

Posicionalities of the DIPEX modules

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Brief notes on the challenges of the methodological and political construction of difference and diversity

FOCUS

To reflect on the articulation between **positionalities** and **voicing** process within the context of DIPEX studies and its consequences to the description of "social difference"

VOICING

- the way (languages, narratives...) people present and place themselves in the social world
- how people invoke and make sense of their own and others' social categories to note differences in experiences

POSITIONALITY

Describes the epistemological, social, and personal position of the researcher in relation to research subjects, the object and the context of study.

POSITIONALITY

Two dimensions:

- Relations between positions and interpretations
- Presentation of self (Goffman) on the research and publication context

REFLEXIVITY

Methodological reflexivity involves critical reflection on how methodological choices, personal experiences, affiliations, identities, languages and bodies take part all together in the construction of scientific knowledge.

AIMS OF REFLEXIVITY

- “Naturalistic” paradigm: to neutralize bias seeking to achieve objectivity.
- “Constructionist” paradigm: to avoid high level of bias and moreover to highlight biases in order to amplify awareness on the objectification process.
- “Praxiological” paradigm: to have a deeper understand of how the social world arise from social practices (including the scientific practices)

POSITIONALITY in the “Naturalistic” and “Constructionist” paradigm

- Bachelard’s epistemology: scientific knowledge arises from a rupture with common sense throughout an *intellectual self-surveillance*
- Social sciences: the “first order” of interpretation (common sense, lay knowledge) is a step to build a “second order” of interpretation in the scientific discourse (expert knowledge)
- Difference results from predefined scientific categories such as sociodemographic characteristics of participants

POSITIONALITY in the “Praxiological” paradigm

- Non-Bachalardian epistemologies: fenomenology, ontological turn...
- Participants are considered practical sociologists and not “cultural idiots” (Garfinkel) that just give us “lay perspectives” of the social world
- Difference arises from a more dialogical, opened and deeper relation between researchers and participants
- Quantum physics: the observer, the object, and the experiment are inseparable and arise together => the true of world is the true of interactions!

Ideal-type of voicing process

Researcher voice	Subjects voices	Validation	Body/language	Vulnerability of Subjects
"Speaking for others"	Denied, subjugated	Researcher	Privilege (+++)	High
"Giving voice to others"	Amplified in predefined spaces/places	Researcher	Privilege (+)	Medium
"Engaging in dialogue with others"	Negotiated "Nothing about us without us"	Researcher Research Subjects	Privilege (-...) Inclusion (+...)	Low

DIPEX

Maximum variation concept can be seen as a predefined category established by researchers in order to control bias avoid producing knowledge from a narrow sample

Assumption: sociodemographic diversity = differences in experiences

Perhaps or even probably this perspective fits into the “constructionist” paradigm most often to “give voice to the other”, depending on the level of participation of the research design



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Talking about inequities: A comparative analysis of COVID-19 narratives in the UK, US, and Brazil



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Dipex's paper on cross-country comparative analysis

Evered, J. A., Castellanos, M. E., Dowrick, A., Germani, A. C. C. G., Rai, T., de Souza, A. N., ... & Grob, R. (2023). Talking about inequities: A comparative analysis of COVID-19 narratives in the UK, US, and Brazil. *SSM-Qualitative Research in Health*, 3, 100277.

Dipex's paper on cross-country comparative analysis

Aims to describe how people voice and make sense of race, racism, and privilege in their experiences with COVID-19 in the United States, United Kingdom, and Brazil.

How and what to compare?

A provocative doubt about the feasibility of a comparative analysis, given the strong methodological differences between the studies, led us to dive into methodological reflexivity.

This required extra time and effort!!

Reflexivity on voicing

We consider:

The health, social and political contexts of the countries

The public discourse and theoretical frameworks addressing differences

The mediation of the interviewer body and language in the data producing

The languages used to express differences

The representation of voices in the quotations

POSITIONALITY

We move towards analyzing the two dimensions of positionality...

- Relations between positions and interpretations
- Presentation of self (Goffman) on the research and publication context

with some limitations regarding the space to present our reflections in a single paper

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- Theoretical and epistemological issues matter
- The readiness to embrace uncertainty on the knowledge producing process is fruitful
- Making room to reflexivity on the positionalities and voicing process in DIPEX studies takes energy, space and time, but it can led us to new valuable paths

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The changes in DIPEX and in the world require balancing power relations and innovation

This may potentially contribute to the development of a diverse array of studies that could reinvigorate DIPEX's contribution to producing scientifically rigorous and socially impactful knowledge