Social Networks from Interaction Events

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Abstract

The network structure of human interaction is rapidly gaining prominence in social network analysis. Theoretical developments in relational sociology or in network exchange theory refocus on human interaction as the foundation of social relations. New data collection techniques, for example Big Data from communication and tracking devices, offer data on what people do and with whom they are doing it with an unprecedented time and spatial resolution. The traditional apparatus of social network analysis, focusing on relations as stable social ties, is not designed for relational events that last only for a very short time. This session is dedicated to the development of new theoretical concepts, models, and analytical techniques for analyzing social networks of interaction events. We welcome papers theorizing or testing the links between social relations and interaction, proposing or applying network models to event data, or exploring the possibilities and limits of collecting relational event data. Relevant research techniques include quantitative analyses of relational event dynamics (in event history models or regression analyses) as well as qualitative investigation of the negotiation of the meaning of relations and identities, drawing on discourse analytical approaches like conversation analysis and sociolinguistics.

Keywords: networks, interaction, dynamics, time, events

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