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*Exercise 8: Read “Consequences of Realism for Sociological Theory-Building” by Thomas Brante (especially pages 178-185) and indicate your understanding if different layers of social analysis by looking at an IT related problem and demonstrate how analysing it through international, inter-institutional, institutional, inter-individual and individual layers would help us in understanding the problem.*

**International (also: global) layer**

Mirrors the global perspective covering nations as well as transnational companies and organizations and is led by political system studies (imperialism, colonialism, etc.) and peace- and conflict research analyzing dependencies between participating parties (autonomous systems from national layer).

**Inter-institutional (also: national) layer**

Within this layer societal and institutional orders are contrasted by focusing on historical and social development studies. Different viewpoints are taken allowing a broader analysis of how institutionalized relations interact. Study targets are generally characterized by territory, cultural and political identity, economy and a law system.

**Institutional layer**

The institutional layer analyses formal or informal statuses and positions of participants in society as well as certain networks highlighting hierarchies and relations within and between those. Most of those relations are referred to as institutional (family, work, school, etc.).

**Inter-individual layer**

This layer elaborates on interaction patterns between individuals finding rituals and rules for those. Additionally behavior in conversations may be covered.

**Individual layer**

The individual layer focuses on how people define and ground their individual appearance and behavior (attitudes, intentions, dispositions, habitus, etc.) within social context.

The five layers may be studied relative autonomously. Rules and mechanisms are rather not interchangeable between layers and, therefore, need separate and isolated consideration.

The division of social actors and networks into layers allows studying the targeted object on an isolated level, without the need to understand its relation to other upper or lower layers. Research on the latter relations may be postponed until a deeper understanding of those relations has been achieved by separated independent studies.

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Cool article :)

*Good analysis has paid attention to all five levels and can demonstrate the added value of the multi-level analysis. Good analysis has also identified correct questions for each particular level. The text and task to it, is quite challenging, so you need to set aside a little extra time to do it.*