Mind the Gap? Translating science and technology projects with TED

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Agenda

1. Background and motivations
2. Case study: TED
3. Conclusion
Translational research

- Originally, translational research was supposed to foster the multidirectional integration of basic research, patient-oriented research, and population-based research, with the long-term aim of improving the health of the public.

- T1 research expedites the movement between basic research and patient-oriented research that leads to new or improved scientific understanding or standards of care.

- T2 research facilitates the movement between patient-oriented research and population-based research that leads to better patient outcomes, the implementation of best practices, and improved health status in communities.

- T3 research promotes interaction between laboratory-based research and population-based research to stimulate a robust scientific understanding of human health and disease.
Translation

“So, the word ‘translation’ now takes on a somewhat specialized meaning: a relation that does not transport causality but induces two mediators into coexisting.

If some causality appears to be transported in a predictable and routine way, then it’s the proof that other mediators have been put in place to render such a displacement smooth and predictable (see Part II).

I can now state the aim of this sociology of associations more precisely: there is no society, no social realm, and no social ties, but there exist translations between mediators that may generate traceable associations.”

Cultural capital

Three forms of cultural capital:
• the embodied state,
• the objectified state and the
• institutionalized state.

Focus

The “embodied state” refers to the cultural capital that resides within an individual.
The “institutionalized state” refers to titles, diplomas and similar types of artefacts that represent achievements in the “cultural” domain.
Recognition

Three main dimensions (Iser, 2013):

- **equal respect** awarded to all agents capable of autonomy;

- **esteem** due to one’s achievements, emphasizing difference and the uniqueness of specific and cultural features;

- **recognition** of concrete individuality as love and friendship.

Honneth (1996) points out distinct stages of recognition along which individuals gain

- **self-confidence**,

- **self-respect** and

- **self-esteem**.

Recognition, on the one hand, allows for the creation and preservation of a subject's identity, granting others the status of an epistemic authority; on the other hand, it allows one to build a normative space of reasons, commitments and entitlements, enforcing the subject as being capable of responsibilities and exercising authority (Brandom 1994)
Valuation

"(...) how value is produced, diffused and institutionalized" (Lamont, 2012)

"[how] the value or values of something are established, assessed, negotiated, provoked, maintained, constructed and/or contested." (Doganova et al, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categorization</th>
<th>Legitimation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• classification systems conventions</td>
<td>• how does an object gain value?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• stabilization</td>
<td>• recognition of value by you and me</td>
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<td>• institutionalization</td>
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Cultural & symbolic capital

table adapted from Lamont, 2012.
## Public sphere

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private realm</th>
<th>Public Sphere</th>
<th>Public authority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>civil society</td>
<td>political realm</td>
<td>state</td>
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<tr>
<td>family's internal space</td>
<td>world of letters</td>
<td>court</td>
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<td>&quot;town&quot;</td>
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Adapted from Habermas, 2003 p.32

1. Formalization of public discussion *(speech acts)*
2. Publicness as publicity *(marketing)*
3. Public Discussion as commodity and business *(reification)*
4. Media sets the agenda *(translation)*
Information Infrastructures (IIs)

“...characterized by openness to number and types of users (no fixed notion of ‘user’), interconnections of numerous modules/systems (i.e. multiplicity of purposes, agendas, strategies), dynamically evolving portfolios of (an ecosystem of) systems and shaped by an installed base of existing systems and practices (thus restricting the scope of design, as traditionally conceived). IIs are also typically stretched across space and time: they are shaped and used across many different locales and endure over long periods (decades rather than years).”

Digital Information Infrastructures

Types of Generative Mechanisms

*Situational mechanisms* (macro–micro level, explaining how the infrastructure enables and constrains its various components)

*Action-formation mechanisms* (socio-technical action, explaining how desires and beliefs generate a specific action)

*Transformational mechanisms* (micro–macro level, explaining how different components interact to produce an outcome)

Evolution Mechanisms

*Adoption:* A self-reinforcing process by which more users adopt the infrastructure as more resources invested increase the usefulness of the infrastructure

*Innovation:* A self-reinforcing process by which new products and services are created as infrastructure malleability spawns recombination of resources

*Scaling:* A self-reinforcing process by which an infrastructure expands its reach as it attracts new partners by offering incentives for collaboration

These formatted talks contribute to **translating science projects** in general and more specifically those projects related to **technological innovation**.
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**Situation, key issues, and remarks**

**Situation**

**Data collection started on February 2015**
- TEDTalk repository (1969 records)
- 24 Informants selected and scheduled (TEDxLausanne)
  - 10 interviews done
- Attended TEDxLausanne on February 9th, 2015
  - Memos, etc

**Key Issues**

- Relationship between TED as a valuation device and the translation of innovation
- Trajectories of TED Infrastructure.

**Focus point:** understanding not only how relationships between the shareholders in S&T projects are constructed, but also how participation in the project reinforces individual and institutional cultural as well as symbolic capital.
Conceptual model
Insights and future work

• **TED as black box [for TEDx]**
• **Barriers to access are there [Not all TEDTalk or x online] but “be my guest”**
• **Subjectivity and subjection**
• **Protocols matter but “don’t say it”**

**Future work:**
- Completing interviews and expanding with cross country informants
- Open coding and selecting coding