

Universelle Erhebungsmethoden und lokale Kognition am Beispiel urbaner Umweltkognition in Süd-Sulawesi/ Indonesien*

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Abstract. Contrary to most work on methods in cognitive anthropology which stress data analysis, this paper addresses problems in the collection of data, especially in fieldwork in nonwestern settings. Data collection in cognitive anthropology is torn between two opposing poles. On the one hand there are formal methods for large samples which are claimed to be universally applicable but are actually seldom used in nonwestern situations. On the other hand we have a very detailed data collection of few or single cases of texts in studies following the more contextual and interpretive approaches of discourse-oriented cognitive anthropology, symbolic anthropology and "new brand" cultural psychology. As an alternative to such studies which go into detail but leave intracultural cognitive diversity and comparative questions largely unexplored, the paper adopts the position, that there is a real need for direct, systematic, formal and comparative yet culturally sensitive cognitive methods for larger samples.

By intent, this paper tries to exemplify the full spectrum of problems with universal methods regarding cognition, from theoretical assumptions through epistemic issues to concrete practical problems in using such methods in fieldwork.

Firstly, a sketch of recent shifts in cognitive anthropology is presented to stress the theoretical underpinnings of cognitive methods. Secondly, an overview of simple methods of structured or systematic interviewing where every informant is exposed with the same stimulus is given. Thirdly one method so far unused in anthropology is described drawing on fieldwork on environmental cognition in the context of intraurban residential mobility in a big Indonesian multiethnic city (Ujung Pandang, South Sulawesi). It is the *repertory grid technique* originating in the psychology of personal constructs. In the presented form it consists of a triadic comparison combined with a ranking procedure revealing a cognitive pattern of mental constructs. The technical as well as the cultural adaptations of the method as well as practical questions of interviewing are described in detail. First results are presented and further possibilities of analysis are indicated. It is concluded that formal but simple cognitive methods can reveal a lot of culturally valid and comparative usable cognitive data. Their universality can be maintained provided that either the informants are acquired to formal questioning or the textbook versions are very carefully adapted to the local cultural setting. The latter requires a good ethnographic grounding in the local culture.

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