Exploring the transition to adulthood by means of sequence analytic methods

GESIS Colloquium- Data Archive for the Social Sciences

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Outline

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Transition to adulthood and sequence analysis

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- Do family life trajectories become less similar over time?
  $\rightarrow$ Comparing life course trajectories across cohorts

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  $\rightarrow$ Useful to review existing general views
  $\rightarrow$ a) Decline of the universal traditional family and increase in number of alternative forms of life?
  $\rightarrow$ b) People live in various statuses during their 20s, but most individuals choose to live in a marriage during their 30s

Why sequence analysis?

- "The work-family link, therefore, can no longer be fruitfully analyzed purely from a static, cross-sectional, event-based perspective, but must take into account a dynamic, longitudinal, trajectory-based perspective."
  (Aassve et al. 2002)

Example

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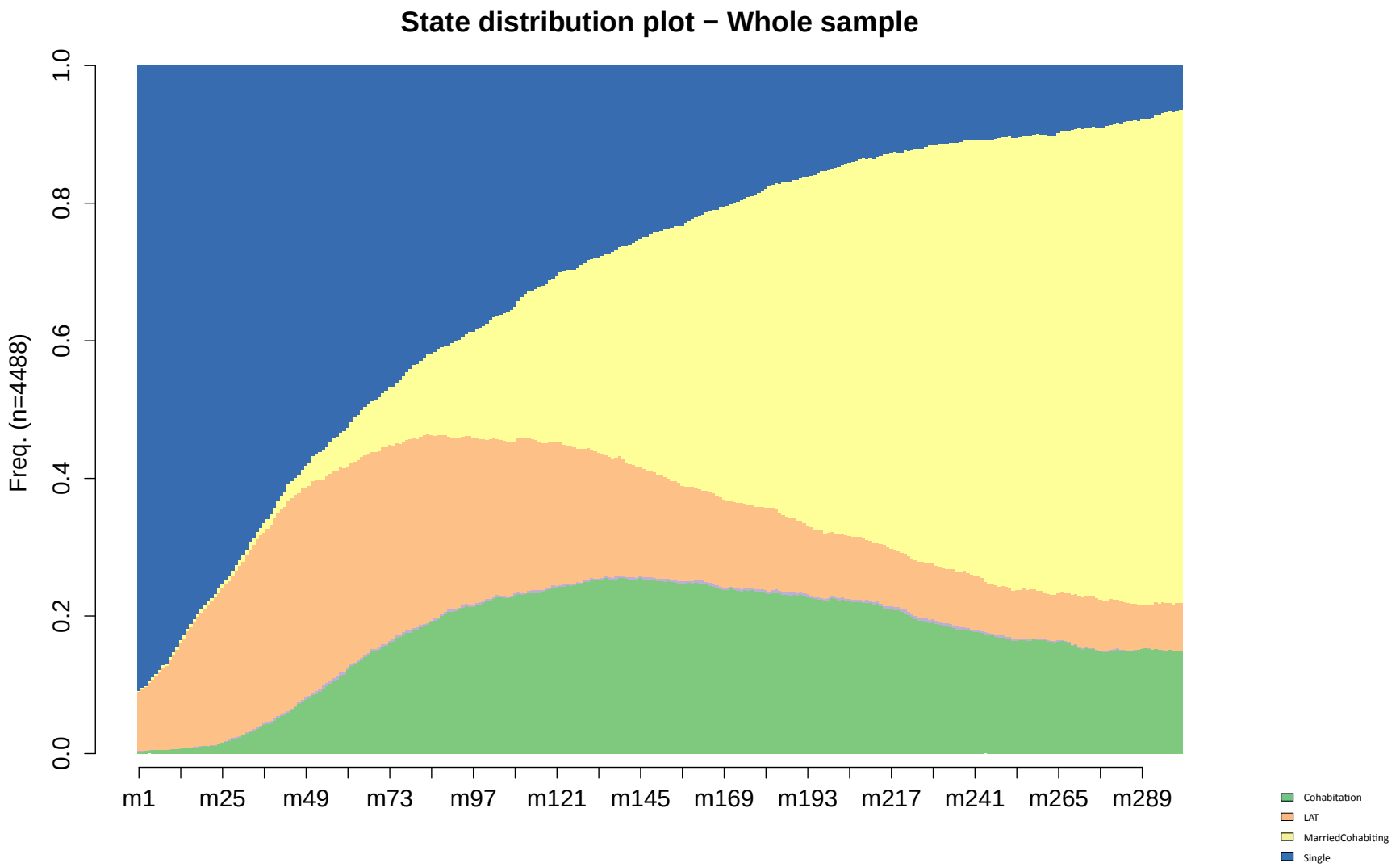
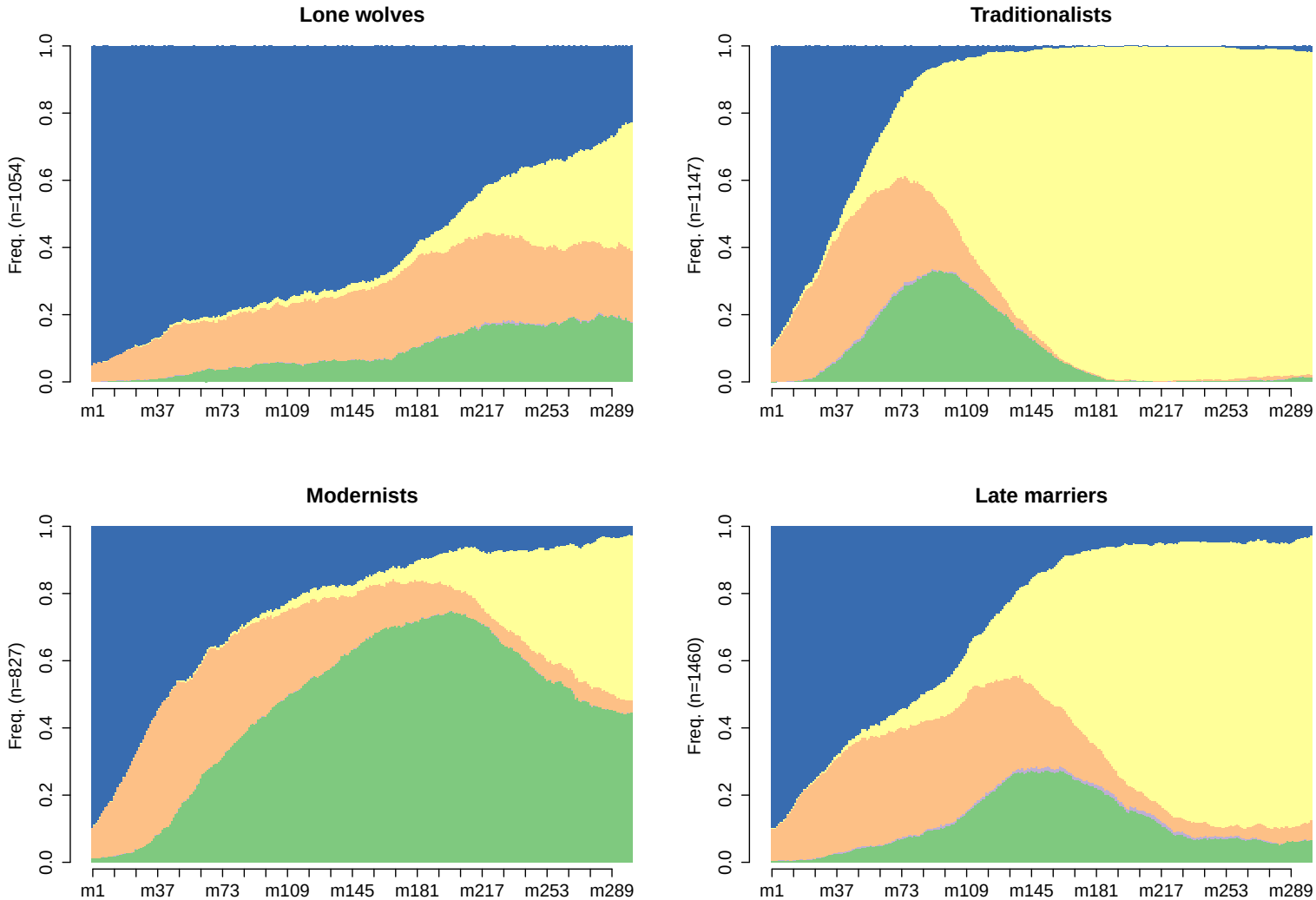
  $\rightarrow$ Which are the most frequent partnership trajectories in Germany?
  $\rightarrow$ Which individual characteristics make individuals prone of experiencing one or the other life course?

Results I



Pairfam, Waves 1-6, Cohort 1971-1973, Own research, n=4488

Results II



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Results III

Table 1: Individual characteristics on Cluster Membership

	Dependent variable:			
	lone wolves	traditionalists	modernised	the late marriers
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female	-0.633^{***}	0.835^{***}	0.067	-0.204^{***}
	(0.088)	(0.090)	(0.098)	(0.078)
Secondary Education	-0.171	0.087	0.397	-0.113
	(0.176)	(0.163)	(0.246)	(0.160)
Tertiary Education	-0.323^{*}	-0.300^{*}	0.488^{**}	0.238
	(0.181)	(0.170)	(0.248)	(0.163)
Ethnic-German Immigrant (Aussiedler)	-0.718^{***}	1.259^{***}	-1.193^{***}	-0.203
	(0.242)	(0.173)	(0.331)	(0.184)
Turkish Background	-0.436^{**}	1.216^{***}	-2.205^{***}	-0.143
	(0.209)	(0.174)	(0.515)	(0.179)
Rural	0.085	-0.248^{***}	0.088	0.082
	(0.097)	(0.094)	(0.107)	(0.086)
Constant	-0.671^{***}	-1.461^{***}	-1.956^{***}	-0.669^{***}
	(0.187)	(0.180)	(0.256)	(0.171)
Observations	3,017	3,017	3,017	3,017
Log Likelihood	-1,596.574	-1,625.392	-1,363.761	-1,904.450
Akaike Inf. Crit.	3,207.149	3,264.784	2,741.521	3,822.900
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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5. In a comparison among cohorts we could study the de-standardisation and individualisation of the life course

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- What kind of turnout trajectories can we observe within households and what does this tell us about the social contextualization of voting?

Thank you!

Sequence analysis vs. Event History Analysis

- Event history analysis: Study of timing of events

Event-history analysis	**Sequence analysis**
Predefined single event	Status or event sequences
One transition	Multiple trajectories simultaneously
	Holistic perspective on the life-course
	$\rightarrow$ Study work career AND family trajectory

Proceedings in sequence analysis

1. Data preparation
2. define sequence dataset
3. Calculate similarities between life courses (-> optimal matching distance matrix)
4. Identify clusters of life course trajectories with wards distance
5. Conduct logistic regression on clusters
   Which individual and macro-level factors (e.g. regional social context) influence whether an individual belongs to a cluster?