Visitors' Evaluation of an Historical District: repertory grid analysis and laddering analysis with photographs

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the complex nature of visitors' evaluation of an historical district, and proposes a theoretical framework and qualitative methods to elicit relations between visitors' mental states and the district's features. The combination of Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis with the use of photographs as stimuli is discussed and demonstrated. Results show that these methods can shed light on the varied nature of visitors' evaluation.

Keywords: visitors' evaluation, historical district, Repertory Grid Analysis, Laddering Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

The evaluation by visitors of an historical district, which is not primarily intended for tourism, is a complex issue. Whether elements designed for tourists are perceived favourably is open to question. However, it seems that the question about how tourists themselves perceive and evaluate such touristic characteristics has so far received little attention. The aim of this study is to propose a theoretical framework and methods to investigate visitors' evaluation, with specific reference to the relations between visitors' mental states and features of an historical district.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Following a consideration of historical districts, the structure of visitors' evaluations of tourism destinations is explored with reference to concepts of cognitive components, affective components, and visitors' mental states such as wants, needs and values. This then provides the background for the research methods, a combination of Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis.

The Complex Nature of Visitors' Evaluations of an Historical District

The geographical forms of historical districts are diverse. In contrast to historical attractions dispersed around a large area, those clustered in a specific district may form what Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) described as an "historical gem" (p.156),

where historic resources are "dramatic, complete and also . . . valued" (p.156). The term "historical district" is employed here in this sense to mean a focus or tight cluster. That is, an historical district is understood to be a cluster of historical buildings where not only the individual units themselves but also their concentrated continuity is valued as heritage.

Although historical districts have been described as places that offer opportunities for visitors to appreciate the past (Lynch, 1972; Millar, 1989; Moscardo, 2000), some authors have argued (Caffyn & Lutz, 1999; Johnson, 1999; Palmer, 1999) that heritage attractions do not always reflect real past events and history, and may even be false or superficial. Indeed, it is often claimed that tourism and commercialisation are usually in an inseparable relation (Richards, 1996; Urry, 1990). This is also argued to be the case for heritage tourism (Adorno, 1991; Ashworth, 1991; Ashworth & Voogt, 1990, 1994; Hewison, 1987; McKercher & du Cros, 2002). In tourism studies, such commercialisation has been criticised for transforming historical settings into superficial objects for the sake of tourism (Boorstin, 1964; Halewood & Hannam, 2001; MacCannell, 1976; Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Walsh, 1992).

While the commercialisation of historical towns has been criticised, some researchers argue that complete authenticity may not be required to attract tourists (Ashworth & Voogt, 1990; Caffyn & Lutz, 1999). Indeed, visitors may not even be

concerned about authenticity or may need a certain degree of familiarity to enjoy unusual experiences (Cohen, 1972; Goss, 1993; Hashimoto, 1999; Krippendorf, 1984) and many visitors demand contemporary facilities (Ashworth, 1988; Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000).

Many historical districts are currently major centres of visitation. However, the existence of tourists, especially in a specific non tourist-oriented area, has often been regarded negatively in that they take up space (Misham, 1969) and consume perceptual capacity related to the subjective quality of visitors' experience (Walter, 1982). In psychology, crowding, which is a psychological stress that sometimes accompanies high population density (Stokols, 1972), has been seen to detract from desired tourist experience (Schreyer & Roggenbuck, 1978; West, 1982; Womble & Studebaker, 1981).

Although the negative impact of the existence of others should not be overlooked, its meaning needs further deliberation. As Urry (1990) has argued, an historical tourism object is basically regarded as the object of "romantic gaze" in which solitude, privacy and a personal, semi-spiritual relationship is appreciated. However, it is worth noting that such a district could have been in the past or may still be a residential or commercial area. In this sense, an historical district itself could be regarded as the object of the collective gaze, in which the presence of other people is necessary to give atmosphere to the experience of a place. Some theories go so far as to suggest that crowding in certain

situations may be exhilarating or arousing (Argyle, Furnham & Graham, 1981; Hull, 1990) or may be perceived as contributory to social affiliation (Ditton, Fedler & Graefe, 1983 cited in Manning, 1985; Graham & Burge, 1984).

On account of these arguments, it is suggested that visitors' evaluations of an historical district cannot be understood simply within the bipolar framework of "favourable" or "unfavourable", and are likely to relate to several evaluative dimensions, such as the place's spiritual value, or the sense of stillness or stimulation, according to visitors' mental states. For instance, in tourism, differences in levels of demand for familiarity among different individuals (Cohen, 1972, 1979; Plog, 1973; Smith, 1977) or within the same individual (Naoi, 2003) have been considered. Visitors' evaluations of an historical district can also vary according to such inter- and intra-personal differences.

In consideration of these arguments, it is suggested that visitors' evaluations of an historical district require methods that are able to elicit complex and delicate relations between variables.

The structure of visitors' evaluations of a tourism destination

In this section, discussion of the psychological structure of visitors' evaluation is attempted in order to lay foundations for the research methods.

Theories and findings from studies of tourism destination image provide useful

guides. It is observed that destination image has been described as related to the subjective mental views that people have of a place, such as beliefs (Chon, 1990; Hunt, 1971; Kotler, 1982), ideas (Chon, 1990; Kotler, 1982), impressions (Chon, 1990; Kotler, 1982; Milman & Pizam, 1995), visual or mental impression (Lawson & Baud-Bovy, 1977), expectation (Chon, 1990), and emotional thoughts (Lawson & Baud-Bovy, 1977). It seems from these descriptions that a concept of destination image is somehow similar to visitors' evaluation of a place in the sense that both are concerned with how people subjectively think about a place. Hence knowledge of tourism destination image provides an important ingredient of the theoretical framework.

In the studies of tourism destination image, two components have emerged as significant: cognitive and affective (Baloglu, 1999, 2000, 2001; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a, 1999b; Gartner, 1993; Walmsley & Jenkins, 1993; Young, 1995). Cognitive components relate to the physical features (Hanyu, 1993) and can be regarded as derived from fact (Boulding, 1956). In contrast, affective components are concerned with the emotional quality of destination (Hanyu, 1993). A number of authors point to the link between these two in that affective components are derived from cognitive components (Crompton & Ankomah, 1993; Gartner, 1993; Lynch, 1960; Mayo & Jarvis, 1981; Russel & Pratt, 1980; Woodside & Lysonski, 1989).

It can also be claimed that there are hierarchical relations between cognitive and affective components, and mental states. In marketing studies, Gutman (1982) proposed *a means-end chain model*, which refers to the idea that attributes of an object are means to achieve certain objectives, which are then the means to achieve more ultimate objectives or satisfy values. His model illustrates the hierarchical ladder-like relationship between physical attributes at the bottom of the ladder, several levels of goal-oriented mental states that indicate concrete desirable actions in the middle, and higher level abstract mental states at the top. Although Gutman (1982) did not use the concepts of cognitive and affective components, the attributes illustrated in an example provided by Reynolds and Gutman (1988) include some cognitive components, such as "sparkling taste" and affective components, such as "refreshing". It seems that their results revealed some relations between cognitive and affective components, such as between "fancy label" and "more feminine", between affective components and mental states, such as between "sophisticated image" and "impress others", and between cognitive components and mental states, such as between "smaller size" and "avoid waste".

Visitors' mental states can further be grouped according to their concreteness. "Want", which is defined as "internal forces that prompt behavior toward solutions" (Cohen, 1981, p. 200), or which "arises from the discrepancy between actual and desired

states of being" (Foxall, Goldsmith & Brown, 1998) is usually placed at the most concrete end. A "want" is usually regarded as a manifestation of "need" (Solomon, Bamossy & Askegaard 1999; Foxall et al, 1998). A concept of "value" is usually placed at the very abstract end, and is defined as "a belief about a desirable end-state that transcends specific situations and guides selection of behaviour" (Solomon, et al. 1999, p. 104) or is argued to influence "the selection from available modes, means and ends of action" (Kluckholn as cited in Markin, 1977, p. 119). These definitions suggest that wants are manifested by needs, which are further based on more abstract values. In other words, there could be a hierarchical relationship between these components.

The possible hierarchical relations are summarised as in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

Relations between cognitive and affective components have been identified in past studies, and relations between cognitive or affective components and mental states were implied by means-ends theory. Hierarchical relations between wants, needs and values have also been previously implied. These possible relations are to be investigated through Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis, as explained later. It should also be noted that there could be some relations between components belonging to the same level, for example between affective components such as "more feminine" and "sophisticated

image" (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988).

Although some studies have considered the relations between visitors' mental states, and cognitive and affective components of a destination, further efforts to refine methods to elicit these seem to be needed. Baloglu and McCleary's (1999a) empirical study investigated relations between motivations, and cognitive and affective components of destination image, but they used predetermined scales and hypothetical models rather than elicited hierarchical relations. In their study of historical destinations, Prentice and Light (1994) applied the Manning-Haas hierarchy, which is based on the perspective that the benefits gained from visiting an attraction are generated from the experiences which arise from the settings of the visit and the activities pursued while visiting. However, they again did not elicit hierarchical relations between the proposed variables (benefits, activities, settings and levels). Most previous work has under-emphasised the contributions from visitors themselves. This includes those that have used images. Indeed, while some studies (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; 1993; Embacher & Buttle, 1989; Gyte, 1988; Reily, 1990; Walmsley & Jenkins, 1993; Young, 1995) have attempted to elicit attributes of destination image, much previous research has used predetermined image attributes, many of which were borrowed from earlier work without eliciting attributes for themselves, or they did not show how the attributes were elicited.

Fairweather and Swaffield (2001, 2002) used Q method with photographs of viewpoints to elicit contents of visitors' experiences in Kaikoura (2001) and Rotorua (2002), New Zealand. In their study, subjects were requested to sort photographs into predetermined groups according to their preference, and these individual sorts were factor analysed. The factors were then compared to subjects' explanations for their selection of the six top and the six bottom-ranked photographs. Their study showed that Q method could elicit visitors' experiences and implied relations between visitors' experiences and the physical characteristics of places. Their study also illustrated the advantages of photographs in encompassing a wide variety of landscape settings in interpreting experiences of visitors. Despite these advantages, there still seems to be room to consider other methods to investigate concretely how physical settings relate to visitors' mental states.

PROPOSED METHODS

In this study, the combination of *Repertory Grid Analysis* and *Laddering Analysis* using photos as stimuli is proposed as a useful method to extract hierarchical relations between physical/affective features of an historical district, and visitors' mental states.

Repertory Grid Analysis is based on Kelly's (1955) *personal construct theory*. The notion of the *construct* refers to the ideas behind the actual discrimination that the subject

makes between phenomena (people or objects) in the environment. Constructs are defined and revealed through the pattern of choices and discrimination that people make among elements given to them to assess (Downs, 1976). Repertory Grid Analysis is one of the methods that attempt to reveal subjects' constructs by providing them with several sets of elements to be compared. Among a variety of methods for eliciting constructs, the triad method is the most used (Bannister & Fransella, 1971). With this approach, the subject under study is presented with three elements (a triad), such as the names of people or places, actual objects or photographs, and asked to specify some important way in which two of them are alike and thereby different from the third (Fransella & Bannister, 1977).

Laddering, which literally means climbing a ladder, is based on the previously explained means-end chain model (Gutman, 1982). Laddering Analysis is a method to identify hierarchical relations between attributes, evaluations, objects and higher levels of abstract mental states, such as values, in accordance with a means-end chain model. Laddering Analysis has been empirically used in the fields of Marketing (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988; Gender & Reynolds, 1995) and Architecture (Maki, n.d.; Sanui, 1995) in order to establish how physical attributes of a place or product are related to human values. Laddering Analysis causes subjects to think critically about the connections

between the product's attributes and their personal motivations, by being repeatedly asked "Why is that favourable/unfavourable/important for you?" For example, a subject who states that "there are many people" may answer this type of question by saying that it must be very crowded. Then the researcher could ask why the fact that the place is crowded is unfavourable, and the respondent could say, "I cannot walk around". Then, in response to being asked why walking around is important, the subject could say, "I like to see many local things". Constructs elicited by Repertory Grid Analysis may be employed as the starting point of Laddering Analysis. However, it is likely that affective components, objectives or values rather than physical attributes of an object are elicited by Repertory Grid Analysis. This is certainly the case in many past studies that have employed Repertory Grid Analysis (Botterill, 1989; Botterill & Crompton, 1987, 1996; Coshall, 2000; Embacher & Buttle, 1989; Gyte, 1988; Walmsley & Jenkins, 1993; Young, 1995) In such cases, it is necessary to ask "ladder-down" type of questions, for instance, about how subjects think things should be in order to meet their objectives (Sanui, 1995). For example, if a subject states that "the place is deserted", a researcher could ask what makes the place look deserted, and obtain responses like "there are very few people". In the same manner, if a respondent says, "I cannot really enjoy walking around", the subject might answer the following ladder-down type of questions by saying, "it is too busy" or

"there are too many cars". These two methods allow the extraction of a complex human

psychological structure by providing subjects with rules/frames to show subjects rather

than by simply asking them for opinions. By providing respondents with frameworks and

almost the same controlled environments, these two methods help to minimise biases

caused by researchers' subjectivity, their lack of experience or uncontrollable factors.

In past tourism studies, Repertory Grid Analysis has been employed by several

authors (Botterill, 1989; Botterill & Crompton, 1987, 1996; Coshall, 2000; Embacher &

Buttle, 1989; Gyte, 1988; Pearce, 1982; Pike, 2003; Walmsley & Jenkins, 1993; Young,

1995). Details are given in Table 1. It is worth noting that most of these studies employed

names of places as the stimuli and they involved only a small number of respondents

ranging from 10 to 50. Few tourism-related studies (Botterill, 1989; Botterill & Crompton,

1987; 1996), which focused on personal travel experience of one or two persons, have

employed Repertory Grid Analysis with usage of photographs. It is argued here that in

investigating the relationship between the features of an historical district and visitors'

mental states, some signs of visual features, such as photographs, can usefully be

presented to subjects in the process of Repertory Grid Analysis. The use of photographs

for this study allowed respondents to evaluate still-image visual stimuli contributing to

the reliability in their responses. A study by Klenosky, Gengler and Mulvey (1993),

which investigated downhill skiers' evaluation of ski resorts, is among the few tourism studies that have employed Laddering Analysis.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

In this study, these two methods with employment of photographs are applied in a tentative research programme designed to explore their potential in investigating the structure of visitors' evaluation of an historical district.

IMPLEMENTATION, ANALYSES AND RESULTS

The Historical District

Areas inside and around the walled historical district in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Germany, were selected for the fieldwork for two reasons: its preserved historical environments, and its touristic and commercial characteristics.

This district was established as a castle town in the Early Middle Ages and obtained its status as a Free City of the Holy Roman Empire in the thirteen century (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000). Many remaining historical features of this district date back to these periods of growth. It started declining during the Thirty Years War (1618-48), followed by the loss of its free status in the nineteenth century due to its incorporation into Bavaria (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000). Such a period of decline contributed to the protection of its historical features, which are described as "crisscrossed by cobbled lanes lined by

picturesque old houses and enclosed by towered walls" (Schulte-Peevers, Bender, Cullen,

Haywood & Oliver, 2002, p. 454). These historical features were preserved because there

were few pressures for development or change until they were damaged during the

Second World War. The post-1945 reconstruction was managed in accordance with its

historical character under municipal control. Rothenburg has now expanded beyond the

walls leaving the historical district constricted by the addition of contemporary functions

and activities other than those concerned with serving visitors (Ashworth & Tunbridge,

2000).

The remaining historical features of Rothenburg have been served as strong pulling

forces to attract not only domestic but also overseas visitors. According to recent statistics,

the number of visitors who stayed in Rothenburg was 435,129 in 2001. In 2000, overseas

visitors accounted for 55% of overnights with Japan making up 42% and USA 33% of

these (Rothenburg ob der Tauber Press, n.d.). The well-known English-language *Lonely*

Planet guide to Germany (Schulte-Peevers et al, 2002) calls Rothenburg "the main tourist

destination along the northern Romantic Road" (p. 454). The Romantic Road, according

to the same guide book, "links some picturesque Bavarian towns and cities …" (p. 446),

is "by far the most popular of Germany's holiday routes designated to get tourists away

from the big cities and out into the countryside" (p. 446), and is visited by two million

people every year. The touristic characteristics of Rothenburg and the Romantic Road are also provided in the *Lonely Planet* guide to Germany. It describes the Romantic Road as a place with "lots of signs in English and Japanese, tourist coaches and kitsch galore" (Schulte-Peevers et al, 2002, p. 446) and also comments that Rothenburg "gets painfully crowded in summer and during Christmas market" (p. 454).

Hence, the walled historical district in Rothenburg ob der Tauber comprises a representative historical district that offers preserved historical features as its main attraction, but it has also contrived elements including commercial tourism services for visitors. The district thus offers a suitable area to be investigated for the purposes of this study, which seeks to shed light, not only on historical and authentic elements, but also on contrived, touristic and commercial elements.

Personal Interviews

Two sets of personal interviews were conducted in a laboratory with usage of photographs. While the findings of laboratory experiments are often hard to generalise due to the exclusion of variables that might be observed in the field, such experiments afford focused investigation of structural relations between variables under controlled conditions. This approach was also expected to minimise uncontrollable variables by providing subjects with highly similar environments and identical stimuli.

As already observed, the sample sizes for the past Repertory Grid Analysis in this field have typically been small. This is supported by Young (1995, p277) who suggested that, "for the purpose of construct elicitation, valid results may be obtained with relatively small sample sizes". Most of the other studies referred to here do not mention how they determined their sample size. Indeed, the question of how many subjects are necessary for viable results is very hard to answer from past studies. In the field of marketing in general, on the basis of experiential knowledge from past studies, Maruoka (1998) suggested 8-16 subjects per segment for Laddering Analysis in consideration of a commonality of responses in group studies. However, he also admitted that there had been no rational criteria to determine the appropriate number of subjects and further suggested the need for studies with large numbers in order to establish how many in fact are needed.

A small sample size was justified as practical by Pike (2003). Although no guidance was available as to who and how to sample for the combination of Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis in tourism studies, it was assumed that a large sample for this study was probably unrealistic. This is especially so given that the time needed per respondent for Laddering Analysis (60-90 minutes in the case of Maki, (n.d)) is added to the time for Repertory Grid Analysis (around 40 minutes in Walmsley & Jenkins' (1993) and Young's (1995) cases, and 40-60 minutes in Maki's (n.d.) case). Against this

background, the study was carried out with 20 Japanese students (10 females and 10 males) studying tourism at the university where two of the authors are employed. Obviously, this sample does not cover a broad range of profiles. However the important issue for this study is not to generalise to the broad population but to focus on the relations between the components. These can then be tested in later studies with a broader population, possibly using questionnaire surveys.

At any rate, it should be noted that the results obtained by this study should be considered as the grounds for proposal of a theoretical framework for further field investigations rather than for conclusions that can be generalized for a broad population.

Interview 1: Classification of Photographs

The purposes of the first set of interviews was to classify photographs of the historical district and to extract terms to describe each category. None of the respondents had ever been to Rothenburg ob der Tauber, but one female subject had been to Germany. A total of 119 photographs taken in and around the walled historical district were used as stimuli. These were taken by one of the authors from 12:00-15:00 on 23 August 2003, when the weather was fine and following Fairweather and Swaffield (2002), "no attempt was made to 'ramdomise' or to 'standardise' viewpoints" (p. 288). The classification of the photographs was elicited as the result of this experiment rather than determined by the

authors in advance. Although the objectivity of the selection of the viewpoints cannot be guaranteed here in a strict sense, the considerable number of photographs used in this experiment were expected to minimize the subjectivity attributed to the authors.

Each subject was presented with 119 photographs and asked to classify them into first rough and gradually more detailed groups according to perceived similarities and differences. The decision on the number of final groups and the criteria for classification was left to each subject. Both the classification and the terms used to describe each group were recorded. Similar procedures were also employed in Maki (n.d.). The duration of the interviews ranged from 1 hour to 1 hour and 30 minutes. This set of interviews lasted from 16 September to 7 November 2003.

For each subject, a matrix was created showing the frequency of every possible pair of photographs, which could be generated, that is, 20 matrixes one for each subject. Then, a single matrix was created showing the frequencies of 119 × 119 pairs of photographs categorised into the same group and summed across the 20 subjects. Thereafter, the summed 119 × 119 frequencies were subjected to hierarchical cluster analysis (Ward Method), which resulted in 18 clusters (groups). The next step was to describe each cluster using the terms that the subjects themselves had used to describe each group of photographs. In order to establish this, the number of subjects who used each term for

each photograph was counted, and the mean number was then calculated by cluster. The

dendrogram of the Cluster Analysis is illustrated as Figure 2, and the mean number of

subjects who used each term to describe each of the 18 categories is shown in Table 2.

This gives only those terms that have a frequency of five or higher in any cell.

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

The rescaled distance cluster combine in Figure 2 shows that distance between the

clusters increases rapidly when the number of clusters falls from two to one. Therefore, it

is suggested that it is reasonable to determine the number of clusters as two and categorise

the photographs into two groups, comprising clusters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

(Group 1) and clusters 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 (Group 2). Table 2 also shows that the terms

that distinctively characterise these two groups (Group 1 and Group 2) are the

prominence of people and stores, and the atmosphere as a place for the locals. It is

observed that photographs belonging to Group 2 were perceived to have people and stores

prominent, and that those included in Group 1 are regarded as places for the locals

without the prominence of people. Group 2 generally represents commercial and touristic

settings. On the other hand, Group 1 generally shows places for the locals.

Interview 2: Repertory Grid and Laddering Analysis

In this set of interviews, the combination of Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering

Analysis with usage of photographs as stimuli was employed. These interviews attempted to extract evaluative components (cognitive, affective components, wants, needs, values) and hierarchical relations between them. The subjects for these interviews were 20 Japanese students (10 females and 10 males), including six men and five women who also co-operated with the previous set of interviews. The five women included one who had been to Germany. The remaining nine subjects (five females and four males) were also tourism students of the same university, and none of them had ever been to Germany. The 44 photographs that were classified as Group 2 (Cluster 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18) through the analysis of Interview 1 were employed as the stimuli.

Each subject was presented with the 44 photographs and requested to classify them into five levels according to their own preference as places for sightseeing. The photographs were then placed in five lines in front of the subject so that their preference gradually decreased top to bottom. They were then asked the following five types of questions so that they could state the components that affected their preference.

(1) "What causes differences in your preference between the photographs in line 1 and line 2? " Then, the same question was asked for lines 2 and 3, for 3 and 4, and for 4 and 5.

(2) "Please state anything that causes differences in your preference between any lines."

The procedure until (2) was also employed in Maki (n.d.).

(3) "Please select the most preferable photograph for you. What makes the photograph

the most preferable?"

(4) "Please select the least preferable photograph for you. What makes the photograph

the least preferable?"

(5) "Please state anything that causes differences in your preference among photographs

in any single line."

Once a subject stated one component, "ladder-up" or "ladder-down" type questions were

asked in order to extract relations between components. The components and the relations

were recorded in the shape of a tree figure by each subject. Both positive and negative,

and direct and indirect relations were recorded. Similar criteria were also utilised by

Reynolds and Gutman (1988). For example, if the following relations as illustrated as

Figure 3 were extracted, this means, "if there are cars (C26), a subject perceives

dangerous atmosphere (AS5) and does not feel like walking (W7). As a consequence, the

subject thinks that it would not be possible to adapt herself/himself to the area (N5)". In

this example, the relations would be counted as in Table 3.

<div align="center">FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE</div>

<div align="center">TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE</div>

The duration of each interview was from 40 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes. This

set of interviews was conducted between 12 November 2003 to 6 January 2004.

There are two reasons why the triad methods (Bannister & Fransella, 1971) were not employed. First, it was found that it was generally easy for subjects to recognise components that not only differentiate photographs, but also relate to their preference. For example, two photographs may be different from each other in some respects, but it does not mean that those respects are always related to subjects' preference. They are sometimes just different. In such cases, subjects experience difficulty in stating further components. Secondly, as this is an exploratory study about an historical district, which is a very complex and broad object compared to tangible products like cars, comparison between a broad range of photographs rather than between a limited number was expected to elicit a large number of components and relations between those components.

The extracted components through Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis were classified by the authors with reference to concepts of cognitive and affective components, wants, needs and values as well as relations between them, as follows:

 a. level of cognitive components

 b. level of affective components

 c. level of wants

d. level of needs

e. level of values

It seems that the previously argued definition of affective components is ambiguous as it could include items such as pleasure, that are highly evaluative, those, such as arousal, that are less evaluative and those, such as excitement or relaxation, that are somewhere between the two. (Nasar, 1998). Furthermore, what Nasar defines as connotative of a place, such as prestigious, could also be included in affective meanings. In this study, affective components that seem independent of evaluation were labelled "Affective Aspects: Physiological Perception" and the others that seem related to subjectivity of subjects were categorised as "Affective Aspects: Subjective Perception".

As for subjects' mental states, if they stated the desire to do something with concrete objects (such as local goods) or do very particular activities (such as shopping), these statements were categorised as wants. If the activities were not very concrete (for example creating good memories or relaxing), the statements were labeled as needs. More abstract and broad statements such as those concerning subjects' creeds or norms were categorised as values. These were not actually extracted in the interviews during "Interview 2".

Afterwards, the extracted components in each level were classified by the authors

into groups that share similar meanings. This was done by first making a large number of categories and then by combining them into a smaller number. This approach was described by Grunert & Grunert (1995) as finding the right level of abstraction to draw a hierarchical map. Only grouped components that were mentioned by five or more subjects were used for the consecutive steps (See Table 4).

TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

This classification process can be criticised as subjective, and the extent to which the results can be claimed as elicited from subjects' may be questioned. The extreme strategy to avoid subjectivity would be to use exactly the same terms as those given by the subjects with no further categorization. However, this would generate an enormous number of individual components, each stated by a very small number of subjects. Such results would obscure the possible relations between components that can be detected by grouping.

As Grunert and Grunert (1995) claimed, the important point here is finding appropriate categories of elicited components for study purposes. Maruoka (1998) suggested that, if the goal is eliciting hierarchical relations between components, categories should be reasonably abstract in order to obtain a meaningful number of relations. As this study aims to elicit these relations, classification of extracted

components by the researchers seemed necessary, even though the possibility of subjectivity cannot completely be excluded.

As explained earlier, both positive and negative, and direct and indirect relations were recorded by each subject as illustrated in Table 3. After creating a matrix like Table 3 for each subject, frequencies in all the cells were summed up across 20 subjects. In this process, frequencies of PD and PI as well as frequencies of ND and NI were summed as positive relations and negative relations respectively. Similar criteria were also utilised by Klenosky et al (1993). The results are shown in Table 5. Only frequencies of four or more are presented.

TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

On the basis of the data shown in Table 5, a tree figure that shows the relations between the extracted components was created (see Figures 4 and 5). In order to avoid excessively complicated figures, the relations between cognitive components and needs are shown separately in Figure 4 whereas Figure 5 shows the relations between cognitive components and affective components, between cognitive components and wants, between affective components and wants, between affective components and needs and between wants and needs.

FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE

FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE

DISCUSSION

Although the aim of this tentative research is to propose a theoretical framework and methods, not to draw conclusions or to generalise, the interpretation of the results of these analyses should be attempted to assess their usefulness. Indeed, the results offer insights into some issues raised by past studies. As a whole, the findings suggest mixed effects of many components, which emphasise the complex nature of evaluation of an historical district.

It was suggested by the results of the first set of personal interviews that two different types of settings of an historical district, namely residential settings and touristic/commercial settings, might be identified by visitors according to the perceived presence of people and stores as well as atmosphere as a place for the locals or as a tourism destination. This accords with previous arguments that the contrived elements of an historical district could mainly be observed as commercialisation and the presence of other people.

It was found that the presence of others in photographs has mixed effects on subjects' evaluation depending on how others are presented. For example, places where people are perceived to gather (C23) could cause the atmosphere to be seen as being

famous/worth visiting (AS13), which in turn would make it possible to satisfy their needs

to see something famous (N1). On the other hand, when people are not prominent (C20),

it could lead to the impression of a dull (AS7) or ordinary (AS15) atmosphere. These

results imply that an historical district could have an aspect as an object of "collective

gaze" (Urry, 1990). Another comparison can be made between the situation when people

in photographs were perceived as locals and when they are perceived as visitors. The

presence of locals (C25) could be perceived as indicating to a sense of activity (AS8) or

possible achievement of "adaptation of self" to the local area (N5), seeing the locals and

their life-style (W10) and seeing something outside daily-life (N3). This implication also

supports the notion of "collective romantic gaze", which is "one that searches for

authenticity through local participation" (Ooi, 2002, p. 85). In contrast, the presence of

visitors (C24) is also related to a rather negative sense of "noisy" (AS9). It is implied by

these findings that whether people are perceived to be locals or visitors could influence

the perceived quality of an historical district as an object of "romantic gaze" (Urry, 1990).

It seems then that, when the presence of people is perceived positively, such

perception is related to a positive perception of activity, such as liveliness, which

reinforces Hull's (1990) claim that the concept of recreation crowding could create high

levels of arousal. On the other hand, negative perception of people may be relevant to a

negative perception of activity, such as noise. Together with the finding that the absence

of people (C20) could also be perceived negatively because of the lack of activity, as

represented by dullness (AS7), it is implied that a sense of activity related to the presence

of others could also have mixed effects on subjects' evaluation. This implication accords

with some of the arguments in the field of psychology that crowding can be perceived

positively when exhilaration (Arygle, Furnham & Graham, 1981) or excitement (Ditton,

Fedler & Graefe, 1983) or social affiliation (Ditton, Fedler & Graefe, 1983; Graham &

Burge, 1984) is desired. In any sense, contrary to some views that the presence of others

has negative effects on visitors' experience in the light of the concept of Crowding

(Schreyer & Roggenbuck, 1978; West 1982; Womble & Studebaker, 1981) or Romantic

Gaze (Urry, 1990), it is implied that the presence of people in an historical district can

also be perceived positively.

Back alleys (C13), and related components, which are narrow pavements (C15),

narrow space between houses (C16) and shadowed space (C18), also suggest the complex

nature of negative and positive perception of activity and its influence on evaluations. As

for positively perceived relations, C13 seem to satisfy needs of seeking something outside

daily life (N3) and adapting oneself to the area (N5) whereas C15 was relevant to the local

atmosphere (AS3), which is perceived to realise desires for local authenticity (N2) and

something outside daily life (N3). C18 concerned the quiet/calm atmosphere (AS6), which contributed to relaxation (N8). However, C13, C16 and C18 were also perceived to result in a dull atmosphere (AS7).

The presence of stores also seems to have complex effects on subjects' evaluation. Although commercialisation has often been discussed negatively in tourism studies (Hewison, 1987; Mathieson & Wall, 1982) as a spoiler of the authenticity of a destination, the results of this research suggest that stores (C5: Stores, C6: Open cafe) can lead to the fulfillment of seeking the local authenticity (N2), seeking something outside daily-life (N3), adapting oneself to the area (N5), and seeing the locals and their life-style (W10) together with a sense of locality (AS3) and uniqueness (AS14). What Ohno (1997) terms the "market type of stores", which are relatively open to the outside, have more decorations on the facades, and exhibit a number of goods along the eaves, are also observed in the results (C11), and such types of stores are also perceived to fulfill a desire for local authenticity (N2) and something outside daily-life (N3) together with a sense of locality (AS3). Shopping (W1) at stores (C5) is also perceived to offer an opportunity to obtain a reminder of an enjoyable occasion (N7) and to obtain something to appeal to others (N6). However, it should also be noted that souvenir shops (C10) are perceived to be relevant to a touristic atmosphere (AS1) and a desire to obtain something to appeal to

others (N6). In this sense, types of stores as well as the type of needs or wants that stores fulfill seem to need attention in considering their effects on the evaluation. Some stores could also offer an opportunity to appreciate the authenticity while others could satisfy a need to obtain something of which to boast. As for a sense of activity, stores may have mixed effects because stores (C5) and open cafes (C6) also bring about active atmosphere (AS8) while stores in particular (C5) are also related to a sense of dullness (AS7). Although an explanation of this issue is not clearly implied in the results, it is assumed that the types of store may have an effect.

It is suggested that there are two types of ways to appreciate "something outside-daily life" (N3): seeing notable/large/historical buildings (C1) or seeing the locals (W10, C25) and open cafes (C6). Therefore, it is argued that both very notable symbolic objects and very local objects could be seen as not being associated with normal-daily-life.

A concept of authenticity (N2) relates to locally (AS3) perceived objects like cars (C26), private houses for the locals (C12) and narrow pavements (C15) as well as stores (C5) and open cafes (C6). In this sense, it can be assumed that there are two types of authenticity: authenticity in the local residential area, and commercial authenticity. In other words, it may be possible to feel a sense of authenticity both in residential areas and

in commercial areas.

The effects of cars (C26) on evaluations are also complex. While C26 was perceived negatively as obstacles for a walk around (W7), spoilers of historical atmosphere (AS10, AS16), dangerous (AS5), obstacles to seeing something outside daily life (N3) and obstacles in adapting oneself to the area (N5), it also related to the local atmosphere (AS3), which is perceived to realise desires for local authenticity (N2).

As a whole, it seems that the combination of Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis employed in this study was reasonably successful in eliciting the complex and mixed nature of evaluative structure of subjects concerning their mental states and features of an historical district, some of which have been claimed by past authors.

CONCLUSIONS

It is crucial for tourism studies to investigate empirically relations between visitors' mental states, and cognitive and affective features of an historical district in order to understand the complex nature of visitors' evaluation. As the structure of visitors' evaluation could be complex and mixed, it should be investigated with employment of well-structured methods rather than by abstract open questions. The main aim of this study was not to propose clear-cut results that show relations between particular variables.

Instead, it aimed to propose a theoretical framework and methods to investigate visitors'

mental evaluation, especially relations between visitors' mental states and features of an

historical district. Elicitation of the components and relations between these components

through Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis attempted to extract a fragment

of the complex structure of visitors' evaluation in order to demonstrate such a structure

and provide readers with an opportunity to recognize it. It is believed that such

recognition is crucial, not only for academics, but also for those who are actually involved

in tourism management.

Although this study did not try to draw conclusions that can be generalized, some of

the results shed light on issues argued by previous studies, such as commercialization, the

presence of others and authenticity. For example, it was implied that historical districts as

tourism destinations can be characterized largely by commercialisation and presence of

others. The presence of people may be perceived either positively or negatively according

to whether visitors wish to see something famous. The presence of stores may have mixed

effects on evaluations according to types of stores, such as souvenir shops or stores that

place some of their goods outside, or visitors' mental states, such as obtaining a reminder

of an enjoyable occasion or something to appeal to others, and seeking authenticity. Cars

may be perceived as dangerous or to be obstacles. On the other hand, cars as well as

private houses, narrow pavements and stores, may imply authenticity. A sense of activity could arise from the locals while a sense of dullness may be attributed to absence of people. These findings may support and complement past arguments about crowding or "romantic and collective gazes" (Urry, 1990). It is also implied that both very notable objects and very local objects might be attractions that provide visitors with opportunities to appreciate something outside daily life.

To sum up, it is indicated by this study that the combination of Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis could be useful to investigate such structures. The results obtained through these methods may contribute to better understanding of how manipulations to an historical district for tourism should be managed to meet visitors' mental states.

<div align="center">LIMITATIONS</div>

There are drawbacks in Repertory Grid Analysis and Laddering Analysis. This study employed personal interviews involving a small number of interviewees, the results of which are limited in the degree to which they can be generalised. For example, possibilities for investigating influences caused by diversity among subjects as to their socio-demographic variables, psychological characteristics or their travel behaviour, are inevitably prevented. These methods are argued to be reasonable and acceptable in the

early stages of exploring a new area of study such as that investigated here, when fundamental data must be obtained in order to develop theoretical frameworks. However, for broader conclusions these methods should be followed by subsequent structured research, such as a questionnaire survey to actual visitors.

The role of culture is an issue that was not fully investigated. To take the case of architecture, for instance, as a result of earthquakes, flammable building materials and war damage, many Japanese historic buildings have been rebuilt. Hence, the Japanese may be receptive to replica constructions (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2002). On the other hand European visitors, many of whose historic buildings are made of stone may employ more rigid criteria to evaluate the historical values.

The role of culture has also been examined in the field of environmental psychology. A study of high-school students from Asian, British and southern European backgrounds showed that the Asians tolerated high density the best and the British students the worst (Gillis, Richard, & Hagen, 1986). However, Homma (1990) suggested that they no longer cope with many kinds of dense environment and view crowding as a negative experience due to the increasingly high levels of density and recent cultural or social changes. These findings indicate that effects of the presence of other people could vary across nationalities. Japanese culture as a determinant of visitors' evaluations of an historical

district is an area of a great interest although understanding of its roles seems to need further investigation. Future studies with use of respondents from various cultural backgrounds would help to clarify the roles of culture.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the study outlined here does provide some indicators both to a method and to some tentative results. The important point now is to take this work further, possibly with a wider survey.

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Table 1: Details of past studies that employed Repertory Grid Analysis

Author: Pearce, P.L. (1982) Elements: names of 14 countries   Repertory grid analysis was conducted using 27 triads Subjects: 10 subjects who had taken or were planning Mediterranean holidays
Author: Botterill, T. D. & Crompton, J.L. (1987) Elements: eight colour prints of scenes the respondent had personally photographed during a 13-day trip to Mexico Subjects: one subject who had been on a 13-day trip to Mexico
Author: Gyte, D.M. (1988) Elements: names of nine countries selected by subjects out of 20 tourist destinations   Repertory grid analysis was conducted among selected nine countries. Subjects: 17 tourists Time needed: between 40 and 90 minutes per subject
Author: Botterill, T. D. (1989) Elements: Six brochure photographs chosen by the respondent before a respondent's vacation, and snapshots selected from respondent's own photographic record of the trip after respondent's vacation Subjects: one subject

Authors: Embacher, J. & Buttle, F. (1989)
Elements: names of 17 countries elicited by respondents
Subjects: 25 subjects who
    , have strong interest in the subject area
    , occupy positions which endow them with special competence
    , have accessibility and gregariousness
    , have contact with information from outside their immediate group

Authors: Walmsley, D.J., & Jenkins, J.M. (1993) Elements: names of 30 tourist areas in Australia   Repertory grid analysis was conducted using 40 triads Subjects: 20 female and 20 male being equally divided between those under 40 and those over 40 drawn in Armidale, Australia, by use of a simple quota sampling. Time needed: between 20 and 50 minutes for 40 triads per subject

Author: Young, M. (1995)
Elements: names of 30 major domestic tourist places in Australia
      Repertory grid analysis was conducted using 44 triads
Subjects: 50 samples drawn by using a simple networking technique
    14-17 years old 5 males and 5 females
    18-24 years old 5 males and 5 females
    25-39 years old 5 males and 5 females
    40-54 years old 5 males and 5 females
    55 and above years old 5 males and 5 females
Time needed: about 40 minutes for 44 triads per subject

Author: Botterill, T. D. & Crompton, J.L. (1996) Elements: six photographs selected from holiday brochures depicting the U.K. selected by each respondent and two photographs taken from a previous trip before their trip to the UK, seven photographs captured on the recent vacation of each respondent after their trips to the UK Subjects: two subjects met by the authors at an American university alumni association
Author: Coshall, J.T. (2000) Elements: names of 11 museums and galleries in London, the UK Subjects: Unknown

Author: Pike, S. (2003)
Elements: names of major domestic short-break holiday destinations for residents in Auckland, New Zealand
        Repertory grid analysis was conducted using 24 triads
Subjects: 25 subjects who comprised 10 business students invited by the author and 15 middle-class business managers sampled using a snowball technique. Both of these people had previously experienced a domestic short break.

Table 2: Description of each category of photographs using the terms extracted from subjects' responses

Group of Photographs	Cluster of Photographs	Number of photos	Subjects' Responses									
			People prominent	People not prominent	Stores prominent	Places for the locals	Cars prominent	Cars not prominent	Back alley	Main street	Plants prominent	Close-up
GROUP 1	Cluster 1	7	0	9	1	9	1	5	9	1	2	1
	Cluster 2	4	2	9	1	8	2	5	8	1	2	1
	Cluster 3	5	4	6	3	11	7	3	7	2	2	1
	Cluster 4	13	3	8	4	9	11	1	4	5	1	0
	Cluster 5	6	5	7	7	5	5	0	1	5	3	2
	Cluster 6	4	6	6	5	3	6	0	1	2	7	0
	Cluster 7	6	8	5	5	6	7	1	5	4	1	0
	Cluster 8	4	0	8	2	9	3	2	1	0	4	3
	Cluster 9	9	2	7	4	8	4	1	3	1	6	2
	Cluster 10	8	2	7	2	8	9	1	5	3	4	0
	Cluster 11	4	3	6	2	6	2	3	3	1	6	1
	Cluster 12	5	1	8	1	8	5	3	5	2	4	1
GROUP 2	Cluster 13	9	6	7	13	3	1	2	1	2	2	5
	Cluster 14	6	18	1	10	2	2	1	3	2	1	1
	Cluster 15	8	13	3	10	3	4	1	3	5	2	0
	Cluster 16	9	13	1	10	1	1	2	1	2	1	1
	Cluster 17	4	14	4	16	5	0	2	1	2	0	5
	Cluster 18	8	18	2	13	3	1	1	2	2	1	3
	Total	119										

Note. Numbers in the cells, apart from Number of Photographs show the mean number of respondents who provided each response for each cluster.

Table 3: Example of table to count frequencies of relations between a pair of components

	AS5				W7				N5			
	PD	PI	ND	NI	PD	PI	ND	NI	PD	PI	ND	NI
C26	1					1						1
AS5					1							1
W5											1	

PD: Positive Direct Relation

PI: Positive Indirect Relation

ND: Negative Direct Relation

NI: Negative Indirect Relation

Table 4: The extracted components

Cognitive Aspects	
Cognitive Aspects Architecture C1. Notable/Large/Historical Buildings (14 subjects) C2. The Continuity of Houses (9 subjects) C3. Warm-coloured/Brick Houses (7 subjects) C4. Timberwork Houses (6 subjects) Stores C5. Stores (14 subjects) C6. Open Cafes(13 subjects) C7. Other Restaurants (6 subjects) C8. Grocer's (8 subjects) C9: Stores for the Locals (11 subjects) C10. Souvenir Shops (9 subjects) C11. Sores that Place Some of Their Goods Outside (15 subjects) C12. Private Houses for the Locals (5 subjects) Spatial Pattern C13. Back Alleys (13 subjects) C14. Stone Pavements (6 subject) C15. Narrow Pavements (12 subjects) C16. Narrow Space between Houses (6 subjects) C17. A Square (8 subjects) C18. Shadowed Space (12 subjects) C19. Streets/Pavements Extending Far Back (5 subjects) People C20. People not Prominent (12 subjects) C21. People Prominent (15 subjects) C22. People Moving Around Prominent (7 subjects) C23. People Gathering Prominent (7 subjects) C24. Visitors/Tourists (9 subjects) C25. The Locals (9 subjects) C26. Cars (12 subjects) C27. Plants (9 subjects) **Affective Aspects-Physiological Perception** AP1. Pressure (9 subjects) AP2. Open (5 subjects) AP3. Simple (10 subjects) **Affective Aspects-Subjective Perception** AS1. Touristic (11 subjects) AS2. Not Touristic (9 subjects) AS3. Local (16 subjects)	AS4. Safe (6 subjects) AS5. Dangerous (7 subjects) AS6. Quiet/Calm (10 subjects) AS7. Dull (15 subjects) AS8. Active/Lively (16 subjects) AS9. Noisy/Fussy (11 subject) AS10. Modern (5 subjects) AS11. Old/Historic/Antiquated (9 subjects) AS12. Nameless (5 subjects) AS13. Famous (10 subjects) AS14. Unique (14 subjects) AS15. Ordinal (9 subjects) AS16 Not in Harmony with Townscape (8 subjects) AS17. In Harmony with Townscape (5 subjects) AS18. Without a Great Deal of Atmosphere (5 subjects) AS19. Gorgeous (6 subjects) AS20. Like a Fairy Tale (5 subjects) AS21. Unsophisticated (5 subjects) **Wants** W1. Shopping (6 subjects) W2. Seeing Local Goods (7 subjects) W3. Eating Local Food (5 subjects) W4. Feeling Easy to Enter (5 subjects) W5. Cannot Feel Easy to Enter (6 subjects) W6. Walking (9 subjects) W7. Cannot Walk (8 subjects) W8. Enjoying the Whole View (6 subjects) W9. Seeing Local Architecture & Other Physical Objects (11 subjects) W10. Seeing the Locals and Their Life-style (12 subjects) **Needs** N1. Seeing Something Famous (6 subjects) N2. Seeking the Local Authenticity (5 subjects) N3. Seeking Something outside Daily Life (15 subjects) N4. Expecting Surprises (5 subjects) N5. Adapting Myself to the Area (9 subjects) N6. Appealing to Others/Boasting (9 subjects) N7. Making and Keeping Good Memories (7 subjects) N8. Relaxing (10 subjects)

Table 5: Frequencies of relations between pairs of components

	C13	AS1	AS3	AS5	AS6	AS7	AS8	AS9	AS10	AS11	AS13	AS14	AS15	AS16	W1	W7	W9	W10	N1	N2	N3		N5		N6	N7	N8	
	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	P	N	P	P	P	
C1										4	8						4				8							C1
C2																					4				4			C2
C5			6			7	5				5			4				5			6		5			4		C5
C6						6										4		4	4		4							C6
C10		8																							4			C10
C11			4																									C11
C12			4																									C12
C13						7															5		4					C13
C15	5		4																		4							C15
C16	5					5																						C16
C18	7				4	11																					4	C18
C20						10							5															C20
C21																					4							C21
C23										4																		C23
C24								4																				C24
C25							5										5						4					C25
C26			4	4					5					4		4				4			4					C26
C27																											4	C27
AS1																									4			AS1
AS3																		4			4							AS3
AS6																											4	AS6
AS13																4		4			6							AS13
AS14																					4					4		AS14
W1																									4	4		W1
W10																					5							W10

P: Positive Relation
N: Negative Relation

Figure 1: The possible relations between visitors' mental states and cognitive/affective components of an historical district
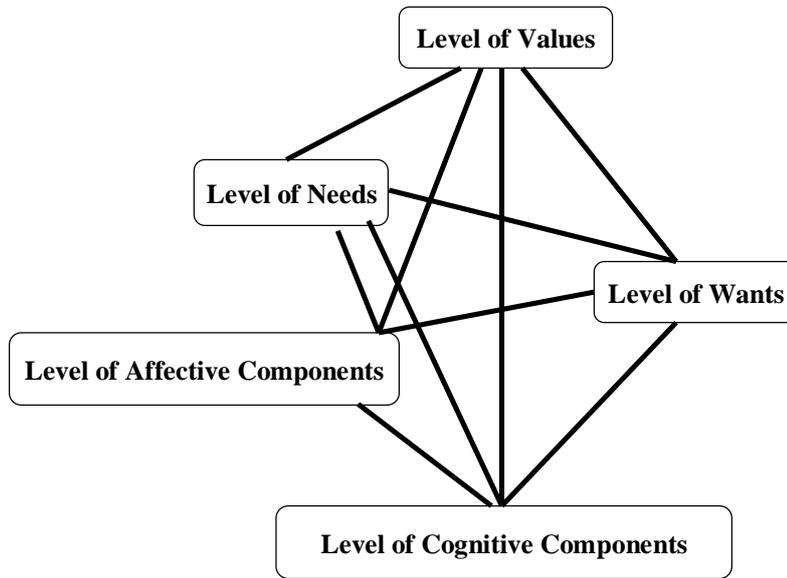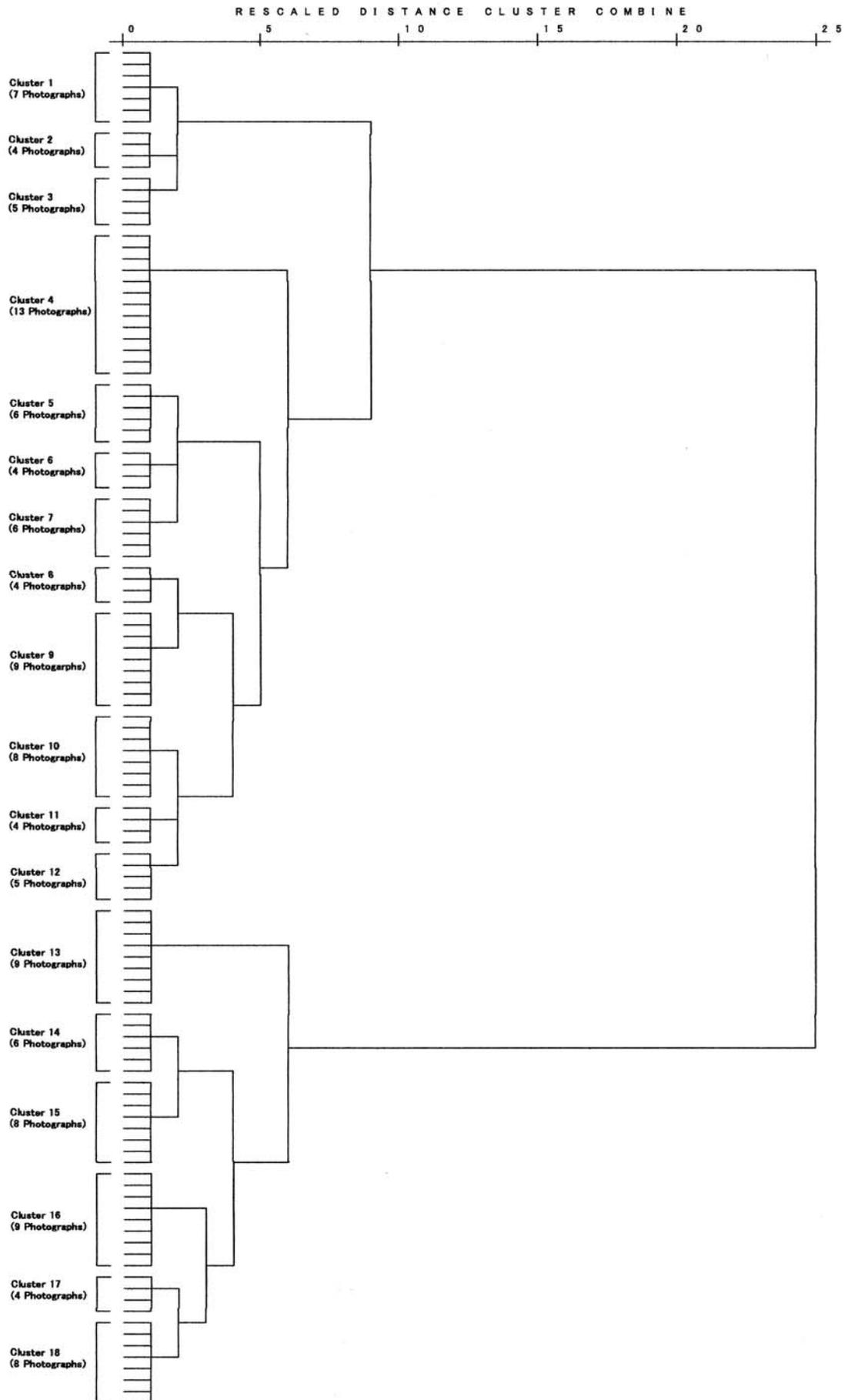
Fugure 2: Dendrogram of the cluster analysis

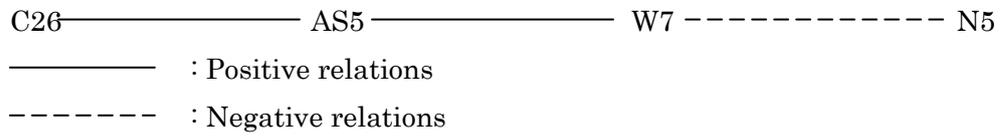Figure 3: An Example of relations whose frequencies to be counted

C26——————— AS5 ——————— W7 – – – – – – – – – – – N5

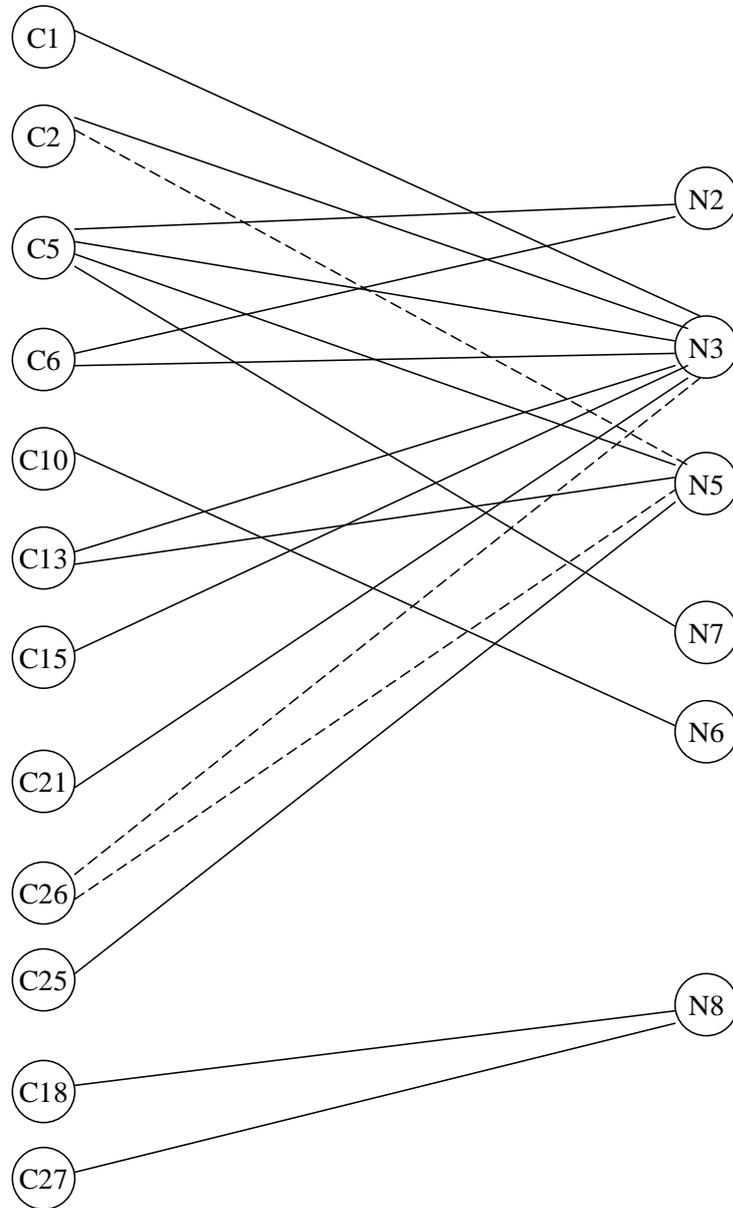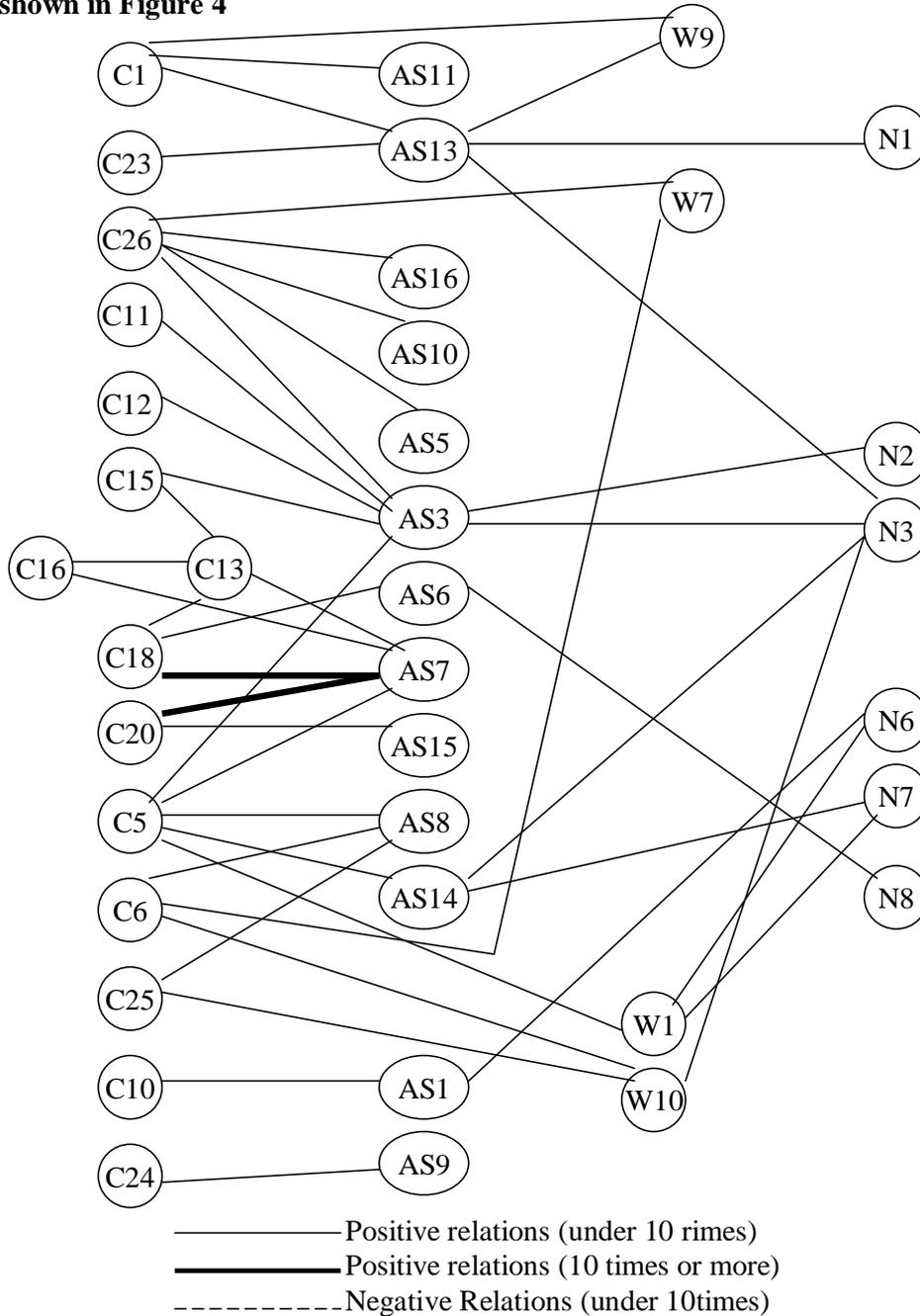——————   : Positive relations

– – – – – –   : Negative relations

Figure 4: Relations between cognitive components and needs

Positive relations (under 10 times)
Negative relations (under 10 times)

Note: For a component each abbreviation stands for , please see Table 5

Figure 5: Relations other than between cognitive components and needs as shown in Figure 4

Positive relations (under 10 rimes)
Positive relations (10 times or more)
Negative Relations (under 10times)

Note: For a component each abbreviation stands for , please see Table 5