



SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

RESEARCH METHODS IN THE DIGITAL SOCIETY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

**25-26 NOVEMBER 2020
UNIVERSITY OF SALERNO**

ABSTRACT BOOK

EDIT BY GIUSEPPE MASULLO
SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR OF
INTERNATIONAL LAB FOR
INNOVATIVE SOCIAL RESEARCH (ILIS)



Abstracts
Second International Conference
Research Methods in the Digital Society
Challenges and opportunities
25-26 November 2020,
University of Salerno

Edit by Giuseppe Masullo

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PREFACE

2nd International Conference ILIS – 25,26 November 2020 – University of Salerno

Innovation in social research and new methodological challenges: International Lab for innovative Social Research

ILIS, set up within the Department of Human Sciences, Philosophy and Education, is proposed as an interdisciplinary study and research laboratory on issues of social interest. The main objective is to stimulate theoretical and methodological reflection as well as the empirical study on the new scenarios of social research: from theoretical challenges facing new problems and dilemmas to new methodological horizons for understanding them.

The mission of ILIS is to promote theoretical, epistemological, and methodological advances in the field of social sciences through constant dialogue with expert scholars both nationally and internationally.

The field of action of ILIS focuses on social processes ranging from the analysis of educational, migratory, identity and cultural processes, to gender and generational perspectives, to health with attention to methodology and techniques for social research. The ultimate goal is to offer an integrated research and knowledge system capable of orienting scientific actions towards an innovative theoretical and empirical knowledge of the transformation processes of our societies through innovative research theories and practices.

From a scientific point of view, ILIS aims to combine the understanding of contemporary social processes with recent developments in the methodology and techniques of social research that have revolutionized some traditional approaches and introduced alternative practices of collecting, analysing and representing information (as in the case of online research approaches and big data analysis).

Among the main activities promoted by ILIS, a key role is played by the scientific dissemination of innovative social research theories and practices through the promotion of meeting and training opportunities such as *lectio magistralis*, seminars, workshops, visiting chances, conferences.

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Of particular importance is the international symposium that ILIS promotes every year, to bring together researchers inside and outside the network to take stock of a new theoretical, methodological and epistemological trend that is becoming established in the contemporary social sciences, thus providing an opportunity to inaugurate a path of reflection that continues (in the form of seminars, workshops, lectures) throughout the academic year.

Since its inception in 2019, the ILIS network has launched several initiatives, including its first International Conference, which saw the participation of numerous Italian and foreign scholars on the theme of Ethnography and Netnography.

The conference, which took place at the University of Salerno on 26th and 27th November 2019, saw the participation of many researchers of the network on emerging issues of Ethnographic and Netnographic research: from the theoretical and epistemological approach of these studies to the methodological and technical aspects about the different techniques that can be used with these approaches to the discussion of ethical dilemmas and their application in the sociological and pedagogical field¹.

The results of this conference – and the other occasions promoted by ILIS throughout 2019 – have been included in a recent volume edited by Giuseppe Masullo, Felice Addeo, and Angela Delli Paoli entitled: *Ethnography and Netnography. Theoretical reflections, methodological challenges and research experiences*, Loffredo editore, Nuova serie².

The interest and stimuli that emerged during the previous Conference, in particular towards the Netnographic approach, together with the inclusion of new members to the network (such as the happy addition of Dr Gabriella Punziano) led me and my colleagues – Addeo and Delli Paoli – to insist on this path also for the second Conference, and to broaden our attention in focusing on the new methods of social research applied to the themes and areas proposed by the digital society.

¹For details of the initiative, please refer to the specific section on the ILIS website: <http://www.labh.it/ilis/conferenze-internazionali/1st-international-conference-ilis/>

²To view the volume, and the topics covered, please refer to the specific section of the publications on the ILIS website: <http://www.labh.it/ilis/pubblicazioni/>

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There is no way to object that the traditional social research methods that governed the study of rooted societies are losing ground in favour of innovative, sometimes extemporaneous, methodological proposals. On the one hand, scholars and professionals transposed the classical social research method to be implemented online; on the other hand, the growing pervasiveness of the digital in our lives required the development of methods more suitable to address the challenges of studying the digital society.

In this latter sense, digital methods imply embracing the natural logic of online communication affordances in gathering, ordering, and analysing data—as with tags, links, or hashtags. Methodological reflections about digital and digitized methods are impervious in our scientific community and applications to the most disparate objects are now the subject of numerous publications. We have witnessed the succession of web methods, virtual methods, digital methods, and many other definitions of what should be doing social research “with” and “on” the Web. However, there is still no agreement on a shared definition of what it means and how to implement the empirical study of the digital society; there are not paradigmatic definitions so solid as to redefine the field.

This apparent methodological Babylonia has found a possible solution in the application of the mixed methods approach. The hybridization of the methods ended up being reflected also in the desire to make the methods more and more disconnected from the disciplines and approaches. The search for integration, the mix that solves every cognitive and research problem, the all-embracing openness that challenges theories and broad visions within which social research fits today, are only a few of the elements that are pushing social research methods in unpredictable directions. But where will this ambition lead us? How much have we reflected on this fast spread? How much did we metabolize the change of a method or how only we simply idealized it in a different context? And how much all this becomes truly appropriate in the study of contemporary phenomena? These, as well as a flood of other questions, can arise if only we stop for a moment to reflect on what the social and human disciplines are called to do today.

In this second conference, to be held on November 25th and 26th, entitled: **Research Methods in the Digital Society: challenges and opportunities** (curated by Felice Addeo, Angela Delli Paoli, Gabriella

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Punziano and myself), we would like to bring together researchers from different disciplines who engage in wide forms of reflection on the future of the research methods in the study of the digital society in its broadest sense. The overall aim is not only to start a debate on the different strands of methods most affected by change but above all to develop a broader theoretical reflection on the future of social research in its challenge to always be fitting, suitable, adaptable and pertinent to the society to be studied.

The present volume, introduced through this short foreword, contains the abstracts of the papers selected by the Scientific Committee ³ from among the many received following the Call for Paper. We did not expect such enthusiasm, and yet it confirms our first intuition – which led to the creation of ILIS – that is, to respond to the need (often unexpressed by the sociological scientific community) to expand the spaces for discussion on the new tools of social research, a need felt in particular by young researchers, who again stand out as the main interpreters and pioneers of these methodological horizons.

The contributions proposed here, without any restriction in terms of topics, subjects, objects, or methodological approaches, are in the following areas:

³ I would like to name them all here, (extending to the organizational secretariat, coordinated by Dr. Marianna Coppola) in thanking them for their valuable contribution to this initiative: Enrica Amato (University of Naples, Federico II); Alfonso Amendola (University of Salerno); Nick Boston (NYU New York University); Davide Bennato (University of Catania); Alessandro Caliendo (University of Bath); Costantino Cipolla (University of Bologna); Roberto Cipriani (University of Rome, Roma Tre); Fabio Corbisiero (University of Naples, Federico II); Francesca De Chiara (Bruno's Kessler Foundation); Maria Paola Faggiano (University of Rome, La Sapienza); Floriana Falcinelli (University of Perugia); Vulca Fidolini (University of Strasbourg); Mihaela Gavrilă (University of Rome, La Sapienza); Brian Gilley (University of Bloomington-Indiana); Giuseppe Giordano (University of Salerno); Susanne Halford (University of Bristol); Francesca Romana Lenzi (University of Rome, Foro Italico); Giuseppe Maiello (University of Prague); Emiliana Mangone (University of Salerno); Paolo Montesperelli (University of Rome La Sapienza); Alessandro Porrovecchio (University of littoral Côte d'Opale); Massimo Ragnedda (Northumbria University of Newcastle); Cyrus Rinaldi (University of Palermo); Jonah Steinberg (University of Vermont); Lucia Velotti (The City University of New York); Zuzana Virglerova (Bata University); Maria Prosperina Vitale (University of Salerno).

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2nd International Conference ILIS – 25,26 November 2020 – University of Salerno

- Theoretical, epistemological and ontological reflections about the digital research methods;
- Innovative methods to collect, analyse and interpret data;
- Ethnography goes online: theory, methods and research;
- The rebirth of Content Analysis in the Digital Age;
- The contribution of the Mixed Methods to the Online Social Research;
- The new imprint of the Social Network Analysis in the Net Scenario.

The best contributions of the Conference will be the opportunity to realize two important editorial projects (of which we will give further news during the conference), which are a special issue of the Italian Sociological Review (edited by Felice Addeo and Giuseppe Masullo) and a collective volume for a prestigious Italian or foreign series (edited by Angela Delli Paoli and Gabriella Punziano).

We hope that the discussion engendered by this conference will contribute to animate a debate that on these issues is still in progress. The discussion will take place in streaming (because of the emergency that we are experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic) but in the future it will hopefully occur face-to-face again, aware that an International Convention like the one we are proposing proves to be productive for scientific purposes not only through the formal sessions of the planned panels but also through all those occasions of informal meetings (coffee breaks, dinners, etc.) in which researchers often exchange ideas, proposals, for future scientific and research initiatives in a more free and relaxed way. This is perhaps the aspect that we miss the most as a young scientific community that loves to relate with other academic realities, promoting not only theoretical and methodological knowledge but also the formation of lasting and continuous human and academic ties with the partners of the ILIS network.

Prof. Giuseppe Masullo (Scientific Coordinator of the International Lab for Innovative Social Research)

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

2nd International Conference ILIS – 25, 26 November 2020 – University of Salerno

Executive Board:

Giuseppe Masullo – Head of the International Lab for Innovative Social Research (ILIS) – University of Salerno (Italy); Felice Addeo – University of Salerno (Italy); Angela Delli Paoli – University of Salerno (Italy); Gabriella Punziano – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy).

Scientific Committee:

Enrica Amaturò (University of Naples, Federico II); Alfonso Amendola (University of Salerno); Nick Boston (NYU New York University); Davide Bennato (University of Catania); Alessandro Caliandro (University of Pavia); Costantino Cipolla (University of Bologna); Roberto Cipriani (University of Rome, Roma Tre); Fabio Corbisiero (University of Naples, Federico II); Francesca De Chiara (Bruno's Kessler Foundation); Maria Paola Faggiano (University of Rome, La Sapienza); Floriana Falcinelli (University of Perugia); Vulca Fidolini (University of Strasbourg); Mihaela Gavrilă (University of Rome, La Sapienza); Brian Gilley (University of Bloomington-Indiana); Giuseppe Giordano (University of Salerno); Susanne Halford (University of Bristol); Francesca Romana Lenzi (University of Rome, Foro Italico); Giuseppe Maiello (University of Prague); Emiliana Mangone (University of Salerno); Paolo Montesperelli (University of Rome La Sapienza); Alessandro Porrovecchio (University of Littoral Côte d'Opale); Massimo Ragnedda (Northumbria University of Newcastle); Cirio Rinaldi (University of Palermo); Sergio Splendore (Università degli Studi di Milano); Jonah Steinberg (University of Vermont); Lucia Velotti (The City University of New York); Zuzana Virglerová (Bata University); Maria Prosperina Vitale (University of Salerno).

Organizing Secretary:

Marianna Coppola – University of Salerno (Italy); Francesca Ianniello – University of Salerno (Italy); Miriam Matteo – University of Salerno, (Italy); Immacolata Senatore – University of Salerno (Italy).

PLENARY SESSION 25/11/2020

| 10.30 AM – 1.00 PM

Institutional greetings:

Giuseppe Masullo – Head of the International Lab for Innovative Social Research (ILIS) – University of Salerno (Italy)

Maurizio Sibilio – Head of the Department of Humanities, Philosophy and Education (DISUFF) – University of Salerno (Italy)

Virgilio D’Antonio – Head of the Department of Political Sciences and Communication (DISPC) – University of Salerno (Italy)

From the surplus of mixed methods to eclectic integration

Costantino Cipolla – University of Bologna (Italy)

Sociology for the Digital Age: directions for methods and practice

Susanne Halford – University of Bristol (UK)

Critical optimism: a methodological posture to shape the future of digital social research

Enrica Amaturò – University of Naples (Italy)

Methodological reflections on the concept and use of Big Data

Sonia Stefanizzi – University of Milan, Bicocca (Italy)

Telling online: the sociality that changes the research

Rita Bichi – University of Milan, Cattolica (Italy);

Digital society and research methods in a changing world

Giovanni Boccia Artieri – University of Urbino (Italy)

Why are digital methods still now where journalism studies are? An epistemology of journalism as a discursive method

Sergio Splendore - University of Milan (Italy)

| 01:00 - 03:00 LUNCH BREAK

SECOND SESSION

| 3. 00 PM – 4. 30 PM

Theoretical, epistemological, and ontological reflections about the digital research methods

Chair: Giuseppe Masullo – Head of the International Lab for Innovative Social Research (ILIS) – University of Salerno (Italy)

Keynote speaker: Davide Bennato – University of Catania (Italy)

Discussant: Massimo Ragnedda – Northumbria University of Newcastle (UK)

Digital traces and social analysis. A way to put together quantitative approach, interpretive methods and computational tools

The spatial dimension in social media analysis: theoretical and methodological characteristics

Noemi Crescentini, Ciro Clemente De Falco, Marco Farracci – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Criticalities and advantages of the use of Artificial Intelligence in research

Jessica Camargo Molano – International Telematic University Uninettuno (Italy),
Jacopo Cavalaglio Camargo Molano – University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (Italy)

Narrative and life stories: from the machine to the person

Edmondo Grassi – University of Rome, Roma Tre (Italy)

What happens when changes the way to “Follow the medium”? A reflection about the role of the researcher and emerging perspectives in the post-API era

Suania Acampa, Giuseppe Michele Padricelli, Rosa Sorrentino - University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Social Identity Seeking and Sharing as a Creative Activity of Art Consumers

Jitka Cirklová - University of Finance and Administration Estonskà (CZR)

THIRD SESSION

| 4. 30 PM – 6. 30 PM

Innovative methods and tools to collect, analyse and interpret data

Chair: Biagio Aragona – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Discussant: Emiliana Mangone – University of Salerno (Italy)

Keynote speaker: Alessandro Caliandro – (UK)

Repurposing digital methods in a post – API environment

Innovative digital methodologies for the historical research of the history of Europe: The Association of European Historians as a case study

Alessandro Laruffa – University of Rome, La Sapienza (Italy)

Dear (digital) diary...evaluating the audio-diary technique as a research method in the social sciences

Veronica Moretti – University of Bologna (Italy)

Innovative research methods for tackling the COVID-19 online disinformation: combining research and regulation in the platform society

Francesco Marrazzo – Authority for Communications Guarantees, AGCOM (Italy)

Fake news pandemic. Detecting bad information by supervised learning

Miriam Di Lisio, Domenico Trezza – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Learning algorithms of sentiment analysis. A comparative approach to improve data goodness

Suania Acampa, Ciro Clemente De Falco, Domenico Trezza – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

The evolution of Online Survey: reflections on the cross-national probability-based online panels

Gianmaria Bottoni – City University of London (UK),

Felice Addeo – University of Salerno (Italy)

FOURTH SESSION 26/11/2020

| 9. 00 AM – 11. 00 AM

Ethnography goes online: theory, methods and research

Chair: Felice Addeo - University of Salerno (Italy)

Discussant: Alfonso Amendola – University of Salerno (Italy), Giammaria Bottoni – City University of London (Italy)

Keynote speaker: Brian Joseph Gilley - Indiana University Bloomington (Usa)

Ethnography in the New Era of Pandemics and Cultural Loos

Subject expert in the COVID era

Martina Carleo - University of Salerno (Italy)

Back to practices. Auto-ethnography as a practice of access to data and algorithms

Elisabetta Risi – IULM University of Milan (Italy),

Tiziano Bonini – University of Siena (Italy), Riccardo Pronzato – IULM University of Milan (Italy)

To be #celts today: features of a neo-pagan cult in the social media

Francesco Amatruda – University of Salerno (Italy)

Digital dark tourism during COVID-19 pandemic: a digital ethnography of Italian red zones' Facebook pages

Felice Addeo – University of Salerno (Italy), Giuseppe Michele Padricelli, Gabriella Punziano – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

National differences and gender stereotypes in Days of Empire

Giuseppe Maiello – University of Finance and Administration, Prague (Czech Republic)

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

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Gender models and sexual scripts of T people on online dating Apps: a netnographic study

Giuseppe Masullo, Marianna Coppola – University of Salerno (Italy)

The perception of the community and intimacy building in the art-fan relationship. A self-netnography on Instagram feeds, stories and direct in the Covid-19 lockdown period

Sonia Pozzi – Independent Researcher, Italy

Digital Ethnography. A systematic literature review

Angela Delli Paoli, Felice Addeo, Valentina D'Auria – University of Salerno (Italy)

FIFTH SESSION

| 11. 00 AM – 1. 30 PM

The rebirth of Content Analysis in Digital Era

Chair: Angela Delli Paoli - University of Salerno (Italy)

Discussant: Francesca De Chiara – Bruno Kessler Foundation (Italy), **Roberto Cipriani** – University of Rome, Roma Tre (Italy)

Keynote speaker: Maria Paola Faggiano – University of Rome, La Sapienza (Italy)

Content Analysis and Digital Data: methodological solutions between tradition and innovation. The case of digital campaigns as meeting ground of expertises and research perspectives

Social Research on Wattpad. An example of small data research

Claudia Cantale – University of Catania (Italy)

How startupper capitalise financial, resources through online and offline narratives

Vincenzo Luise, Patrizio Lodetti – University of Milan (Italy)

The political communication of Italia Viva on Instagram: from its formation to the COVID-19 emergency

Agostino Stravolo, Assunta Luongo – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Being a pirate: how pastafarian activism is built on the social media

Jacopo Ranzato – University of Rome, La Sapienza (Italy)

Methodological directions for the study of memes

Giulia Giorgi - NASP (University of Milan / University of Turin)

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

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Diaries from isolation

Federica Palmieri, Marco Sallusto Palmiero, Roberta Tofani, Jessica Parola
University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Italian twittephere in COVID-19 time: a topic analysis

Mara Maretti, Vanessa Russo, Lara Fontanella, Emiliano Del Gobbo –
University of Chieti-Pescara, Gabriele D'Annunzio (Italy)

| 1.00 PM – 2.30 PM LUNCH BREAK

SIXTH SESSION

| 2. 30 PM – 4. 00 PM

The contribution of the Mixed Methods to the Online Social Research Chair:
Gabriella Punziano – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)
Discussant: Lucia Velotti – The City University of New York (Usa)
Keynote Speaker: Floriana Falcinelli – University of Perugia (Italy)
Research culture and educational sciences: digital challenge

Delphi mix methods for future scenarios during social distancing
Antonio Tintori - National Research Council (CNR), Giulia Ciancimino –
Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies (IRPPS)

Case studies and digital platforms: methodological directions from reddit
Ilir Rama - University of Milan (Italy)

**Tricked into supporting: a case study on computational propaganda
persuasion strategies**
Valentina Nerino – University of Trento (Italy)

SEVENTH SESSION

| 4. 30 PM – 6. 00 PM

The new imprint of the Social Network Analysis in the next scenario Chair:

Fabio Corbisiero – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Discussant: Giuseppe Giordano – University of Salerno (Italy)

Keynote speaker: Maria Prosperina Vitale – University of Salerno (Italy)

Unveiling network data patterns in social media

An exploratory study on the spread of fake news on Twitter: protection vs. amplification

Alfonso Amendola, Simona Castellano, Giuseppe Giordano, Maria Prosperina Vitale – University of Salerno (Italy)

Culture and networks in online social fields. Studying the duality of culture and practice in social network sites through Bourdieu's theory and social network analysis

Marco Serino – University of Naples Federico II

@ConfesionesMachistas: social networks, participatory online research and new masculinities

Javier Garcia-Martinez – Independent Researcher, Spain

RESERVED SESSION

| 5: 30 PM - 6: 00 PM

Sessione S.F.OR.A. Sperimenta forma e orienta

Università degli studi di Napoli Federico II – Regione Campania

Chair: Amalia Caputo, presentazione piano operativo per il progetto S.F.O.R.A nell’ambito del “Programma Scuola Viva – Azioni di accompagnamento”,
University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Discussant: Gianluca Attedemo, Luca Bifulco, Cristiano Felaco,
Dario Minervini, Gabriella Punziano – University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

FINAL GREETINGS

| 6: 00 PM

Organizing Committee:

Giuseppe Masullo - Head of the International Lab for Innovative Social Research (ILIS) -
University of Salerno (Italy)

Felice Addeo - University of Salerno (Italy)

Angela Delli Paoli - University of Salerno (Italy)

Gabriella Punziano - University of Naples, Federico II (Italy)

Organizing Secretary:

Marianna Coppola - University of Salerno (Italy)

Francesca Ianniello - University of Salerno (Italy)

Miriam Matteo - University of Salerno (Italy)

Immacolata Senatore - University of Salerno (Italy)

National differences and gender stereotypes in Days of Empire

Giuseppe Maiello – University of Finance and Administration, Prague (Czech Republic)

Days of Empire is a freemium mobile strategy video game developed and published by the company OMET, having actually its headquarter in Fuzhou Fujian, China. The company is specialized in fantasy video games mostly settled in the Middle-East, which are full of references to the history and mythology of the Arab and Turkish peoples. Our aim is to provide a description of the game and to carry out a qualitative analysis of the attitude of chosen players towards the game, their emotional thrusts, and the financial commitment to which many of them undergo to achieve greater success in the game. As in the game many discussions take place in the chat of the game itself, we are interested in the stereotypes referring to the nationality of origin of the players, to gender stereotypes, and even the sexual harassment to which female players are subjected. The first part of the netnographic study has already been carried out in a covered way, at a later time we would ask semi-structured and free questions to the players in a covered way. Using the emic approach, it will be shown the insider's perspective of the ways in which the players of Days of Empire relate themselves to the problematics of nationalism and gender stereotypes, and the emotional connection between single individuals and such kind of freemium game.

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