

# JADT' 18

PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
14<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF TEXTUAL DATA



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## Is the educational culture in Italian Universities effective? A case study

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### Abstract 1

The paper explores the professors and students' representation of professional training in Clinical Psychology in the faculty of Medicine and Psychology of the Sapienza University of Rome in order to understand whether the educational context supports students in developing their ability to enter the job market. To this aim, an Emotional Text Mining of the interviews of 30 students and 17 teachers of the Clinical Psychology Master of Science was performed. Both corpora underwent the analysis procedure performed with T-Lab, i.e. a cluster analysis with a bisecting  $k$ -means algorithm followed by a correspondence analysis on the keyword per cluster matrix, and the results were compared. The results show 4 clusters and 3 factors for each corpus, highlighting a relationship between student and professor representations. Both of them split the training process, distinguishing the educational process from the professional one. The emotional text mining of the interviews turned out to be an enlightening tool letting their latent dimensions emerge, setting the process and outcome of the academic training, and it proved to be very useful for educational purposes.

### Abstract 2

La ricerca ha esplorato la rappresentazione della formazione in Psicologia Clinica dei professori e degli studenti della facoltà di Medicina e Psicologia della Sapienza Università di Roma al fine di comprendere se il contesto formativo supporti gli studenti nello sviluppo di competenze utili all'inserimento nel mercato del lavoro. A questo scopo è stata effettuata un'Emotional Text Mining delle interviste di 30 studenti e di 17 professori del Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Psicologia Clinica con T-Lab (analisi dei cluster con algoritmo bisecting  $k$ -means seguita da un'analisi delle corrispondenze sulla matrice cluster per parole-chiave). I risultati mostrano 4 cluster e 3 fattori in entrambi i corpora, evidenziando una relazione tra le rappresentazioni degli studenti con quelle dei professori per quanto concerne il processo di apprendimento, distinguendo e mantenendo separati gli aspetti formativi da quelli professionali. L'Emotional Text Mining risulta essere uno



strumento utile ad evidenziare le dimensioni latenti che organizzano il processo e i risultati dell'apprendimento accademico.

**Keywords:** Education, Clinical Psychology, Job Market, Youth Unemployment, Emotional Text Mining.

## 1. Introduction

The problem of youth unemployment is relevant nowadays. In Italy, 25% of young people under 30 years of age are unemployed and this percentage grows to 40% for under 25s (McKinsey & Company, 2014). But why is this percentage so high? According to McKinsey's study (*ibidem*), it shows that the figure of 40% for youth unemployment does not rely on the economic cycle but on "structural causes". Among other causes, education is one of the relevant factors of youth unemployment, and is a protection factor for poverty and quality of life, as stated by ISTAT (2017). Graduates are less likely to become poor although the employability and the wages depend on the type of degree. 80% of young graduates in psychology are employed after four years (Anpal Servizi, 2017). Psychologists are more likely to become entrepreneurs than employees. Most probably, the length of time needed to get into the job market is connected to the mismatch between the educational system and enterprise (McKinsey & Company, 2014). Young people's skills are considered appropriate by 70% of Schools and Universities, but only by 42% of employers. The effectiveness of education depends in part on the representation of the professional training characterizing the University. Several studies were performed in order to investigate students' representation in the Psychology Faculty in order to improve the training process (e.g., Carli et al., 2004; Paniccia et al., 2009). Due to the change in the educational plan that took place over the past decade, this study aims to understand whether the present educational context supports students in developing their ability to enter the job market, performing an emotional text mining (Cordella et al., 2014; Greco, 2016) of the interviews of students and teachers of the Master Degree in Clinical Psychology at the Sapienza University of Rome.

## 2. Methodology

We know that a person's behaviour depends not only on their rationale thinking but also, and sometimes most of all, on their emotional and social way of mental functioning (Carli, 1990; Moscovici, 2005). Namely, people consciously categorize reality and, at the same time, unconsciously symbolize it emotionally (Fornari, 1976). These two thinking processes are the product of the double-logic way of the functioning of the mind (Matte Blanco, 1981) which allows people to adapt to their social environment. According to this

socio-constructivist approach, based on a psychodynamic model, the unconscious processes are social, as people generate interactively and share the same emotional meanings. The socially shared emotional symbolization sets the interactions, behaviours, attitudes, expectations and communication processes, and for this reason, the analysis of the narrations allows for the acquisition of the latent emotional meaning of the text (Salvatore & Freda, 2011). If the conscious process sets the manifest content of the narration, namely *what* is narrated, the unconscious process can be inferred through *how* it is narrated, that is to say, the words chosen to narrate and their association within the text. We consider that people emotionally symbolize an event, or an object, and socially share this symbolisation. The words they choose to talk about this event, or object, is the product of the socially-shared unconscious symbolization (Greco, 2016). According to this, it is possible to detect the associative links between the words to infer the symbolic matrix determining the coexistence of these terms in the text. To this aim, we performed a multivariate analysis based on a bisecting *k*-means algorithm (Savaresi et Boley, 2004) to classify the text, and a correspondence analysis (Lebart et Salem, 1994) to detect the latent dimensions setting the cluster per keywords matrix. The interpretation of the cluster analysis results allows for the identification of the elements characterizing the emotional representation of education, while the results of correspondence analysis reflect its emotional symbolization (Cordella et al., 2014; Greco, 2016). The advantage connected with this approach is to interpret the factorial space according to words polarization, thus identifying the emotional categories that generate professional training representations, and to facilitate the interpretation of clusters, exploring their relationship within the symbolic space.

### 3. Data collection and analysis

In order to explore the emotional representation of the education in the Master of Science in Clinical Psychology, we interviewed 30 students (13% of students) and 17 teachers (71% of teachers) of the Sapienza University of Rome accordingly to their voluntary participation. We used an open-questions interview for students and teachers. Students' interviews resulted in a medium size corpus of 57.387 tokens, and teachers' interviews resulted in a small size corpus of 28.746 tokens. In order to check whether it was possible to statistically process data, two lexical indicators were calculated: the type-token ratio and the hapax percentage ( $TTR_{students} = 0,09$ ;  $Hapax_{students} = 50,3\%$ ;  $TTR_{teachers} = 0,147$ ;  $Hapax_{teachers} = 53,8\%$ ). According to the size of the corpus, both lexical indicators highlight its richness and indicate the possibility to proceed with the analysis. First, data were cleaned and pre-processed by the software T-Lab (Lancia, 2017) and keywords were selected.

Due to the size of the corpus and the hapax percentage, in order to choose the keywords, we used the selection criteria proposed by Greco (Cordella et al., 2014; Greco, 2016). In particular, we used stem as keywords instead of type, filtering out the lemma of the open-questions of the interviews. Then, on the context units per keywords matrix, we performed a cluster analysis with a bisecting *k*-means algorithm (Savaresi et Boley, 2004) limited to ten partitions, excluding all the context units that did not have at least two keywords co-occurrence. The eta squared value was used to evaluate and choose the optimal solution. To finalize the analysis, a correspondence analysis on the keywords per clusters matrix was made (Lebart et Salem, 1994) in order to explore the relationship between clusters, and to identify the emotional categories setting professional training representations both for students and teachers.

#### 4. Main results and discussion

The results of the cluster analysis show that the keywords selected allow the classification on an average of 96% for both corpuses. The eta squared values was calculated on partitions from 3 to 9, and they show that the optimal solution is four clusters for both corpora. The correspondence analysis detected three latent dimensions. In table 1 and 2, we can appreciate the emotional map of the professional training emerging from the interviews of the teachers and the students and cluster location in the factorial space.

*Table 1 – Cluster coordinates on factors of the teachers' corpus (the percentage of explained inertia is reported between brackets above each factor)*

Cluster (CU in Cl %)	Factor 1 1 (26,53%) Motivation	Factor 2 (19,03%) Outcome	Factor 3 (14,56%) Role
1 Training Group (22,3%)	Group -0,21	Competence 0,51	Teacher -0,50
2 Clinical Training (33,7%)	Institution 0,33	Competence 0,23	Professional 0,39
3 Institutional Obligations (20,2%)	Institution 0,65	Degree -0,66	Teacher -0,38
4 Student Orientation (23,8%)	Group -0,79	Degree -0,39	Professional 0,16

*CU in Cl = context units classified in the cluster.*

The teachers' corpus first factor (table 1) represents the motivation in teaching, focusing on the group of students and their specific needs or on the Institutional generic scopes; the second factor focuses on the training outcome, the degree or the professional skills; and the third factor reflects the role of the academic professor that could represent oneself as a teacher or a

professional. As regards the students corpus (table 2), the first factor represents the approach to university experience, which can be perceived as an individual experience or a social one (relational); the second factor explains how students experience vocational training, perceiving it as the fulfilment of obligations or the construction of professional skills that requires personal involvement; and the third factor reflects the outcome of the educational training that can focus on professional skills development or on the achievement of qualifications.

Table 2 – Cluster coordinates on factors of the students' corpus (the percentage of explained inertia is reported between brackets above each factor)

Cluster (CU in CI %)	Factor 1 (23,2%) Approach	Factor 2 (15,3%) Training	Factor 3 (14,0%) Outcome
1 Idealized Product (27,6%)	Individual -0,56	Fulfilment 0,45	Skills -0,43
2 Professional Education (20,8%)	-0,04	Construction -0,63	Skills -0,24
3 Group Identity (26,3)	Relational 0,69	Fulfilment 0,22	-0,01
4 Empty Degree (25,3%)	Individual -0,32	0,01	Qualifications 0,59

CU in CI = context units classified in the cluster.

Table 3 – Teachers' Cluster (the percentage of context units classified in the cluster is reported between brackets)

Cluster 1 (22,3%)		Cluster 2 (33,7%)		Cluster 3 (20,2%)		Cluster 4 (23,8%)	
Training Group		Clinical Training		Institutional Obligations		Student Orientation	
keyword	CU	keyword	CU	keyword	CU	keyword	CU
studente	59	psicologia	94	scuola	29	domanda	42
cercare	43	lavoro	81	persona	28	idea	40
corso	43	clinico	54	laurea	19	organizzazione	33
teoria	32	insegnare	36	università	18	aggiungere	32
lezione	21	contesto	29	trovare	17	processo	30
modalità	21	problema	27	specializzazione	16	rispetto	29
organizzazione	20	intervento	27	importante	16	orientare	21
intervento	19	diverso	25	entrare	15	parlare	21
relazione	17	conoscenza	22	scegliere	14	Corso di laurea	20
				percorso	14	Attività	18
modello	16	interno	22			didattiche	

CU = context units classified in the cluster.

The four clusters of both corpuses are of different sizes (tables 1 and 2) and reflect the representations of the professional training (table 3 and 4). Regarding the teachers' corpus (table 3), the first cluster represents the group of students as a tool to teach professional skills, focusing on the group process where relational dynamics are experienced; the second cluster focuses on clinical training, teaching skills marketable in the job market; the third cluster focuses on the teachers' institutional obligations regardless of the students' training needs; and the fourth cluster represents students' orientation as a way to support students in managing their academic training regardless of professional skills. As regards the students' corpus (table 4), in the first cluster the good training involves students' adherence to lesson tasks regardless of critical thinking on the theoretical model proposed; in the second cluster, learning professional skills is strictly connected to the ability to get and respond to market demand; the third cluster reflects the relevance of belonging to a group of colleagues supporting the construction of a professional identity that, unfortunately, seems unconnected to professional skills development; and the fourth cluster represents professional training as a process in which the degree achievement is the main goal, regardless of the job market demand.

Table 4 – Students' Cluster (the percentage of context units classified in the cluster is reported between brackets)

Cluster 1 (27,6%) Idealized Product		Cluster 2 (20,8%) Professional Education		Cluster 3 (26,3) Group Identity		Cluster 4 (25,3%) Empty Degree	
keyword	CU	keyword	CU	keyword	CU	keyword	CU
esperienza	116	pensare	89	scelta	154	vivere	26
triennale	44	esame	71	studiare	153	trovare	85
percorso	43	psicologia	65	frequentare	104	tesi	20
professione	41	seguire	55	rapporto	102	sentire	91
università	37	realtà	55	piacere	98	riuscire	30
possibilità	35	vedere	55	collegli	97	prendere	33
capire	33	iniziare	53	parlare	74	persone	105
diverso	31	triennale	53	organizzare	68	maniera	23
senso	30	lavoro	44	domanda	55	livello	35
vivere	25	interessante	44	aggiungere	36	laboratorio	18

CU = context units classified in the cluster.

Students and teachers seem to have similar representations of the training process: the academic need of building a network, highlighted by the students' cluster on *group identity*, and the teachers' cluster on *training group* and *student orientation*; the relevance of achieving a qualification, highlighted by the students' cluster on *empty degree* and the teachers' cluster on *institutional obligation*; and the development of professional skills marketable in the job market reflected by the teachers' cluster on *clinical training* and the

students' cluster on *professional education* in line with what it was found by Carli and colleagues (2004) and Paniccia and colleagues (2009) by means of a similar methodology, the emotional textual analysis (Carli et al., 2016). The awareness of the psychological demand of the labour market is an indicator of the professional training process's effectiveness. Nevertheless, students and teachers split the academic achievement from the development of professional skills. This could be a critical aspect, possibly explaining young graduates' difficulty in entering the job market, focusing more on academic context rather than on market demand. As a consequence, during the training process, students do not develop the connection between professional training (what they are learning) and professional skills (what they are going to do in the future).

## 5. Conclusion

Although the study results could not be generalized, due to the participants' selection criteria and the methodology we used, they highlight professional training representation characteristics, which are the elements influencing the rate of unemployment among young psychologists. Even though it is not possible to quantify the relevance of the characteristics of the representation, the emotional text mining, allowing for the identification of the words association explanatory of the education representation, allows for hypotheses definition and the identification of the resources and the issues pertaining the professional training in a specific context.

The interpretation of the text mining results lets the social unconscious process emerge, setting the education useful to defining the type of psychological intervention able to support the representation transformation toward a more effective training process. In this particular case study, the intervention would aim to develop the connection between professional qualification achievement and the professional skills development, which are currently split.

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