Addressing the Ideational Turn

How the Resources of Qualitative Content Analysis and Idea Analysis Can Together Strengthen the Study of Ideas

Henrik Friberg Fernros

1. Introduction

Broadly speaking, the study of ideas can be based on assumptions that are in line with either the process model of communication or semiotic (or structural) approaches to communication (Fiske 1990:40; Thompson 2003:12–20; cf. Cobley & Schultz 2013:vi).[1] The process communication model (or models more or less in line with this model) assumes "that communication is the transfer of a message from A to B" (Fiske 1990: 39). In this model, it is thus assumed that communication *contains* messages whose meanings can be discovered. That means, in turn, that the meaning of ideas – which is one form in which messages in communication can manifest themselves – can be discovered and then described.[2] In contrast, according to semiotic approaches, communication is conceptualized in terms of "how messages, or texts, interact with people in order to produce meanings" (Fiske 1990: 2). According to this approach, communication is thus a process by which the meaning of messages is the result of

---

1   I am not claiming that this is the only way of distinguishing between different approaches to the study of ideas based on different models of communication. For instance, you might prefer to use the terminology of (social) constructionism/constructivism to conceptualize the approach referred to here as the semiotic approach to communication. However, I do not think that the terminology is of most importance here; rather, my aim is to broadly distinguish between two ways of studying ideas by relating them to more fundamental views on communication. Also, I believe that such a distinction can be made between views that are more or less in line with the process model of communication and views that are largely in accordance with semiotic approaches.

2   It is important to emphasize that I am not only referring to the model developed by Shannon and Weaver (1949), but am also referring to models that all have, "in varying degrees, emphasized the *process* of communication" in contrast to other approaches which "emphasize not so much on communication as a process, but on communication as the generation of meaning" (Fiske 1990: 39).

Henrik Friberg Fernros är verksam vid Statsvetenskapliga institutionen, Göteborgs universitet.
E-post: henrik.friberg-fernros@pol.gu.se

interaction rather than discoveries. Hence, the meaning of ideas is generated by the interaction between the message and its reader.

While the literature on methods based on semiotic approaches to communication – most notably discourse analysis – is voluminous and universally spread, the literature about qualitative methods aimed at describing ideas based on the process model of communication seems to be much more limited.[3] More specifically, the two most detailed methodological approaches to the qualitative study of ideas based on the process model of communication – qualitative content analysis and idea(tional) analysis[4] – are, to different degrees, quite provisional in relation to the broader international community of political scientists.[5] The former approach, qualitative content analysis (hereafter QCA) has a dominant position in Germany but is rarer in the English-speaking world (Kuckartz & Rädiker 2023: 20; Prasad 2019).[6] Moreover, QCA is very seldom

---

3   The rationale behind this claim is based on comparisons between existing (English) textbooks on discourse analysis and textbooks on qualitative textual analysis more generally, including those which are based on the process model of communication. More specifically, methodological introductory books (such as textbooks) about discourse analysis seem to be much more common than similar kinds of books about qualitative text analysis based on the process model of communication (the label "text(ual) analysis" is often used in relation to that category). I have identified the following textbooks about discourse analysis published since 2000: Wood & Kroger 2000; Wodak & Mayer 2001; Powers 2001; Hoey 2001; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Philips 2002; Fairclough 2003; Gee, 2004; Paltridge 2006; Gee, 2010; Jones 2012; Taylor 2013; Bloor & Bloor 2013; Chimombo & Roseberry 2013; Fairclough & Fairclough 2013; Williams 2014; Coulthard & Condlin 2014; Dunn & Neumann 2016; Georgakopoulou 2019. During the same time period – i.e. since 2000 – I have only managed to identify a few introductory books on qualitative textual analysis based on the process model of communication: Kuckartz & Rädiker 2023; Helder 2011; Schreier 2012; Mayring 2014, 2022. While I might have missed some books in the latter category (although that might also be the case with regard to the former category), I nevertheless believe that it is safe to say that there is a major difference between the number of introductory methodological books based on the semiotic approach (here operationalized as books about discourse analysis) and similar kinds of books based on the process model of communication.

4   I consider the terms "ideational analysis" and "idea analysis" as being synonymous. Both terms are used in the literature to refer to the kind of method I will use here, but I will do as Mats Lindberg, one of the leading scholars, in this regard and use the term "idea analysis" to signify the method to which I refer (Lindberg 2017:95).

5   While this relationship between qualitative content and idea analysis on the one hand, and the process model of communication on the other, is seldom explicated, I nevertheless believe that these methods clearly rest on a view of communication in line with this model. As both methods assume that there is a meaning in a message to be discovered – which is manifested by the fact that these methods provide tools with which such a discovery can be made (see Section 4) – both methods also assume that there is a sender from whom the meaning derives. That is, in turn, an assumption in line with the process model – or other linear models – of communication.

6   However, the term "qualitative content analysis" is used in early English-written methodological literature, such as in Kracauer 1952 (who is claimed to be the originator of the term, see Kuckartz 2019), Berelson 1952, and George 1959, but here the term is mainly used as a way of labeling an alternative methodological modus operandi compared to the mainstream quantitative approach. Thus, in this early literature, qualitative content analysis had not been developed very much as a distinct methodological approach on its own terms. That does not mean, however, that later approaches did not learn from these early works, see Kuckartz 2019.

applied in the field of political science.[7] The provinciality is, however, even more obvious with regard to the latter approach, idea(tional) analysis. While this method is mainly applied by political scientists, there are very few publications in English proclaiming to be idea-analytical. Indeed, one of its most prominent proponents, the political scientist Evert Vedung, claims that idea analysis is a "Swedish innovation" and is – as a self-proclaimed method – almost exclusively written about in Swedish (Vedung 2018: 157).[8] Unsurprisingly, nor has there been any interaction between scholars of QCA and of idea analysis.

Such a state of affairs is hardly satisfactory. Especially due to the fact that political science as well as social sciences in general have experienced an "ideational turn," which of course makes the need for adequate methods to describe ideas more urgent (Berman 2013; Gofas & Hay 2010; Béland & Cox 2010; Campbell 2002; Blyth 1997). In light of this, it is problematic, and indeed a waste of resources, if the majority of political scientists are not acquainted with some of the most developed methodological approaches to the study of ideas that would benefit their scholarly endeavors.

In order to adequately respond to the ideational turn in political science, qualitative methodologists need to apply and develop approaches that are as good as possible. I will address these concerns by first introducing two somewhat less well-known approaches to the study of ideas and thereby potentially expanding the toolbox for ideational analysts, and, secondly, by suggesting ways in which the comparative advantages of these two approaches respectively can be exploited in order to improve the manner in which ideas are examined in political science as well as in social sciences in general. The overarching aim of my article is to demonstrate the relevance of QCA and idea analysis to scholars who study ideas.

As I have already indicated above, the focus here is on descriptive analyses of ideas. However, that certainly does not rule out that analyses of ideas – which are based on the process model of communication – may have other aims than merely description. First, such analyses may be aimed at evaluations rather than descriptions of ideas. In that case, the aim is to establish a state of affairs "that should be" in some respects, or in all things, considered.[9] In contrast,

---

7   The literature here is indeed thin. In my efforts to localize the literature, I only succeeded in identifying the following publications using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) in political science journals: Acar, 2019; Coşkan 2021 et al.; Real-Dato et al. 2022; Siewert 2021; Heitmayer 2021; Sheikh & Askari 2021; Dardanelli 2014; Wierenga 2019; Lounasmeri 2020.

8   Here are some of the rare exceptions: Lindberg 2017, 2018a, 2018b; Lapidus 2015; Vedung 1982; Petersson 1964.

9   This is certainly a broad category which includes full-fledged normative analyses as well as more limited analyses of the coherence or the compatibility of ideas. The former category is voluminous and includes works by, and discussions on, philosophers such as Rawls, Nozick, and Habermas while the latter is narrower but still distinct and includes works by, for example, Tingsten 1936, Berlin 1969, Jagers 2007, and Friberg-Fernros & Brommesson 2013.

a descriptive analysis aims to establish a state of affairs "that is" rather than "should be". Now, while descriptions are insufficient to accomplish an evaluative analysis of ideas, they are nevertheless necessary for evaluations – since we need to know what something is before it is evaluated. This illustrates, in turn, the utility of providing tools for descriptions of ideas, which I aim to do here.

Secondly, studies of ideas based on the process model of communication may be aimed at establishing casual relationships rather than merely providing descriptions. Here, I believe that it is important to differentiate between, on the one hand, the aims of the *analysis* and, on the other, the overarching aim of the *study* as a whole. By advancing the aims of the analysis – by applying, for instance, idea analysis or QCA – answers are generated and used in order to fulfill the overarching aim of the study, which, to simplify matters slightly, can either be of a descriptive, explorative, or explanatory nature. Thus, while I am assuming that the aim of the analysis of ideas is descriptive, the result of this descriptive analysis can be used in studies with descriptive, explorative, or explanatory (overarching) aims. This also means that the substance of the discussion in this paper is potentially relevant for both descriptive as well as explorative or explanatory studies.[10]

2. Varieties of Idea Analyses and Qualitative Content Analyses

Like many phenomena in social sciences, there are no settled definitions of either QCA or idea analysis. One oft-cited definition of QCA is suggested by Philipp Mayring (2000: 2), according to which it is "an approach of empirical, methodological [sic!] controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification." In a later publication, he elaborates in the following manner about the "most salient points in the characterization" of QCA:

> The qualitative content analysis' approach (as with the quantitative content analysis) is category-based, that is its distinguishing feature. Categories refer to aspects within the text, which put the meaning of those aspects in a nutshell (Mayring 2019: 29).

Idea analysts often claim that there is a broad variety of different kinds of idea analyses. Evert Vedung proposes four different kinds of idea analyses: descriptive, critical, explanatory, and constructive (2018b). Ludvig Beckman generally agrees, although he does not include constructive analysis (2005). I will defend the stronger claim that idea analysis is essentially a descriptive

---

10   This is indeed very common. See Collier et al. 2008, Table 7.1 for many examples of these kinds of studies.

method by which the content of ideas is described in a systematized way.[11] Consequently, as I see it, idea analysis is neither evaluative nor able to establish causal relations by itself.

Starting with the latter, I suggest that what is sometimes called explanatory (or functional) idea analysis should instead be considered as a design rather than a specific kind of analysis. By the term explanatory, we usually mean "to give an explanation about something"[12], but to do that we need to make comparisons between variables – either over time or in space – which in turn is about the design rather than about the analysis of the study. As the design and the analysis of the study belong to two different stages of the research process respectively, the concept of "explanatory idea analysis" seems therefore almost oxymoronic. Instead, I suggest that we distinguish between the realization of the aim of the study as a whole – which is dependent on specific designs – and the realization of the aim of the specific analysis, and that idea analysis (or QCA) belongs to the latter.

The question about whether idea analysis is essentially descriptive – in terms of being non-evaluative – is less clear cut. It is sometimes suggested that some version of idea analysis can be evaluative, often labeled as critical idea analysis (or idea/ideological criticism).[13] While I do not think that there are any principal reasons to reject such a claim, I nevertheless believe that, from a pragmatic point of view, we should exclude evaluative approaches from the method of idea analysis in order to differentiate it from argumentation analysis. As I see it, argumentation analysis, which is much more widespread and established than idea analysis, already provides tools for evaluative studies aimed at determining the soundness or merely the validity of arguments. There is therefore no reason to re-conceptualize evaluative analyses in terms of versions of idea analyses since such a re-conceptualization would overlap significantly with argumentation analysis (Vedung 2018b; Beckman 2005).

Admittedly, there are evaluative analyses that do not address the soundness or the validity of arguments. This is the case when comparisons are made in relation to other norms than validity or soundness – for instance, deliberative norms (Steiner et al. 2005), norms of consistency (Jagers 2007) or efficiency norms (Cellini & Kee 2015) – which, in turn, suggests that there are evaluative

---

11 This definition is similar to how so-called content or descriptive idea analysis is usually defined (Bergström & Svärd 2018: 140f; Beckman 2005: 49).

12 https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/explanatory

13 By evaluative analysis, I here mean an analysis from which you can draw a conclusion about whether an entity of analysis is better or worse than other entities in some regard (morally, epistemically, rationally etc.). As the political scientist John Gerring notes (2012: 723), this is the way the concept of evaluative analysis is usually used in philosophy, but, as I note below, this use is also common in other kind of research as well. Thus, by evaluative analysis, I am not referring to analyses in which the empirical results can be expressed at different levels (for instance, on ordinal or interval scales). For this latter use of the term "evaluative analysis", see Kuckartz & Rädiker 2023, Chapter 6).

analyses that cannot be accommodated within the category of argumentation analysis. Nonetheless, "non-argumentative evaluative analyses" are not alternatives to descriptive analyses. Instead, I believe that descriptions of ideas constitute the first step in evaluative analyses since it is only once the idea is described that comparisons with other norms – such as consistency or deliberative ideals – can be made. Non-argumentative evaluative analysis must therefore be based on and is added to descriptive (idea) analysis.

My suggestion is therefore that idea analysis should be seen as a merely non-evaluative method, even though that does not mean, as I have noted above, that it can only be used in descriptive studies, but rather also in studies of a causal or evaluative nature. While in theory this is also the case with qualitative content analysis, to my knowledge, this method has thus far not been applied to studies of an evaluative nature, but only to studies with either causal or (merely) descriptive aims.[14] Therefore – since my aim is to address the current practice of both qualitative content and idea analysis – I will not consider evaluative studies but rather focus on studies with descriptive or causal aims. By studies with causal aims, I mean studies with either explanatory or explorative aims.

However, also with this limitation, there are still a variety of ways in which QCA and idea analysis can be used in different studies. Most fundamentally, the overarching research approach in studies is determined by the extent of knowledge about the research problem. If there exists extensive previous research and existing theories, then, prima facie, a deductive approach is appropriate, while scant previous research and a lack of established theories speak in favor of an inductive approach.

Here, it is important to notice that I am not reducing deductive approaches to merely explanatory studies in which hypotheses are tested. Even though such explanatory studies clearly constitute one (maybe indeed a paradigmatic form of) deductive approaches, I operate with a broader meaning according to which deductive and inductive approaches are differentiated by the way previous research is used generally. In deductive approaches, previous research is the point of departure in the design of the study (by using, for instance, hypotheses) and/or in the analysis of the study (by using, for instance, theory-based analytical tools) while this is not the case for inductive approaches.[15] Consequently, according to this meaning, the differences between deductive and inductive approaches can be reflected in both the design and/or the

---

14   For instance, neither of the leading textbooks on QCA– by Mayring (2014;2022), Kuckartz & Rädiker (2023), or Schreier (2012) – discuss QCA in the context of this kind of evaluative studies. Kuckartz & Rädiker (2023) do indeed use the term "evaluative analysis" (see Chapter 6), but with another meaning (see footnote 13 above).

15   However, I do not claim that the difference between inductive and deductive approaches is necessarily exhaustive nor binary.

Table 1. Decisions related to the design and the analysis respectively actualized by the distinction between deductive and inductive approaches

		Design of the study	
		Deductive approach (explanatory)	*Inductive approach (explorative, descriptive)*
Analysis of the study	*Deductive approach*	Demker 1997; Brommesson & Ekengren 2013.	Brommesson 2010; Brommesson & Fernros 2009; Laudel & Bielick 2018.
	Inductive approach	Ekengren 2011.	Winkelhage et al. 2013; Lin et al. 2013; Herrick et al. 2022.

analysis of the study.[16] This is illustrated by the table below in which I also provide examples of each kind of study applying either QCA or idea analysis.

Principally, I believe that both qualitative content and ideal analysis can be applied in all these kinds of studies, even though some are more common than others. For instance, I believe that most idea analysists have, more or less, taken a deductive approach in the analysis for granted, which is manifested by the fact that researchers working within this tradition mostly apply theoretically based analytical tools, such as ideal types.[17] In contrast, the implications of the distinction between deductive and inductive approaches in the analysis are extensively discussed among qualitative content analysists.

3. Varieties of Analytical Tools in Idea Analysis and Qualitative Content Analysis

Different kinds of analytical tools can be applied in both deductive and inductive studies. Drawing on my differentiation between the aims of the studies and of the analysis/analyses respectively, I suggest that we can make a distinction between deductively and inductively constructed analytical tools, which in turn can be used in studies with either deductive or inductive designs. Here, I will not, however, differentiate between studies with different designs but only discuss deductively and inductively constructed analytical tools. For practical reasons, I will start with, and focus more on, the former since discussing the latter rigorously requires the introduction of empirical material. Instead, I will here only sketch two principally different approaches to the

16   This implies that we can construct analytical tools inductively in studies with deductive designs as well as constructing analytical tools deductively in studies with inductive designs, which might sound odd unless the difference between the design and the analysis of the study is fully appreciated.

17   This is illustrated by the fact that inductive approaches are not considered in textbooks that discuss idea analysis – such as Bergström 2018 [2000]; Lindberg 2017; and Beckman 2005 – nor in articles about idea analysis, e.g. Vedung 2018b.

empirical material and illustrate how it is possible to proceed in constructing analytical tool inductively using a fictitious example of a study.

3.1 DEDUCTIVELY CONSTRUCTED ANALYTICAL TOOLS

By deductively constructed analytical tools, I simply mean tools that are based on material outside the empirical study in question. Within the (Swedish) idea analytical tradition, at least three distinct forms of analytical tools can be crystallized: ideal types (Bjereld & Demker 2000); classifications (Andersson 2004;), and dimensions (Strandberg 1998). In contrast, it is harder to differentiate between specific forms of analytical tools in QCA; instead, a single concept, such as "categories" (Mayring 2014; 2022; Kuckartz & Rädiker 2023) or "coding frame" (Schreier 2012), is commonly used. However, a closer reading reveals that within such singular conceptualizations, there are indeed also variations within this tradition, even though these variations are not conceptualized in a uniform way. I will therefore take my point of departure in the tradition of idea analysis, but also add insights derived from scholars working with QCA, which are relevant for specifying the features of ideal types, dimensions, and classifications respectively.

Moreover, the forms of analytical tools that I will focus on – ideal types, classifications, and dimensions – are widely discussed and applied in the field of political science far beyond the tradition of idea analysis, and my conceptualizations of these analytical tools might differ in comparison to how they are interpreted by other researchers. Most fundamentally, dimensions and classifications might be seen as aspects or elements of (other) analytical tools rather than analytical tools in themselves (Bailey 1994; Collier 2008, see also Schreier 2012). I certainly do not deny that dimensions and classifications can be used as elements of other analytical tools; my claim is simply that they are not *merely* such elements but can also constitute analytical tools in themselves.[18] I will discuss each of these analytical tools sequentially, starting with dimensions, proceeding with idea types, and ending with classifications.

3.1.1 Dimensions

While the concept of dimension originates from mathematics, it is commonly applied in social sciences in a metaphorical sense. The educational scholar Göran Linde describes the logic behind the application of dimensions in social sciences in the following manner:

---

18   In relation to my tripartite conceptualization of different forms of analytical tools, I suggest that dimensions could be used as elements in both classification and ideal types, and classifications in ideal types, while ideal types are too complex to be used as elements in either dimensions or classifications. Ideal types are consequently merely an analytical tool in themselves, while both classifications and dimensions can be used as elements in other kinds of analytical tools as well as constituting analytical tools in themselves.

> The use of 'dimensions' in social science is a metaphor in which social phenomena are placed in positions just as points are in mathematics of space. When dimensions are used in social science, the end points of the dimensions are usually given designations that are supposed to be opposites of each other (2003: 38).

Consequently, by applying dimensions as an analytical tool, the aim is to describe one aspect of a scalar phenomenon – i.e. something which can be conceptualized in degrees, like, for instance, physical phenomena such as length and weight, but also psychological phenomena such as intelligence and kindness. Consequently, applying Philipp Maying's distinction between nominal and ordinal deductively constructed analytical tools (2014: 99), dimensions are ordinal deductive tools by nature. That, in turn, implies two requirements for the use of dimensions in the study of ideas: first, that the unit of analysis is of a scalar nature, and, secondly, that the endpoints are opposites of each other.

In order to illustrate the implications of the application of these requirements, consider the differentiation between liberals and conservatives in an American context. While the ideological commitments to either liberalism or conservatism could principally be viewed in a scalar manner – i.e. that people could be more or less committed to liberalism or conservatism respectively – the ideological concepts of "liberalism" and "conservatism" are too complex to be examined with the use of dimensions. This is illustrated by the fact that liberalism and conservatism cannot be considered as "opposites of each other". For instance, if, ideologically speaking, you distance yourself from liberalism, that does not necessarily mean that you move ideologically toward the conservative endpoint; instead, you might move closer to socialism. Hence, liberalism and conservatism are not exhaustive ideological alternatives.

In contrast, suppose that you are focusing on the view of the moral capacity of the human person in liberalism and conservatism, and conclude that conservatism takes a more pessimistic position in comparison to liberalism. Thus, we assume that conservatives, more than liberals, believe that humans are inclined to act morally wrongly. We then have a unit of analysis that fulfills the requirements for the use of dimensions. First, the view of the moral capacity of humans is a scalar phenomenon, and secondly, the relationship between optimism and pessimism can be conceptualized as "opposites of each other", which is illustrated by the fact that if you are becoming less optimistic about the moral capacity of the human person, then it is implied that you are becoming more pessimistic.

It is important to note that as long as a unit of analysis fulfills these two requirements – i.e. it is a scalar phenomenon, and it can be conceptualized in terms of opposite endpoints – dimensions can also be combined. For instance, in examining liberalism and conservatism, you might not only be interested

in their views on the moral capacity of the human person, but also their view on the intellectual capacity of the human person, which is arguably also a scalar phenomenon. As long as the two dimensions are analytically distinct, they can be combined, which means that the analytical tool then becomes two-dimensional.

3.1.2 Ideal Types

The German social scientist Max Weber is commonly viewed as the one who launched ideal types as an analytical tool. He describes ideal types in the following manner:

> An ideal type is formed by the one-sided *accentuation* of one or more points of view... In its conceptual purity, this mental construct (Gedankenbild) cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality (1949: 90).

Based on this description of ideal types, the American sociologist Kenneth Bailey concludes that there are two features that are "the heart of the method" of ideal types:

> 1) the ideal type is not found empirically; and (2) the ideal type is used to study the degree to which a concrete empirical case differs from the ideal (1994: 17).

Consequently, following Weber and Bailey, we can conclude that the use of ideal types assumes that the units of analysis are scalar phenomena since they are used to determine the degree to which "a concrete empirical case" deviates from the ideal type. That, in turn, implies that the ideal type is conceptually purer than the concrete empirical case. In fact, the aim of constructing ideal types is to maximize their conceptual purity in order to determine how close concrete empirical cases come to this conceptually pure construct.

When an ideal-type analysis is applied, usually more than one ideal type is constructed. That is usually necessary in order achieve exhaustiveness (Bailey 1994), which in turn means that all empirical material of relevance for the research question can be related to the ideal types. Consequently, often two or more empirical phenomena are conceptually "purified" as ideal types. While these ideal types – like dimensions – may constitute endpoints in terms of being "opposites of each other", they are not necessarily ordinal by nature, but can also constitute a nominal scale, which means that the ideal types are not necessarily scalarly related, even though they should be mutually exclusive.[19] For instance, it does not necessarily follow that a political party comes closer to

---

19   For the distinction between ordinal and nominal construction of analytical tools in QCA, see Mayring 2014: 99.

the conservative ideal type when it develops in a way that increases its distance from the liberal ideal type. The party might instead develop in a socialist direction, which means that the distance from *both* the liberal and the conservative ideal type increases. However, it is also perfectly possible to construct ordinally ordered ideal types. For instance, you might construct and differentiate between, for example, ideal-typical radical and modest left-wing (i.e. communism versus reformed socialism) ideologies respectively. Such ideal types would then be ordinarily related in terms of ideological radicalness.

3.1.3 Classifications

Classification can be defined as "the ordering of entities into groups or classes on the basis of their similarity" (Bailey 1994:1). Consequently, by using classifications, you aim at determining whether entities belong to groups. While this definition might seem very basic, it nevertheless implies a difference between, on the one hand, analyses based on classifications, and analyses based on ideal types or dimensions on the other. The results of analyses based on classification are conceptualized in binary terms – either entities belong or do not belong to groups – whereas the results of analyses based on ideal types or dimensions are conceptualized in terms of degrees of deviations from an endpoint (dimension) or a theoretically idealized construct (ideal types).

   In order to determine whether entities belong to certain groups, necessary and sufficient conditions of the belongingness must be defined. By defining *necessary* conditions, you identify what features entities *must* have in common in order to belong to a certain group. By defining *sufficient* conditions, you identify features that are *enough* for entities to belong to a group. Together, necessary and sufficient conditions ensure that the classification is mutually exclusive, which means that entities belong to one group. For instance, a person might be classified as a student as long as they are registered for a course at a college or university. Being registered for a course at a college or university is therefore both a necessary and a sufficient condition for being a student. This makes the classification mutually exclusive in the sense that a person cannot both be a student and not a student at the same time.

   The fact that results of analyses generated through the use of classifications are conceptualized in binary terms does not, however, mean that classifications cannot contain scalar components. For instance, consider our previous example according to which human nature could be described in a two-dimensional way: morally and intellectually. These views of the intellectual and moral capacity of the human person can certainly vary in degrees, as you can view the capabilities in these two respects as being more or less strong (or weak). Now, this two-dimensional way of describing humans morally and intellectually can also form the basis for a classification as long as you are able to identify a threshold (based on necessary and sufficient conditions) that separates pessimistic

from optimistic views. It is necessary to establish such a threshold in order to apply classification – otherwise it would not be possible to determine whether a certain empirically identified view of the capacity of the human person can be classified as being either optimistic or pessimistic.

However, in order to achieve exhaustiveness in this specific example – which means that all views on the moral and intellectual capacity of the human person are covered by the classification – you would need to add a potential group, namely those who view the capacity of the human person as equally strong and weak. That means that in this specific case, we end up with a trichotomy: 1) views according to which human capacity is more strong than weak; 2) views according to which human capacity is more weak than strong; and 3) views according to which human capacity is *equally* strong (or weak). Consequently, not only do you have to find thresholds in order to classify phenomena, but you also need to ensure that the classification is exhaustive.

3.1.4 Comparing Dimensions, Ideal Types, and Classifications

It goes without saying that none of these analytical tools are inherently better than the other; the comparative adequateness of these tools are of course determined by the aim of the analysis, which is in turn dependent on the research problem. However, there are some general features of these tools that might be of relevance in deciding which of them to use in an analysis. Here, I will discuss different features related to the scope of applicability (of the tools) and to the validity as well as reliability (of the analysis).

First, relevant to the scope of applicability, both ideal types and classifications can be constructed on a nominal or ordinal scale, while dimensions are ordinal by nature. In that regard, the two former analytical tools have a greater scope of applicability compared to the latter one. Another feature of relevance for their scope of applicability is the fact that ideal types, in particular, but also – albeit somewhat less obviously – dimensions, are by nature theory-laden in a way that classifications are not. The very fact that ideal types are defined as conceptually pure constructs that are not found empirically suggests that you should not construct ideal types merely on the basis of empirical material. While there are some revisionist routes you can take in order to make such an analysis possible (see Bailey 1994:22), it is nevertheless safe to say that the use of ideal types fits better within a deductive rather than an inductive approach to the analysis of ideas.

Dimensions too seem to fit better within a deductive rather than an inductive approach. This is because you need to rely on theory in order to describe the value of each endpoint. As these endpoints are supposed to represent the maximization of a property (and its negation), such a description can arguably not be found in empirically collected material. Rather, such a maximization must be guided by theory, which in turn implies that the construction of

dimensions must rely on theory. Hence, also the use of dimensions seems to fit better within a deductive rather than an inductive approach to the analysis. It is therefore possible to conclude that classifications seem to have a broader scope of application than both ideal types and dimensions.

Secondly, ideal types and dimensions, on the one hand, and classifications on the other, seem to have inverted preconditions for fulfilling requirements related to reliability and validity. The fact that the result of analyses based on ideal types or dimensions must be conceptualized in terms of deviations from the ideal types or dimensional endpoints, necessarily implies a degree of vagueness, as it seems impossible to determine the distance between the empirical phenomenon and the ideal type or the dimensional endpoints with precision. This, in turn, generates problems with regard to the potential reliability of the analysis.

Now, one possible response may certainly be to claim that determining the precise distance from ideal types or dimensional endpoints is not generally the goal of an analysis; rather, the goal is usually to determine the order (in space) or the movement (over time) of empirical phenomena in relation to endpoints or ideal types. While that is certainly correct, it nevertheless seems valuable to *also* be able to say something about the extent to which the phenomena in question actually exhibit, in a non-relative sense, the features that constitute the ideal types or the dimensional endpoints. This, however, seems to be inherently difficult. In contrast, in analyses that apply classifications, the aim is to determine whether or not phenomena merely belong to certain groups, which seems much less difficult to accomplish in a reliable manner once sufficient and necessary conditions have been identified.

However, precisely due to the fact that you need to identify necessary and sufficient conditions when constructing a classification, difficulties related to requirements of (theoretical) validity might arise more in relation to this tool compared to ideal types and dimensions.

As an illustration, consider the example above, according to which a classification was made in order to describe views as being either optimistic or pessimistic about the moral and intellectual capacity of the human person. In order to classify views in this regard, it is important to find the necessary and sufficient conditions that demarcate optimistic views from pessimistic ones. Such an operationalization seems indeed difficult to achieve in a theoretically valid manner.

However, when constructing ideal types or dimensions, such difficulties are not as apparent. As the very aim of ideal types and dimensions is to maintain theoretical and conceptual purity, such radical operationalization of theoretical concepts and positions can more or less be avoided, which increases the (theoretical) validity of the operationalization. For instance, in constructing dimensions or ideal types about moral and/or intellectual capacity, it is not

necessary to consider how to demarcate between pessimistic and optimistic views respectively on the basis of sufficient and necessary conditions. Instead, the endpoints of the dimension or the content of ideal types can be informed by theory without such operationalizations.

3.2 TO CONSTRUCT ANALYTICAL TOOLS INDUCTIVELY

From a general point of view and according to Mayring, it is possible to inductively construct analytical tools either through "summary" or "explication" (2022: 73).[20] Starting with the former, he suggests that the aim of constructing analytical tools through summarization is to gain a more generalized overview of the material (ibid). This is achieved by abstracting the content of the analysis, which in turn means that information concerning the empirical material is reduced or subtracted.

In order to illustrate how summarization might work, let us assume that we are interested in peoples' ideas of artificial intelligence (AI). Let us further assume that we do not have strong theoretical expectations about the content of these ideas and that we therefore approach this research theme inductively. By conducting interviews, we learn that respondents with some professional background – such as programmers, actors, journalists – express more concern about the development of AI than others. While the ways in which these respondents express their concern vary, there is one common denominator: they are afraid of losing their jobs. Consequently, with summarization, we reduce the specific ways in which these respondents express their concerns over AI and construct an analytical tool based on the essence of their concerns – which is the fear of losing their jobs.

Constructing analytical tools inductively through summarization corresponds nicely to one of two possible overarching aims of inductive analyses: First, to seek and collect information in particular cases – for example, concerns over the development of AI – that potentially provides a basis for other studies which aim at greater generalizations (for example, generate hypotheses about some professionals being more concerned about the development of AI than others, which then can be tested in other studies). The other overarching aim of inductive analysis is to provide a more detailed and thicker description of the empirical material in order to gain a better understanding of particular cases. In order to achieve that aim, Mayring suggests that we construct analytical tools inductively by explicating – i.e. by adding information (2022: 73).

---

20   Mayring claims that summary and explication together with "structuring" – with which you deductively construct the analytical tool – are "three fundamental forms of interpreting" (2022:73). It should be noted, however, that he also differentiates and mixes these forms, which means that he ends up with as many as nine subcategories (Mayring 2022: 75). For practical reasons, I here focus on the "fundamental forms" and more specifically on those related to inductive approaches – i.e. summary and explication.

Reusing our previous fictitious example of a study of peoples' ideas about AI, we can illustrate how explicating works by assuming that some respondents might have viewed AI as representing an independent existential threat against humanity (Bostrom 2014). Let us further assume that they did not articulate exactly how AI would constitute such a threat, and also that their concerns became more understandable once we presupposed that the respondents believed that AI could acquire consciousness and superintelligence far beyond human capacity. In this context, explication can mean that we add such an assumption (about the possibility that AI gains consciousness and superintelligence) to our empirical material in order to make it more understandable. Consequently, explicating is precisely the opposite to summarizing, and is aimed at increasing the richness of information in the material in order to gain a better understanding of particular cases (for example, reasons for peoples' concerns over AI). Explicating is thus appropriate in studies where the aim is to provide thick descriptions of phenomena, which is a common *modus operandi* in certain case studies.

These inductive approaches either reduce information from the empirical material through summarization or add information to the empirical material through explication. What specific kind of analytical tool might we subsequently end up with summarization and explication respectively? As noted above regarding three deductively-constructed analytical tools, only classifications are well suited to an inductive analytical approach. That is because both ideal types and dimensions, at least according to the standard view, should be based on material outside the study – particularly theories. However, I believe that not even classifications are necessarily relevant as a possible form of inductively constructed analytical tool – at least not for explication. The aim of explication is to make the material more comprehensible by adding information. In other words, we explicate in order to provide a thicker description of the material. I fail to see the relevance of requiring that such an analytical tool is formally defined by necessary and sufficient conditions – something which classifications should be.

In order to illustrate this point, consider my previous example about a fictitious study in which we learned that some respondents viewed AI as representing an independent existential threat to humanity. The respondents did not exactly articulate how AI would constitute such a threat, but once we presupposed that the respondents believed that AI could acquire consciousness and superintelligence, their concerns became more understandable. Consequently, through explication, we inductively construct a tool with which we can categorize ideas about AI which are motivated by concerns about AI gaining consciousness. However, it does not seem generally appropriate – at least, it is not a requirement – to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for such a categorization – i.e. to construct a classification – in order to sharply

differentiate these ideas from other ideas about AI. Why? Because such a classification would not be based on the empirical material as such, but rather on extrapolations based on our interpretation of the empirical material, which in turn limits its scope of applicability outside the specific study in question. Since such extrapolations are constitutive ingredients of explication – i.e. explication by its very nature means that information is added to the empirical material – it is reasonable to conclude, I argue, that analytical tools based on explication will usually not be used in studies other than the original one. Thus, there seems to be comparatively less strong motivation to put an effort into developing such a tool by adhering to the formal criteria of a classification.

In contrast, I think that classification as a possible form of inductively constructed analytical tool is much more relevant with summarization, where information is subtracted rather than added. By constructing an analytical tool by subtracting information, the possibilities of obtaining a generalized overview of the empirical material are increased (Mayring 2022: 75-81). Thereby, the scope of applicability outside the context of the study is increased, which in turn adds comparatively more motivation to develop such a tool by adhering to the formal criteria of a classification by providing necessary and sufficient conditions.

We can again illustrate using the fictious study above on ideas about AI. It is not difficult to imagine the usefulness of being able to sharply differentiate between various ideas about how AI represents a threat by providing necessary and sufficient conditions once we learn that respondents with some professional background – such as programmers, actors, journalists – express more concern about the development than others. For instance, it seems appropriate to be able to differentiate sharply between ideas about AI *replacing* professionals altogether as a workforce from ideas about AI making some professions *"merely" less stimulating.* This could be done by providing sufficient and necessary conditions for each view. Here, information about specific ways of articulating both kinds of ideas about AI is subtracted – which is the *modus operandi* of summarization – while the essences of the two different ideas respectively are maintained. The views are thus decontextualized with summarization, which in turn means that it is easy to see how this classification of ideas – about AI replacing professionals all together as a workforce and about AI making some professions "merely" less stimulating respectively – can be reused in another study. Consequently, it makes more sense to use summarization instead of explication to categorize the empirical material by constructing classifications based on necessary and sufficient conditions.

4. Expanding the Scope of Applicability by Combining QCA and Idea Analysis

I think that both QCA and idea analysis have important contributions to make for adequately addressing the ideational turn in political science and social sciences more generally. The comparative strength of the idea analytical tradition is its explicit and systematic treatment of deductively constructed analytical tools – consisting of, for example, ideal types, classifications, and dimensions – for analyses of ideas. Thus, this tradition provides a toolbox that can be useful for any qualitative scholar who studies ideas. The comparative strength of the tradition of QCA is, in contrast, the way in which it treats inductive studies and analysis. First, it does so by conceptualizing the difference between deductive and inductive approaches in the earlier step in the research process, and secondly, by providing an approach for constructing tools inductively either through explication or summarization.

What is then the scope of research applicability if you consider the complementary comparative strengths of both QCA and idea analysis? More specifically: What kind of research about ideas can we address by making both QCA and idea analysis more available for ideational scholars? I will illustrate how both these approaches may expand the scope of applicability by taking my point of departure in the tripartite categorization of empirical research as either explanatory, explorative, or (merely) descriptive.

Explanatory research: This kind of research is perhaps mostly associated with quantitative research, which in turn might suggest that qualitative idea analysis will be of minor relevance. That is, however, incorrect. First, while quantitative approaches might dominate explanatory research, there is certainly room for testing hypotheses without large n-numbers – something which is also reflected in research within both QCA and idea analysis (e.g., Blatter & Haverland 2012; Schmidt 2008; Brommesson & Ekengren 2013; Demker 1997). Secondly, it might be relevant to apply qualitative analyses in some phases of quantitative research. For instance, in order to determine the value of the dependent variable in explanatory research, you might need to make descriptions of the units of analysis, which in turn can be done using the tools of idea analysis. Here, the tools are commonly deductively constructed as the aim is to determine the effects of the independent variable, which means that the whole toolbox of analytical tools is available – i.e. ideal types, classifications, or dimensions. Consequently, even though the dependent variable will in the end be the object of quantification, its value might nevertheless initially have to be qualitatively determined, suggestively by the tools of idea analysis.

Explorative research: This line of research is more commonly associated with qualitative approaches such as process tracing. Here the explanandum is known, which means that the aim is to determine the value of the independent variable (the *explanans*). Moreover, in explorative research, the point

of departure is the empirical material (again, the *explanandum*) and the tool of analysis – which will be used to determine the value of the independent variable – is usually inductively developed. This actualizes the choice between analyses that ultimately aim at subtracting (summarizing) or adding (explicating) information, which in turn is determined by whether the overarching aim of a study is merely to suggest possible explanations for a particular case or (at least also) to generate hypotheses, which than can be tested in other (explanatory) studies. Explication (i.e. adding information) is arguably appropriate if the overarching aim is to understand the factors in the particular case in question while summarization (i.e. subtracting information) is appropriate if the overarching aim is to generate hypotheses. As discussed above, the analytical tool of classification might be relevant in particular to the latter kind of inductive studies as their aim is to provide a basis for future explanatory studies, which suggests that the analytical tool will be reused. That in turn makes it adequate to develop an analytical tool that is defined formally by necessary and sufficient conditions.

Descriptive research: In descriptive research, the construction of the tool of analysis can be developed either deductively, based on material – for example theories – outside the study, or inductively, based on the empirical material. In the former case, a tool of analysis is deductively constructed, which means that all three kinds of tools – i.e. ideal types, dimensions, or classifications – are applicable. In contrast, if the tools of analysis are constructed inductively, they are based on the empirical material about ideas, which in turn means – like in the case with explorative studies – that we either can add (explication) or subtract (summarization) information in analysis. The rationale for this decision in description studies is arguably similar to the one in explorative studies: if the overarching aim is mainly to gain understanding about particular cases, then explication is prima facie preferable, while summarization is prima facie preferable if the overarching aim is mainly to provide a basis for future research.

5. Conclusions

The ideational turn in political science makes the question about how we can adequately describe ideas urgent. Yet, there is a lack of literature about how to conduct descriptions of ideas based on the so-called process model of communication. According to this model, communication aims to transfer messages, which, in turn, implies that messages – in terms of, for example, ideas – have a meaning, provided by the sender, that can be discovered. The situation is strikingly different when it comes to semiotic approaches to communication, which is the main rival view, according to which the meaning of messages is not discovered but rather produced. Here, the literature about how to conduct such an analysis – generally in the form of discourse analyses – is voluminous.

The aim with this article has been to remedy this imbalance by introducing two appropriate approaches – QCA and idea analysis – which are both based on the process model of communication, and to demonstrate how these approaches can adequately address the ideational turn. More specifically, I have demonstrated how these approaches can contribute by providing deductively constructed tools as well as ways of constructing tools inductively by either summarization or explication. Furthermore, I have also shown how these tools can be used to examine ideas in studies with either explanatory, explorative, or descriptive designs

References

Acar, Yasemin Gülsüm, 2019. "Village Guards as 'In Between' in the Turkish-Kurdish Conflict: Re-Examining Identity and Position in Intergroup Conflict", *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 7(2), p. 925-940.

Andersson, Jan, 2004. *Yttrandefrihetens dilemman: debatten om hetspropaganda, mediekoncentration samt personlig integritet mellan 1940-och 2000-tal.* Dissertation. Uppsala University.

Bailey, Kenneth D., 1994. *Typologies and Taxonomies: An Introduction to Classification Techniques.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Beckman, Ludvig, 2005. *Grundbok i idéanalys.* Stockholm: Santérus Förlag.

Berelson, Bernard, 1952. *Content Analysis in Communication Research.* Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.

Béland, Daniel & Cox, Robert, H. (eds), 2010. *Ideas and Politics in Social Science Research.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bergström, Göran & Boréus, Kristina (eds), 2018 [2000]. *Textens mening och makt: metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text-och diskursanalys.* Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Bergström, Göran & Svärd, Per-Anders, 2018. "Idé- och ideologianalys", p. 139-176 in Bergström, G. & Boréus, K. (eds), *Textens mening och makt: Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys.* Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Berlin, Isaiah, 1958. *Two Concepts of Liberty.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Berman, Sheri, 2013. "Ideational Theorizing in the Social Sciences since 'Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State'", *Governance* 26(2), p. 217-37.

Bjereld, Ulf & Demker, Marie, 2000. "Foreign Policy as Battlefield: A Study of National Interest and Party Motives", *Scandinavian Political Studies* 23(1), p. 17-36.

Blatter, Joachim & Haverland, Markus, 2012. *Designing Case Studies: Explanatory Approaches in Small-N Research.* New York: Springer.

Bloor, Meriel & Bloor, Thomas, 2013. *The Practice of Critical Discourse Analysis: An Introduction.* London: Routledge.

Blyth Mark M., 1997. "Any More Bright Ideas?" The Ideational Turn of Comparative Political Cconomy", *Comparative Politics* 29(2), p. 229-250.

Bostrom, Nick, 2014. *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Brommesson, Douglas, 2010. "Normative Europeanization: The case of Swedish foreign policy reorientation", *Cooperation and Conflict* 45(2), p. 224-244.

Brommesson, Douglas & Ekengren, Ann-Marie, 2013. "What happens when a new government enters office? A comparison of ideological change in British and Swedish foreign policy 1991–2011", *Cooperation and Conflict* 48(1), p. 3-27.

Brommesson, Douglas & Friberg-Fernros, Henrik, 2009. "Individualisation and destabilisation of the international order. The case of the responsibility to protect", *International Review of Sociology* 19(2), p. 315-330.

Campbell, John L., 2002. "Ideas, Politics, and Public Policy", *Annual Review of Sociology* 28(1), p. 21-38.

Cellini, Riegg S. & Kee, James, E., 2015. "Cost-Effectiveness and Cost-Benefit Analysis", p. 636-672 in *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*. Hoboken, NJ, USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Chimombo, Moira & Roseberry, Robert L., 2013. *The Power of Discourse: An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*. Routledge.

Cobley, Paul & Schulz, Peter, J. (eds), 2013. *Theories and Models of Communication*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Collier, David, 2008. "Typologies: Forming Concepts and Creating Categorical Variables", p. 152-173 in J. M. Box Steffensmeier, H. E. Brady & D. Collier (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Coulthard, Malcolm & Condlin, C. N., 2014. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*. London: Routledge.

Coşkan, Canan, Acar, Yasemin Gülsüm & Bayadg, Aydin, 2021. "Revealing the Manifestations of Neoliberalism in Academia: Academic Collective Action in Turkey", *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 9(2), p. 401-418.

Dardanelli, Paolo, 2014. "European Integration, Party Strategies, and State Restructuring: a Comparative Analysis", *European Political Science Review* 6(2), p. 213-236.

Demker, Marie, 1997. "Changing Party Ideology: Gaullist Parties Facing Voters, Leaders and Competitors", *Party Politics* 3(3), p. 407-426.

Dunn, Kevin C. & Neumann, Iver B., 2016. *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Ekengren, Ann-Marie, 2011. "How Ideas Influence Decision-Making: Olof Palme and Swedish Foreign Policy, 1965–1975", *Scandinavian Journal of History* 36(2), p. 117-134.

Fairclough, Norman, 2003. *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London: Routledge.

Fairclough, Isabela & Fairclough, Norman, 2013. *Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students*. London: Routledge.

Fiske, John, 1990. *Introduction To Communication Studies*. London: Routledge.

Friberg-Fernros, Henrik & Brommesson, Douglas, 2013. "The Responsibility to Protect – An Incoherent Doctrine?", *International Politics* 50, p. 600-622.

Gee, James P., 2004. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. London Routledge.

Gee, James P., 2010. *How to Do Discourse Analysis: A Toolkit*. London: Routledge.

George, Alexander L., 1959. *Propaganda Analysis: A Study of Inferences Made from Nazi Propaganda in World War II*. Doctoral dissertation, The University of Chicago.

Georgakopoulou, Alexandra, 2019. *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Gerring, John, 2012. "Mere Description", *British Journal of Political Science* 42(4), p. 721-746.

Glaser, Jochen & Laudel, Grit, 2019. "The Discovery of Causal Mechanisms: Extractive Qualitative Content Analysis as a Tool for Process Tracing. SSOAR-Social Science Open Access Repository". Available at https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/download/3386/4495?inline=1, accessed 2025-02-04.

Gofas, Andreas & Hay, Colin, 2010. "The Ideational Turn and the Persistence of Perennial Dualisms", p. 13–55 in Gofas, A. & Hay, C. (eds), *The Role of Ideas in Political Analysis: A Portrait of Contemporary Debates.* London: Routledge.

Heitmayer, Maximilian, 2021. *Smartphones as Steady Companions: Device Use in Everyday Life and the Economics of Attention.* Doctoral dissertation, The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

Helder, Bodil, 2011. *Textual Analysis: An Approach to Analysing Professional Texts.* Fredriksberg: Samfundslitteratur.

Herrick, Shannon. C., Baum, Tyler & Duncan, Lindsay, R., 2022. "Recommendations from LGBTQ+ Adults for Increased Inclusion within Physical Activity: A Qualitative Content Analysis", *Translational Behavioral Medicine* 12(3), p. 454-465.

Hoey, Michael, 2001. *Textual Interaction: An Introduction to Written Discourse.* London: Routledge.

Jagers, Sverker, C., 2007. *Prospects for Green Liberal Democracy.* Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Jørgensen, Marianne & Phillips, Louise, 2002. *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method.* London: Sage.

Kracauer, Siegfried, 1952. "The Challenge of Qualitative Content Analysis", *Public Opinion Quarterly* 16(4), p. 631-642.

Kuckartz, Udo, 2019. "Qualitative Content Analysis: From Kracauer's Beginnings to Today's Challenges", *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 20(3), 20. Available at https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/3370, accessed 2025-02-04.

Kuckartz, Udo & Rädiker, Stefan, 2023. *Qualitative Content Analysis: Methods, Practice and Software.* Sage.

Lapidus, John, 2015. *Social Democracy and the Swedish Welfare Model: Ideational Analyses of Attitudes Towards Competition, Individualization, Privatization.* Dissertation, University of Gothenburg.

Laudel, Grit & Bielick, Jana, 2018. "The Emergence of Individual Research Programs in the Early Career Phase of Academics", *Science, Technology & Human Values* 43(6), p. 972-1010.

Lin, Chiu-Chu, Chen, Mei-Chun, Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang & Chang, Shu- Chen, 2013. "Illness Representations and Coping Processes of Taiwanese Patients with Early-stage Chronic Kidney Disease", *Journal of Nursing Research* 21(2), p. 120-128.

Lindberg, Mats, 2017. "Qualitative Analysis of Ideas and Ideological Content", p. 86-121 in Boréus, K. & Bergström, G. (eds), *Analyzing Text and Discourse. Eight Approaches for the Social Sciences.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Lindberg, Mats, 2018a. "The VDP-triad in Ideational Analysis", *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift* 120(2), p. 277-359.

Lindberg, Mats, 2018b. "The VDP-triad in Ideational Analysis: Toward a general theory of ideological thought-content in social and political communication, debate, thought and language – beyond the concepts 'ideology', 'culture', 'belief-system', 'discourse' and 'policy' (Part II)", *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift* 120(3-4), p. 434-554.

Linde, Göran, 2003. "The Use of Two-dimensional Models in Social Science: An Autocritical Review", *European Journal of Teacher Education* 26(1), p. 37-45.

Lounasmeri, Lotta I., 2020. "The Finnish Think Tank Landscape–A Mixture of Consensualism and Adversity?", *Scandinavian Political Studies* 43(3), p. 187-206.

Mayring, Philipp, 2000. "Qualitative Content Analysis", *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 1(2), Art. 20. Available at http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0002204, accessed 2025-02-04.

Mayring, Philipp, 2014. *Qualitative Content Analysis: Theoretical Foundation, Basic Procedures and Software Solution.* Klagenfurt. Available at Social Science Open Access Repository (SSOAR). Available at https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/39517, accessed 2025-02-04.

Mayring, Philipp, 2019. "Qualitative Content Analysis: Demarcation, Varieties, Developments", *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 20(3): Article 16. Available at https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/download/3343/4557?inline=1, accessed 2025-02-04.

Mayring, Philipp, 2022. *Qualitative Content Analysis. A Step-by-Step Guide.* Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington, DC, Melbourne: SAGE.

Paltridge, Brian, 2006. *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction.* London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Petersson, Hans F., 1964. *Power and International Order: An Analytical Study of Four Schools of Thought and Their Approaches to the War, the Peace and a Post-War System 1914–1919.* Lund: Gleerup.

Philips, Nelson, 2002. *Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction.* Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Powers, Penny, 2001. *The Methodology of Discourse Analysis.* Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

Prasad, Devi B., 2019. "Qualitative Content Analysis: Why Is It Still a Path Less Taken?", *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 20(3), DEU.

Real-Dato, José, Rodriguez-Teruel, Juan, Martinez-Pastor Ester & Estevez-Toledo Esperanza, 2022. "The Triumph of Partisanship: Political Scientists in the Public Debate about Catalonia's Independence Crisis (2010–2018)", *European Political Science* 21(1), p. 37-57.

Schmidt, Vivian A., 2008. "Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse", *Annual Review of Political Science* 11(1), p. 303-326.

Schreier, Margrit, 2012. *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice.* Newbury Park: Sage publications.

Shannon, Claude & Warren, Weaver, 1949. *The Mathematical Theory of Communication.* Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Sheikh, Nida & Askari, Muhammad U., 2021. "Foucauldian Panopticon: A Model for US Cyber Surveillance", *Journal of Political Studies* 28(1), p. 193-211.

Siewert, Markus. B., 2021. "How Annotation for Transparent Inquiry Can Enhance Research Transparency in Qualitative Comparative Analysis", *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(3), p. 487-491.

Steiner, J Bächtiger, André, Spörndli, Markus & Steenbergen, Marco, R., 2005. *Deliberative Politics in Action: Analysing Parliamentary Discourse.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Strandberg, Urban, 1998. *Debatten om den kommunala självstyrelsen 1962–1994.* Hedemora: Gidlunds.

Taylor, Stephanie, 2013. *What is Discourse Analysis?* London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Tingsten, Herbert, 1936. *Den nationella diktaturen: nazismens och fascismens idéer.* Stockholm: Bonnier.

Thompson, Neil, 2018. *Effective Communication: A Guide for the People Professions.* London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Vedung, Evert, 1982. *Political Reasoning.* Newbury Park, CA.: Sage.

Vedung, Evert, 2018a. ”Idéanalys från ankdamm till universums mitt”, *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift* 120(2), p. 155-195.

Vedung, Evert, 2018b. ”Fyra typer av statsvetenskaplig idéanalys”, *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift* 120(2), p. 197-235.

Weber, Max, 1949. *The Methodology of the Social Sciences.* New York: Free Press.

Wierenga, Louise, 2019. "Bauska's Chairmen: Party Leadership and Twitter Engagement in Estonian and Latvian Populist Far-right Parties", *Polish Political Science Review* 7(1), p. 138-154.

Williams, Glyn, 2014. *French Discourse Analysis: The Method of Post-structuralism.* London: Routledge.

Winkelhage, Jeannette, Schreier, Margrit & Diederich, Adele, 2013. "Priority setting in health care: Attitudes of physicians and patients", *Health* 5(4), p. 712-19.

Wodak, Ruth & Meyer, Michael (eds), 2001. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis.* London: Sage.

Wood, Linda A. & Kroger, Rolf O. 2000. *Doing Discourse Analysis: Methods for Studying Action in Talk and Text.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.