

Polish Qualitative Sociology: The General Features and Development

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Abstract: The article explores the development of qualitative sociology in Poland by presenting its main intellectual routes and some of the general features of Polish sociology. Romanticism and induction method are crucial elements for the development of this discipline in Poland and contribute to its uniqueness. The role of Florian ZNANIECKI in creating the Polish qualitative sociology is also underlined.

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1. Introduction—What We Mean by Qualitative Sociology?

Qualitative sociology is a perspective of description, understanding and/or explaining social phenomena by researching and analysing individual and group experiences and world outlooks plus human actions using qualitative methods of research, or qualitative analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative sociology is not only associated with the use of qualitative methods of research (in-depth interviews, individual and/or group interviews, participant observations, field study etc.), as it is sometimes understood (see WYKA 1988). It is a qualitative way of thinking about human experience, i.e. the way of "scientific intersubjective empathy" in getting the meaning of individual and group experiences of the so called "external world". [1]

2. The Beginning and the Roots of Qualitative Sociology in Poland

From the very beginning Polish sociology was empirically oriented. Methods of data gathering and analysis were qualitative and theoretical interpretations were strictly connected and interrelated with a process of generating empirical data. The development of Polish qualitative sociology is associated with the name Florian ZNANIECKI (1882-1958). He used it to organise the memoirs

competitions giving rise to institutional development of the Polish sociology. The first competition was set by F. ZNANIECKI in Poznan in 1921. He was interested in workers' autobiographies. The organiser of the competition, the Institute of Sociology in Poznan, received 149 biographies. The Institute organised the competition once again among inhabitants of Silesia in 1934, gathering 700 biographies and 400 biographies of unemployed in 1938 (SZCZEPAŃSKI 1971, p.586). The Institute of Social Economy (Instytut Gospodarstwa Społecznego) gathered diaries of peasants, the unemployed, and Polish emigrants from many parts of the world. The biggest success was the competition organised by "Przysposobienie Rolnicze" (Journal of Farmer Education) in 1936. The topic of this competition was: "Description of my life, works, reflections and aspirations. The organisers received 1544 descriptions from young rural activists (SZCZEPAŃSKI 1971). On the basis of this data Jozef CHALASIŃSKI (1904-1979) wrote the fundamental work: "The young generation of peasants" (1938). [2]

This inclination of Polish researchers to gather autobiographies can be explained both by influence of F. ZNANIECKI on Polish sociology and by the political situation in Poland. During the whole 19th century Poland was a nation without a state. The First and the Second World Wars destroyed many archives and libraries and other cultural resources. Almost all the competitions appealed for autobiographies referring to patriotic motives, and individual vicissitudes in the background of the fate of the country. The patriotic stories were not only an interesting illustration of the recent past of particular nation, but also a chance to fill the gap in the historical documents (SZCZEPAŃSKI 1971, pp.587-588). [3]

The fundamental work written by THOMAS and ZNANIECKI significantly influenced Polish sociology (THOMAS & ZNANIECKI 1918-1920/1976). Qualitative data obtained from personal documents (letters, autobiographies, diaries) of Polish peasant emigrants to USA were analysed. During this analysis the qualitative method of personal documents emerged. Cultural values and the attitudes towards it were searched in this data. Such kind of autobiography analysis set the ground for biographical sociology that was developed in Poland. [4]

We can say that biographical threats are very often analysed in Polish qualitative sociology. What was very peculiar to the analysis of biographies was the concentration on a processual aspects of many phenomena, e.g. process of adjustment and social organisation, process of family forms changing, etc. The processes are characteristic "objects" of research in qualitative sociology. There is a possibility to get the "objective" sequence and types of forms under change and the "subjective sense" and influence on the processes under research. Moreover "The Polish Peasant ..." defined the development of qualitative sociology and marked the scope of substantive areas of rural and city sociology, sociology of nation, etc. [5]

3. The General Features of Polish Qualitative Sociology

3.1 Romanticism

The main and distinctive feature of Polish qualitative sociology is its flavour of romanticism. Romanticism means here, that a stronger accent is put on an individual and particular human being than on collective level or structural aspects of societies. The individual perspective and free will to change and to shape the life situation is under the researcher's scrutiny. Sociologists started looking into "unofficial" culture and folk traditions, peasant consciousness and national consciousness. The measurement and the objective and structural conditions of human activities were not examined in sociology; instead the researchers focused more on the spiritual side of human activities. Sociologists take, at first, the subjective point of view of the researched persons, their creative imagination, projections and emotions. Not everything can be explained and consequently rationally predicted, the freedom of individuals is a base of unpredictability of human actions and an independent development of human culture. [6]

ZNANIECKI constructed a general principle of his scientific orientation i.e. "the principle of freedom and unpredictability of knowledge development" (ZNANIECKI 1925). He maintained that, new values in culture could be formulated by creative individuals even though it is difficult to find the causes of inception of new ideas in any context of social life and society. Although this kind of thinking is unscientific and ZNANIECKI is well aware of it (SITEK 2002, p.365), we can find the concentration on the individual level of experience of social influences in his works. "The deviant man" can go against social norms and change the world according to her/his vision (ZNANIECKI 2001). The experiencing of external objects by an individual gives them authenticity. Culture is created by individuals who associate external entities in their experience, which then become internal by an individual and unique interpretation. [7]

We can see the consequence of this kind of thinking in a concept of *humanistic coefficient* that seems to be necessary to include the human experience in scientific analysis of social and cultural phenomena. Humanistic coefficient means that all the cultural objects before becoming the aim of scientific analysis are rooted in somebody's experience and the subjects are conscious of them. We cannot understand the cultural phenomena without addressing the humanistic coefficient, even if these phenomena cannot exist without human perception (ZNANIECKI 1988, p.25). The objects beyond human experience lose all their validity. Such an ontological interpretation of the humanistic coefficient, gives us the assumption to conclude, that the autobiographical data are valid sources of a social reality investigation (SZCZEPAŃSKI 1971, p.591). Every attitude of an individual is a real social force. We cannot reduce cultural phenomena to the objective and natural reality and measure them as facts can be measured in hard sciences. Sociology became humanistic, because the aim of the study is to understand and elucidate the quality of social phenomena. Then the humanistic sociology could be understood as a qualitative sociology. And the human being becomes a creator of values. Values can be classified by an analyst in order to understand

better their role in human life and culture, but they cannot be reduced to natural or even just psychological phenomena. [8]

3.2 Induction

The second feature of Polish qualitative sociology is the concentration on induction as a general way of scientific reasoning. ZNANIECKI was a proponent of the so called analytic induction. He advocated the sociology as a nomothetic science relating to the study or discovery of general scientific laws, although it is possible to use also some inspirations and scientific tools of deduction and phenomenological analysis. He refused enumerative induction that starts from the definition and is followed by gathering of facts fitted to the classes of facts predefined earlier. Statistical methods were the tools of such a way of thinking. ZNANIECKI was an opponent of statistical methods that cannot discover laws and only concentrate on quantitative aspects of phenomena, but not their causes (ZNANIECKI 1934; SZACKI 1981, pp.753-754). According to ZNANIECKI we should first concentrate on empirical facts and data and later on make typologies and look for the regularities as social laws. The procedure was aimed mainly to reconstruct general types of social phenomena taking into consideration some general criteria for making typifications. The different types of procedures consisted necessary features that distinguished them from other types. A principal feature of qualitative sociology is its inductive methods. This is an influence of ZNANIECKI on, not only Polish sociologists but also on qualitative sociologists. F. ZNANIECKI took the polemic position of using naturalistic approach for researching culture (SITEK 2002, p.366). This polemic position is so far present in qualitative research in Poland, even if it is not always explicitly expressed. Sometimes the qualitative research is a manifestation of opposition to the dominating functionalist paradigm and the neopositivistic spirit of Polish quantitative sociology. [9]

One of the followers of ZNANIECKI was J. CHAŁASIŃSKI. It was mentioned that he wrote the fundamental sociological monograph "The young generation of peasants" (1938). In his work he took similar assumptions like ZNANIECKI. Social groups do not exist beyond individuals, but only in the experience of the group members (individuals). The social group, for CHALASIŃSKI, is constituted by individual experience of common socio-cultural values and community consciousness. The social structure, according to CHALASIŃSKI (1939, p.XXXII) cannot be reduced to technical and economical elements because it is an organisation of social attitudes and values. The change in social structure, the moving up of social hierarchy is associated with the changes of attitudes and values. The autobiographies then give enough material to obtain deeper knowledge about all processes in the society. The scientific description could be well grounded in empirical data. [10]

For CHALASIŃSKI autobiography gives a researcher an opportunity to see description of social situations made by a narrator and his attitudes and actions in these situations (CHALASIŃSKI 1938, p.XXXIII). Moreover autobiographies elucidate the participation of an individual in social processes as they develop

over time. The life events presented in autobiographical story are naturally connected and associated with one another. Such an approach protects the researcher from mistakes often made in quantitative data analysis. Moreover the "life picture" presented in autobiography is more coherent, clear and lucid than the one which emerges from questionnaires or standardised interviews. [11]

4. The Personal Documents Methods and Biographical Method —The Continuation and Development

Interest in biography as a subject of the scientific analyses has a long tradition which goes back to the early 19th century, when the so called memoirs' movement and historical-literatures studies made use of biographical data (KACZMAREK 1971). However, use of written biographies in Polish sociology is connected with scientific activity of Ludwik KRZYWICKI (1859-1941), Florian ZNANIECKI and Jozef CHALASINSKI, who are recognised as classical scholars of Polish biographical studies. Their remarkable interest in autobiography has arisen from their way of practising sociology. [12]

KRZYWICKI has repeatedly emphasised that everything that humans produce, from the single personal relationship to the culture itself, has a meaning only when it is related to its producers. In that case, any scientific discovery and understanding of that sense is possible only through infiltration into the process of sense-making, that brings KRZYWICKI closer to COOLEY's conception of the sympathetic introspection (CHALASINSKI 1976). Also ZNANIECKI, when formulating his conception of the humanistic coefficient, indicated that the researcher should study human's social environment not as a phenomenon itself, but as an effect of human's interpretation (ZNANIECKI 1976). Despite general, ideological differences between KRZYWICKI and ZNANIECKI, for both the most important element of the social world which sociology should take into consideration was the essential meaningfulness, which becomes easy to perceive during an analysis of an autobiography (BIERSTEDT 1968). The possibility of insight into the human's way of receiving the world, into the process of sense-making, or into relations with groups of which she/he is a member, produces the highest value for social research (SZCZEPANSKI 1971). [13]

"The Polish Peasant ..." of ZNANIECKI as a precursory work and "Pamiętniki bezrobotnych" (Memoirs of the Unemployed) of KRZYWICKI (1931), which was a pioneer attempt to connect individual, subjective testimony with a historical process (JUNIEWICZ 1975), both became an inspiration for development of personal documents method in Polish sociology (SZCZEPANSKI 1976). [14]

Immediate and the most important successor of that scientific heritage was Jozef CHALASINSKI. Also for him, autobiography was the best material for research, because it brought the description of the situation in which human existed, and which he/she experienced. It reveals her/his attitudes and undertaken activities. Moreover, he admitted irreducible subjectivism to be of a significant value, because individual attitudes and activities do not refer to a situation as independent of human's perception, but to a situation as perceived and

interpreted by individuals (CHALASINSKI 1977). CHALASINSKI noticed a possibility of reconstructing political, economical and cultural transformations using the individual member's point of view. He was especially interested in alternation of generations within peasants' and workers' circles (CHALASINSKI 1931), but also in the process of the peasants' awareness transformation, ways they perceived their social environment and its inner changes which were continually occurring (CHALASINSKI 1964, 1980). [15]

Data contained in diaries were treated through him as the main evidence of the Polish nation's alteration (CHALASINSKI 1971). Works of KRZYWICKI, ZNANIECKI and CHALASINSKI gave the basis for use of the personal documents method in Polish sociology, but also, and what is even more important, set the course of applying that method in social studies. For many years autobiography was recognised as a means (HELLING 1990), as a source of information about the studied issues, mostly social structure, mobility and other phenomena on the macro level, which were inquired from the member's point of view (ROKUSZEWSKA-PAWELEK 2002). [16]

That way of defining autobiography had a fundamental influence on the selection of the problems investigated by personal documents method. CHALASINSKI continuing his, started as far back as World War II, analyses of the social structure transformation in the perception and life experience of peasants, edited several volumes of collection of the diaries "Młode pokolenie Wsi Polski Ludowej" (Young Rural/Village Generation) in 1964. Furthermore, competitions for diaries and autobiographical records, were more and more frequently used not only for peasants', but also worker's circles studies (A. NOWAKOWSKI 1975; JAKUBCZAK 1975). The area of sociological interest was progressively narrowed from whole social classes to the substantial professional groups, that in consequence brought numerous collections of biographies of, among other, teachers, physicians or lawyers (BIDAKOWSKI 1962; WOJCIK 1964, 1969). Autobiography became an inspiration for urban sociology which began to be interested in both, the social processes which took place in the city and how its citizens perceived them (MIKULOWSKI 1973; S. NOWAKOWSKI 1980, 1990). [17]

The use of diaries and biographical data grew rapidly in the middle of the '60s. In 1971 a special journal "Pamiętnikarstwo Polskie" (Polish Memoirism), wholly devoted to the published autobiographies, as well as their sociological, historical or literature analyses, appeared. The popularity of the diaries on the turn of the '60s and '70s was so large that competitions were organised when any occasion had arisen. [18]

But this large-scale character of the competitions had generated biographical data of poor quality, which were collected without any basic scientific concepts (ADAMSKI 1969). That situation raised the question for discussion. And as the critics have pointed out there was too much data collected in relation to the conducted studies, and that instead of generating new data, methods of its in-depth analysis should have been improved (DULCZEWSKI 1971). Finally, the

discussion and the criticism yielded significant modifications in the sociological formulation of the biographical problems. [19]

Researchers have begun to diverge from the personal documents method and have tried to find new applications of the biography in studying social phenomena. Since then, biography was not only recognised as a means of insight into the subjective reception of the reality, but also as a research topic itself. More and more frequent, autobiography was becoming a question of outstanding importance in sociological studies, which aimed at the reconstruction of typical sequences of the events within the life course of particular social groups as well as meaning ascribed to these events (ROKUSZEWSKA-PAWELEK 2002). [20]

Therefore, the classical, personal documents method was often replaced by a new approach—the biographical method and diaries competitions with a new way of collecting data—interview, in particular retrospective in-depth interview and narrative interview. These were acknowledged as the best tools for gathering autobiographical stories because of their methodological requirements. Most of all, the rule of openness, which means abstention from initial theoretical structuration of the explored subject by collecting data without a forward hypothesis. Also the rule of communication is a kind of access to the data, the rule which necessitates communication with the subject with respect for his/her, individual communicational rules (PRAWDA 1989; KONECKI 2000; KAZMIERSKA 2004). Both in-depth and narrative interview enable researcher to select most wanted data with reduction of the preconceptualisation at the same time (DOBROWOLSKA 1990). These features have immediate influence on further use of narrative tools and development of biographical method in Poland. [21]

Since the beginning of the '80s, there have been more and more studies with the application of the biographical method. This method has been used to study, for instance, collective aspects of the biographical war experiences (PIOTROWSKI et al. 1997; KAZMIERSKA 1999), analyses of the occupation trajectories and experiences (ROKUSZEWSKA-PAWELEK 2002), ethnicity, ethnic groups, their self-perception and perception of the others (KLOSKOWSKA 1996; MUCHA 1996; BOKSZANSKI 1998), migration experiences (KAZMIERSKA 2003), memory and national identity or the process of self identification through life course experience and the cognitive essence of this identification (MELCHIOR 1990). [22]

One may also observe the development of discourse analysis at the same time. The public discourse as a multi-layered area of mutually connected communication phenomenon was the object of analysis by M. CZYZEWSKI (1984, 1997), A. PIOTROWSKI and co-authors (1997). Their extensively cultivated theoretical and empirical approach was orientated toward the interactionist theory. The public discourse was an object of many further analyses (RANCEW-SIKORA [2002] about conflict in Polish ecological discourse, PAWLISZAK [forthcoming] about strategy of group consensus creation in the parliament debates on Polish Membership in the European Union). [23]

Reconsidering biography as a topic made it possible to expose the importance of the time on which incessant passages, the whole narrative structure is based. It gave rise to researching and reconstructing subject's orientations towards time and revealed, among other things, connection between age and the domination of the past, present or future in the way of thinking (WORACH-KARDAS 1990). Other individual approaches to the temporality were discovered within sociological studies of work which were focused on the role of the work and its various aspects for human's biography (DOBROWOLSKA 1990; KONECKI 1990a, 1992) or subjective manners of perceiving the time by the specified professional groups (DYMARCZYK forthcoming). [24]

In spite of a growing number of studies for which biography was a topic, there were still some ideas to reactivate large-scale diaries competitions (LATOSZEK 1993), or to use new methods of analysing written autobiographical data, like, for instance the use of semantic fields conception (LEONSKI 1987, 1990). Even diaries were used in several research projects, KONECKI's (1987) analyses of redefinitions of self based on published autobiographies of the Nazi concentration camp's prisoners or PALSKA's (1994) comparison of political propagation of socialistic reality with its social reception are good examples. [25]

Biography as the basic source of data was also applied for the study of general problems of intermingling individual life courses and the role of this process for creating human's participation in collective, public activity, but also for studying reciprocal interdependence when the social structure is manifested itself in human's experience (NAROJEK 1982). Besides these often successful applications of written autobiographies, the biographical method was developed progressively and, what is new, also combined with other qualitative approaches. [26]

First efforts of connecting biographical analyses with other methods were undertaken in the latter half of the '60s. By then, integrative inquiry was used for studying the process of shaping the profession of farmers in the peasant's awareness (JAGIELLO-LYSIOWA 1969). Also exploring and describing families' life styles was based on the procedure of triangulation of autobiographical and field observation data (TARKOWSKA 1988; GLINSKI 1985; PALSKA 2002) and the latest research application is a combination of biographical method with grounded approach in studying post-transformation business milieus in Poland (SZLACHCICOWA, DOMECKA & MROZOWICKI 2004; DOMECKA & VERHOEVEN 2004). [27]

5. The Field Research

Field research strategy in social sciences has a long tradition in Poland. It comes from ethnographic and anthropological field endeavours. Sociologists also tried to be as close to researched subjects like anthropologists. Induction as an epistemological way of inference in social research got its legitimisation through the works of Florian ZNANIECKI, and especially his book "The Method of Sociology" (1934). He was against enumerative induction, which belonged to quantitative methodology, and supported the so-called "analytic induction" pro-

cedure. The procedure starts with empirical research and after that step researchers define the phenomena and analyse data. Next, hypotheses are formulated and checked by the empirical data. If the data do not confirm the hypotheses, then it is necessary to go back to the phase of definition of the phenomena and reformulate the hypotheses. [28]

The field studies used mainly the technique of participant observation and in-depth interviews. The field monographic research of communities (for example TUROWSKI 1964; research on Milejow village) have been quite popular. Concerning the research of various institutions and organisations, the method of case study was often used (GLINKA 2002). Kazimierz DOKTOR gathered data in an industrial enterprise using participant observation. He maintained that the method of participant observation allowed him to notice factual events, which took place during working hours and in the production: "The data collected by participation in observed situation come first hand and are not dependant on the willingness of observed people and their abilities to speak correctly about their experiences as it happens in interviews and questionnaires" (DOKTOR 1964, p.44). The technique of participant observation was also used by Krystyna LUTYNSKA. She researched clerks in Lodz institutions. The conclusions of the investigation were published and are well known in Poland (1965). [29]

K. DOKTOR (1964), as it was mentioned, and B. CHMIELEWSKA (1965) used covert participant observation. L. JANISZEWSKI (1970) in his research of a fisherman ship crew also applied a similar technique. The research was conducted on a trawler-freezer, where he worked as a cook's assistant for about four months. [30]

Another researcher A. SOSNOWSKI (1984, see also JANISZEWSKI & SOSNOWSKI 1984) while doing research about a community of mariners also utilised the same kind of technique. SOSNOWSKI made use of overt participant observation when he presented himself as an acquaintance of a mariner's family and as a sociologist at the same time. He did the same at the Sea Enterprise PZM which employed mariners in Szczecin. Moreover he also asked students, in addition to interviewing, to do some direct observation of mariners' behaviours. [31]

Qualitative field studies were done also on the social movement Solidarity; there were three teams that did research in the '80s. The first team under the direction of Miroslawa MARODY did research using the phenomenological and analytical approaches. The second team under the direction of Ireneusz KRZEMINSKI conducted interviews in 11 different types of factories to get multiple perspectives on the events; group interviews were also conducted. The researchers used the assumptions of symbolic interactionism, particularly the concepts of G.H. MEAD (WYKA 1988, pp.67-68). The third group under the direction of Jan STRZELECKI and Alain TOURAINE applied the method of sociological intervention and the assumptions of sociology of action (WYKA 1988, p.69). [32]

The main feature of this approach was a tendency to reach beyond the limits of the survey methodology and the public opinion research strategy (SULEK et al.

1989). Researchers realised that sociology as a science identified mainly with survey methodology went astray. In order to explain difficult and complex social phenomena, one has to return to qualitative methods of data gathering—in-depth interviews, participant observations—not acting as a supporting secondary and supplemental method—but as the main, basic source of knowledge and rightful research method (GRABOWSKA 1989). [33]

K. KONECKI from the Lodz University in his research at the beginning of his work (1992, 1994) depicted the subject of his research: cultural aspects of workers' activities in industrial enterprises. The technique of covered participant observation seemed to be the most appropriate to investigate the phenomena beyond official organisational life. Interactions, behaviours and organisational culture data are very difficult to obtain by the use of research techniques that limit the time of contacts with the researched subjects. Investigator decided to use covered participant observation to be close to the field and the researched people. The author was employed as an unqualified worker in the internal transport division in a factory (KONECKI 1990b, 1992). It was a case study of an industrial enterprise. He worked as a sweeper and a transport worker and his work was to gather junk pieces and transport them to a junkyard. The transport worker's job was also to supply the strip and to mount it on a reel from which it was fed into the press operators' machine. The transport worker had an advantage of observing different workers from different factory divisions and to get to know everyday life of the factory community. During this time the researcher participated in informational meetings, went to the factory restaurant, visited the factory doctor, and met workers in bars and in their private homes. The researcher wrote his notes from observed events, and coded data according to principles of the methodology of grounded theory everyday after work. Discovered and theoretically described categories were: flirting among workers (1990b), ridiculing rituals and factory folklore (1992). [34]

In a methodological sense similar research was done by K. KONECKI (1994) in a factory in Japan. The researcher went to the factories without a full conceptualisation of his research and observed Japanese workers in their everyday work and their everyday life. He lived in the factory hotel, met his Japanese workmates everyday and participated in informal meetings and life. He analysed the meanings of work and meanings of time, socialisation practices, the system of communication and the *folk theories*. He discovered that the meanings of work could be associated with the context of their production, some are expressed in *omote* (open) dimensions and others in *ura* (private) dimensions. This discovery questioned the practice of the analysis of data obtained only from a survey research. His analysis of data was inspired by an anthropological perspective, but was done according to the grounded theory methodology. The participant observation as a part of ethnographic endeavour appeared to be a very useful technique of sociological research. The technique of participant observation used together with free interviewing and other ethnographic tools is useful to investigate cultural and symbolic aspects of organisational life, especially ones that are not fully expressed in official documents as e.g. gender issues in Polish organisations. The research on these subjects was done by KOSTERA (1996). [35]

Interesting themes of investigation were institutional and organisational ways of supporting terminally ill patients researched in 1996-2001 by Anna KACPERCZYK (1998, 1999, 2002). The fields of her investigation were palliative and hospice care organisations in Poland. The processes of arising social charity movement called "Hospice Care" and professional movement in the medicine "Palliative Care" are described in the book "Social support in hospice and palliative care" (KACPERCZYK forthcoming a). Objects of special interest were issues of social support and the work done by qualified caregivers. With the aide of participant observations, in-depth interview with caregivers and using analytical procedures from grounded theory, the author reconstructed the phases of help-providing process performed by professional hospice and/or palliative caregivers. Moreover the investigation mentioned above is situated in the perspective of symbolic interactionism (KACPERCZYK forthcoming b) as well as the KONECKI's research about social worlds of pet owners (2005) and RANCEW-SIKORA's research of world of Polish hunters (forthcoming). [36]

Sociological research inspired by anthropological perspective has existed in Polish sociology since the field research of B. MALINOWSKI. The research on ethnic communities is an example of this tradition in Polish sociology. M. DZIEWIERSKI and B. SIEWIERSKI realised the project: "Unification and differentiation of cultural patterns of Lemkos community in Poland". The cooperative research was done together with P. WROBLEWSKI and B. PACTWA (employed at the Institute of Sociology at Silesian University). The research was conducted in Beskid Mountains and in the western part of Poland. The main goal of the research was to catch the everyday life of the ethnic community. The methods of the research were: free interviews, quasi participant observation, interviews with experts (priests, local community leaders, activists of ethnic organisations, artists). Topographic and photographic documentary of the communities was also analysed (DZIEWIERSKI, SIEWIERSKI & PACTWA 1992; DZIEWIERSKI 1995; DZIEWIERSKI 1997). [37]

Another research project realised by DZIEWIERSKI and PACTWA "Ethnic mobilization of Ukrainians in Poland" took place in 1997 (DZIEWIERSKI & PACTWA 2001). The research was done in the Bieszczady and Mazury region. The following investigation techniques were used: free interviews with inhabitants of the researched communities, expert interviews, quasi-participant observation, the analysis of a space with the usage of mental maps, audiovisual documentation. [38]

A similar research about the awareness of Bieszczady Mountains' inhabitants was done by scholars from Szczecin University (FITERNICKA-GORZKO, GORZKO, HESS-LEOŃSKA & LEOŃSKI 2004). Qualitative and quantitative methods were combined there. Focus group interviews were conducted with students of secondary schools on the topic: "what does it mean to be young?" The grounded theory approach and research about interaction between tourists and personnel of tourist industry is also developing in Szczecin University (by M. GORZKO, A. TERELAK). [39]

Ethnicity was also a topic of a systematic ethnographic study of one of the major Polish-American communities in the United States (MUCHA 1996). The process of transformation of the Polish immigrants group, its adaptation to the dominant, all-American culture in the community's everyday life and finally, the marginalisation of the ethnicity during the process of the settlement were found and described in the results. [40]

The Grounded Theory approach has been well developing at the Lodz University. The procedures of grounded theory methodology in connection with field research used in many research projects by K. KONECKI (1992, 1994, 1997, 1998) were used there. The methodological aspects of the grounded theory were developed and elaborated for Polish readers in a book "Studia z metodologii badan jakosciowych. Teoria ugruntowana [Studies on Qualitative Methodology Research. Grounded Theory]" (2000). [41]

6. Conclusions

In the paper we presented the main features of the Polish qualitative sociology. Some romantic attitudes and the induction method are used in generating the theoretical conclusions. The biographical methods dominated the methodological landscape of Polish Qualitative Sociology. However the field studies are developing now and are done by many sociologists inspired by anthropological, ethnographical and ethnomethodological methods of research. [42]

The qualitative sociology and the qualitative methods in Poland are still developing mainly according to the tradition of Polish sociology set by ZNANIECKI and CHALASINSKI. The institutionalisation of the qualitative movement in Polish sociology is currently in progress. A special group was formed at the XII Congress of Polish Sociological Association in 2004 in Poznan. The group was called "Constructing of Self and Society. The European Variants of Symbolic Interactionism" and organised by K. KONECKI and E. HALAS. Qualitative research was the basis of most of the papers presented there. The presenters conducted field studies, analyses of discourse, biographical analysis and used grounded theory methodology often. During the discussions it became obvious that researchers needed institutional legitimisation for their work. Based on the group discussion, a section of "Qualitative Sociology and Symbolic Interactionism" in the Polish Sociological Association (2005) was created. Moreover the group of Polish scholars mainly from Lodz University (Krzysztof KONECKI, Anna KACPERCZYK, Lukasz MARCINIAK, Slawomir MAGALA, Marek DZIEWIERSKI) created an international, bilingual, online, open access journal called [Qualitative Sociology Review](http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs/). The Polish version of the journal is called "Przegląd Socjologii Jakosciowej". There are also conferences being organised on qualitative and interpretative sociology in many places in Poland (Szczecin, Lodz, Torun, etc.). The quantitative sociology still dominates the landscape of Polish sociology but the future of qualitative movement in Polish sociology seems to be bright. [43]

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