in their research on tender physical and social issues (such as mobbing or prostitution). Moreover, they paid attention to a crucial problem influencing the development of qualitative research, meaning institutional barriers that scientists meet when applying for grants for projects conducted according to the grounded theory routines.

During the third and last session of that day, entitled “Transdisciplinarity and GT & Cultural Context in GT Applications” chaired by Joerg Struebing (University of Tübingen, Germany) their speeches gave: Łukasz Marciniak (University of Łódź, Poland) i Massimiliano Tarozzi (University of Trento, Italy) and the organizer of the thematic group professor Krzysztof Konecki. Due to absence of the author of the article Alain Colsool (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium) it was read by his colleague. During the session the speakers talked about various present and still open issues concerning the influence of cultural and lingual disparities as well as previous experiences of a researcher resulting from his/her dedication to a particular scientific discipline on the scientific research. What is more, the discussion covered difficulties with translation of scientific terms and concepts linked to the grounded theory methodology into national languages as well as with translation of scientific results from the given languages into English. Another important problem mentioned during the

session was spinning around the application of the grounded theory methodology routines in the research based on visual data.

On the second day (Thursday, September 4<sup>th</sup>) there were two sessions entitled “Practical aspects of GT developments” chaired by Łukasz Marciniak. Anna Kacperczyk (University of Lodz, Poland) with her paper entitled “Codes and categories in rock climbers’ social world analysis” marked the beginning of the first session. The researcher was accompanied by Beata Glinka (University of Warsaw, Poland) oraz Svetlana Gudkova (Leon Kozminski Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management, Poland) a także Jakub Niedbalski (University of Lodz, Poland); while the final paper was presented by a representatives of the hosts, Matteo Artoni. The papers presented during that session showed in what a wide range of social issues, such as entrepreneurship, mental incapacity or social association of rock climbing enthusiasts, the grounded theory methodology can be used. The methodological aspects of the application of the grounded theory procedures in the speakers’ research were an inspiring subject matter mentioned during both the speeches and subsequent discussions.

On the second and last session that took place within the confines of the thematic group “Re-discovering Grounded Theory. Forty Years of the Research Practice”, Enrica Tedeschi (Universita di Roma Tre, Italy) gave the speech on “The Writing Method in Grounded Theory”. The author focused on narration as a crucial point in the process of research conducting with the usage of the grounded theory. During the session a paper of Francois Guillemette (Universite du Quebec a Trois-Riveres, Canada) i Ann Dale (Royal Roads University) was also read, which dealt with epistemological, ontological and methodological aspects of the application of the electronic multimedial platform in the interdisciplinary qualitative research.

The ending of the last session marked the official closing of the thematic group by professor Krzysztof Konecki who thanked all the participant of the sessions for their active partaking. At the same time he encouraged them to send their articles on the given speeches as the most interesting ones would be published in a special edition of a magazine **Qualitative Sociology Review**. On that occasion professor Konecki invited everyone to take part in an International Conference 4th Midterm Conference: Teaching Qualitative Methods that was to be organized by the Sociology of Organization and Management Department (University of Lodz) and ESA QM RN 20 and held in Lodz (Poland) on September 15-17, 2008.

The conference organized by the International Sociological Association (ISA) was one of the most important scientific events of the year. It is crucial to stress that the thematic group “Re-discovering Grounded Theory. Forty Years of the Research Practice”, as one of only few that dealt during the conferences with the movement of the qualitative sociology, was attended by numerous speakers and as many listeners. Gathering of distinguished researchers from all over the world made it possible to present a wide spectrum of scientific questions and show the specification of the grounded theory methodology application in diverse cultural contexts. The session also proved that the interest in the grounded theory does not decline as it has been present in research and theoretical deliberations for over 40 years. Therefore, it appears to be a very attractive methodological attitude that is being applied not only by experienced researchers but also by countless beginners.