



SOCIAL NETWORKS AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

Creole Seminar at the University of Ljubljana (Department of
Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology)

European Joint-MA Programme in Anthropology "Cultural
Differences and Transnational Processes"

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PRESENTATION

This seminar is intended to students interested in an introduction to the social networks field. In this occasion the case study selected has been ethnic identity because it fits especially well with the Creole orientation.

Although social networks is currently an interdisciplinary field (with contributions from physics, computer science, social sciences and humanities among others disciplines), the concept and some of the methods were invented by anthropologist in the fifties, specially the idea of “personal networks”.

Personal networks are the sum of contacts, social relations and acquaintances that hold a given individual. Of course, the personal networks of different people overlap at certain degree and taken altogether represent the social structure of a given society. Studying personal networks we have the opportunity of identifying both the effects of structure and personal biographies in our theme of interest, ethnic identity in this case.

But ... how get network data? How we can grasp social relations sometimes invisible, sleeping in the memories of people?

In this seminar we will present the open-source software EgoNet, designed especially for getting this type of information from people. Also, we will introduce Pajek because it is a very important contribution of the University of Ljubljana to the scientific world and to the social networks field.

Some caveats before continuing:

First, we will deal with structured interviews not with participant observation, so sometimes we will lose part of the context. Are you ready for this?

Second, we will do some statistic analysis of our data, nothing sophisticated, but necessary.

Finally, this is the first time we meet together and we will talk in English, so a large amount of patience and enthusiasm will be needed.

I sincerely hope that his seminar brings you some new insights about your research interests.



COMPETENCES

In this seminar the following competences will be acquired (*be able to ...*):

1. *Explain the intellectual background and the historical origins of social networks perspective.*
2. *Perform a basic sociocentric analysis with Pajek.*
3. *Design the questionnaire and getting personal network data from informants with EgoNet.*

The student profile is someone with a Humanities-Social Sciences background, advanced computer user and interested in applying some of the tools and concepts of the seminar to his/her research.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

This 5-day seminar implies at least two hours of homework every day in order to follow it. The assignments and articles for each lecture or workshop can be accessed at the following URL:

<http://seneca.uab.es/antropologia/jlm/creole.html>

This URL will be updated at convenience.

The sessions are the following:

1. Monday, March 31st (16:20 – 18:00, seminar room) – Presentation and introductory lecture on social networks.
1. Tuesday, April 1st (16:20 – 18:00, library) – Workshop: Sociocentric networks with Pajek.
2. Wednesday, April 2nd (16:20 – 18:00, seminar room) – Introductory lecture on personal networks and identifications.
3. Thursday, April 3rd (16:20 – 18:00, library) – Workshop: Personal networks with EgoNet.



4. Friday, April 4th (16:20 – 18:00, seminar room) –Discussion about ethnicity, social networks and identifications

Seminar consultations will be held on Thursday, April 3rd, from 14:40 to 16:20 in seminar room.

ASSESSMENT

All students have to send me by email (jose Luis.molina@uab.es) before Friday April 4th 14:00 the following assignments (in a word or rtf document):

1. One sociocentric network.
2. One personal network.
3. A 3-pages paper with a) what new ideas the seminar arose in his/her mind, especially if can be applied to the current research interests and b) a evaluation of the seminar (good things, bad things, suggestions for improve future seminars).

The two first assignments can be in groups. The last one have to be made individually.

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