

Call for Abstracts (Deadline: 13.06.2022)

Session “Bridging the Gap of Computational (Structural) and Hermeneutic Approaches in Discourse Analysis”

at the 2nd International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability (SMUS Conference) &
1st RC33 Regional Conference Latin America: Brazil, 08–10.09.2022,
Online-Conference hosted by the University of São Paulo (Brazil)

Dear Colleagues,

We hereby invite you to submit an abstract for the Session “Bridging the Gap of Computational (Structural) and Hermeneutic Approaches in Discourse Analysis” at the at the “2nd International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability” (“SMUS Conference”), which will simultaneously be the “1st RC33 Regional Conference Latin America: Brazil” and take place online at the University of São Paulo (Brazil) from Thursday, September 8th, to Saturday, September 10th, 2022.

Session Organizers

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Session Topic

The Internet, with its massive number of digital materials, is an important source of information for discourse analyses. Even though methodologies of interpretative, hermeneutic research, such as Grounded Theory, provide strong concepts for the meaningful reduction of social reality for qualitative research, the substantial amount of digital resources calls for new methodological approaches for addressing this complexity in discourse analyses and its large bandwidth of variations. While most qualitative methods of data collection are limited to analyzing only a small part of information on the Internet, digital methods with their structural approaches to textual and visual expressions only provide somewhat inadequate meaning interpretations and thus are not capable to analyze a large scale of materials. Bridging the gap between structural patterns



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detected with digital methods and the interpretative, hermeneutic processes of meaning making thus becomes a most crucial endeavor in methodologies that seek to combine both approaches in the analysis of digital discourse materials. In discourse analytical approaches, human scientists are often confronted with the challenge of working with complex research fields, encompassing several text phenomena, theories, or methodological approaches. The consideration of a variety of styles and research questions, epistemological specifics, different levels of practice and experience matter, as well as the mutual assistance, reflection, and understanding between human and artificial actors. Ethical questions arise on how to control or avoid the use and development of biased research processes. With the integration of IT tools and infrastructures into the knowledge production in the humanities, ontological changes take place in the knowledge production; new social, ethical, and political constellations are consolidated, disturbed, or created. These complexities in human-centered research collide with and challenge the AI-oriented work that is often limited to identifiable phenomena on the text surface. Such computer-driven methods used in qualitative data analysis tools range from topic modeling, co-occurrence analysis, sentiment analysis to visualization of quantified discourses and patterns, offering insights into structural conjunctures and leave scope of what they actually mean. What is often missing in this mutual and iterative research process of quantitative (computational structural analysis on the surface) and qualitative analysis (the human analysis in the fine textures of the dossier), is a closer look on how this gap of structural analysis and the hermeneutic process of meaning making, and understanding is closed. In which ways do these modes of knowledge production affect interpretative epistemologies? How can this discrepancy be adequately recognized and addressed? The panel invites contributions that address the challenge of bridging the gap between computational and hermeneutic analyses by developing integrative methodological approaches of discourse analyses. It is particularly interested in how the analytical modes are implemented in research practices, how this interplay of structural and hermeneutic is organized in a meaningful way and what this means in terms of quality and effectiveness of the research process. By focusing on this gap based on a range of concrete examples from practical experience, the panel seeks to address the epistemological challenges that arise from the use of AI-assisted methods for questions of humanities and how they can be dealt with.

About the Conference

The “Global Center of Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability” (GCSMUS or SMUS) together with the Research Committee on “Logic and Methodology in Sociology” (RC33) of the “International Sociology Association” (ISA), and the Research Network “Quantitative Methods” (RN21) of the “European Sociology Association” (ESA) will organize the **“2nd International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability” (“SMUS Conference”)**, which will simultaneously be the **“1st RC33 Regional Conference Latin America: Brazil”**, and take place **online at the University of São Paulo (Brazil) from Thursday, September 8th, to Saturday, September 10th, 2022**. The three-day conference aims at continuing a global dialogue on methods and should attract methodologists from all over the world and all social and spatial sciences (e. g. anthropology, area studies, architecture, communication studies, computational

sciences, digital humanities, educational sciences, geography, historical sciences, humanities, landscape planning, philosophy, psychology, sociology, urban design, urban planning, traffic planning and environmental planning). The online conference programme will include keynotes, sessions and advanced methodological training courses. With this intention, we invite scholars of all social and spatial sciences and other scholars who are interested in methodological discussions to suggest an abstract to any sessions of the conference. All papers have to address a methodological problem.

Please find more information on the **SMUS Brazil 2022 Conference** on:

<https://gcsmus.org/conferences/brazil/>

Information about the above institutions may be found on the following websites:

- Global Center of Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability (GCSMUS): <https://gcsmus.org/>
- ISA RC33: <http://rc33.org/>
- ESA RN21: www.europeansociology.org/research-networks/rn21-quantitative-methods
- University of São Paulo: <https://www5.usp.br>

If you are interested in getting **further information on the conference** and other GCSMUS activities, please **subscribe to the SMUS newsletter** by registering via the following website: <https://lists.tu-berlin.de/mailman/listinfo/mes-smusnews>

Submission of Abstracts

If you are interested in **presenting a paper at this session**, please **submit an English-language abstract** containing the following information to SMUS Brazil 2022 via <https://smusbrazil2022.sinteseeventos.com.br/> between 01.04.2022 and 13.06.2022:

- Title of (at maximum two) preferred session(s)
- Paper title
- Author(s) (= name(s), gender(s), institutional affiliation(s), position(s), country(ies), email address(es))
- 300- to 500-Word Abstract (= short description of the proposed paper. The abstract should make explicit (i) the methodological problem addressed, (ii) why this is relevant, (iii) how the paper relates to the session, and (iv) what the general line of argument will be.)

Please note that all sessions must adhere to the **rules of session organization** comprised in the RC33 statutes and GCSMUS Objectives (**see below**). Please note that you can give a **maximum of two papers** at the conference, including joint papers. The conference organizers will inform you by **31.07.2022** whether the proposed paper has been accepted for presentation at the conference. For further information please see the SMUS Brazil 2022 conference website or contact the session organizers.

Please also kindly **forward this call to anybody to whom it might be of interest**.

Best wishes,

Gertraud Koch and Isabel Eiser



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Rules for Session Organization (According to GCSMUS Objectives and RC 33 Statutes)

1. There will be no conference fees.
2. The conference language is English, although some of the activities are going to be simultaneously translated into Portuguese. All papers therefore need to be presented in English.
3. All sessions have to be international: Each session should have speakers from at least two countries (exceptions will need good reasons).
4. Each paper must contain a methodological problem (any area, qualitative or quantitative).
5. There will be several calls for abstracts via the GCSMUS, RC33 and RN21 Newsletters. To begin with, session organizers can prepare a call for abstracts on their own initiative, then at a different time, there will be a common call for abstracts, and session organizers can ask anybody to submit a paper.
6. GCSMUS, RC33 and RN21 members may distribute these calls via other channels. GCSMUS members and session organizers are expected to actively advertise their session in their respective scientific communities.
7. Speakers can only have one talk per session. This also applies for joint papers. It will not be possible for A and B to present at the same time one paper as B and A during the same session. This would just extend the time allocated to these speakers.
8. Session organizers may present a paper in their own session.
9. Sessions will have a length of 90 minutes with a maximum of 4 papers or a length of 120 minutes with a maximum of 6 papers. Session organizers can invite as many speakers as they like. The number of sessions depends on the number of papers submitted to each session: for example, if 12 good papers are submitted to a session, there will be two sessions with a length of 90 minutes each with 6 papers in each session.
10. Papers may only be rejected for the conference if they do not present a methodological problem (as stated above), are not in English or are somehow considered by session organizers as not being appropriate or relevant for the conference. Session organizers may ask authors to revise and resubmit their paper so that it fits these requirements. If session organizers do not wish to consider a paper submitted to their session, they should inform the author and forward the paper to the local organizing team who will find a session where the paper fits for presentation.
11. Papers directly addressed to the conference organising committee, suggesting a session. The conference organizers will check the formal rules and then offer the paper to the session organizer of the most appropriate session. The session organizers will have to decide on whether or not the paper can be included in their session(s). If the session organizers think that the paper does not fit into their session(s), the papers has to be sent back to the conference organizing committee as soon as possible so that the committee can offer the papers to another session organizer.