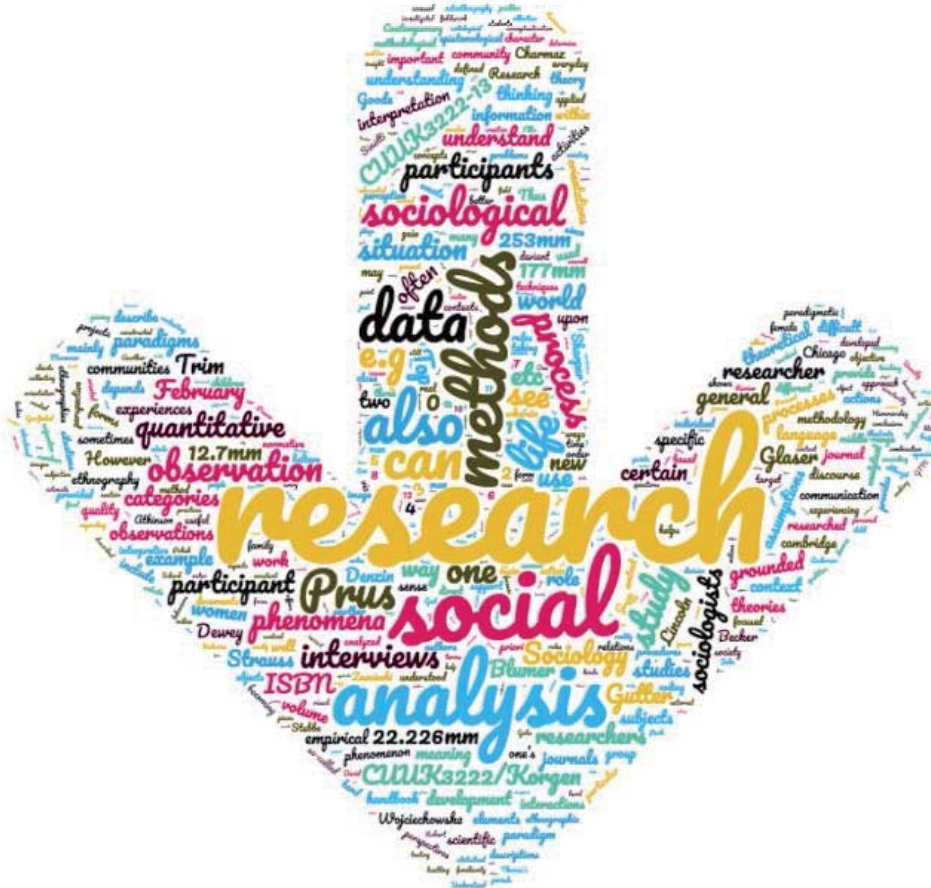


Qualitative methodology. Theories, paradigms and research.

Lecture at Chuo Daigaku. .

Qualitative methodology



What is it qualitative research?

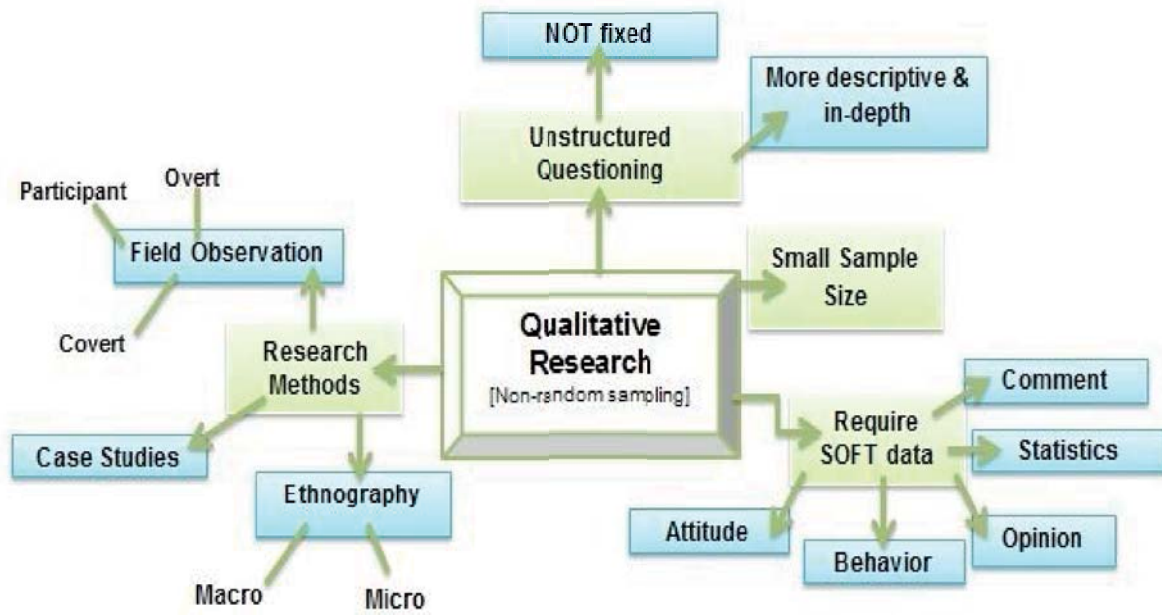
- It is not quantitative research (in social sciences)
- Defining is done by opposition.
- The identification of the type of research is done by indication of methods and techniques of research.

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Opposition



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Qualitative thinking

- „[t]he world in which we immediately live, that in which we strive, succeed, and are defeated is preeminently a qualitative world. What we act for, suffer, and enjoy are things in their qualitative determinations” (Dewey, 1931: 1).
- The concept of common sense and the associated **common sense thinking** “that concerned with action and its consequences, whether undergone in enjoyment or suffering, is qualitative” (idem) and is inherently a part of qualitative researcher work

Qualitative thinking

- The ontological sense of quality is built amid classifications or while attributing characteristics to given objects. However, qualities are not “objective” properties of objects.
- While we can enumerate features of any object (e.g. image, biography unit, activity, social phenomenon, social stratification, etc.), we may appreciate that its meaning depends upon the understanding of a situation in which it is embedded.
- We need the pattern of interpretation.

Qualitative thinking

- What we, as analysts, can do is to understand certain phenomena and mindfully “decipher” the existence of unifying qualitiveness.
- Therefore, we need to know the exact situation (in sociology we call it the interpretative context, or the universe of discourse, or the situation) in which the object (or action) being subject of our analysis and the attempt to understand will be found.
- The main motif (eg. in a picture, a novel, a building, etc.) is necessary for understanding individual, sometimes seemingly dispersed parts.



Qualitative Thinking

- What we, as analysts, can do is to understand certain phenomena and mindfully “decipher” the existence of unifying qualitiveness.
- Anger exists in everyday life and can be experienced and perceived in reference to the situation in which it occurs.
- The complete image often determines the meaning of elements, and without taking into account the whole, it is difficult to understand its parts (see Figueroa 2008: 7)

Qualitative thinking



- The scientific thinking is specific in qualitative form of control of results: „ The more formal and mathematical science becomes, the more it is controlled by sensitiveness to a special kind of qualitative considerations.” (Dewey 1931)
- Quality is often experienced without a reflection before it becomes the object of rational description (**intuition**)
- Thinking and understanding have qualitative character.

Situating the methods in a discipline – the case of sociology

- Do the use of qualitative methods of research indicate that we apply the qualitative sociology?
- The opposition of quality/quantity builds the symbolic border
- Do we need it?

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What is a qualitative sociology?

- As a perspective, qualitative sociology mainly focuses on describing and understanding but sometimes also explaining the causes of social phenomena through empirical research and analysis of individual and group experiences
- The quantitative methods also could be used to help in understanding the broader contexts of some phenomena that are analysed mainly by qualitative methods.

Qualitative sociology

- Qualitative sociology is not only about the use of specific techniques and methods of research (group interviews, participant observation, unstructured interviews, narrative interviews, video-elicited interviews, photographs, video recordings, etc.), as it is sometimes understood.
- It is rather a qualitative way of thinking about human experience – through “scientific intersubjective empathy,” which, under certain circumstances, allows reaching the meanings of individual and group experiencing of the so-called *external world*.

Qualitative Sociology

- Thus, qualitative researchers investigate “what” and “how” something occurs (processual reconstruction of phenomena), as they describe social phenomena (R. Prus in Kleinknecht 2007).
- Processes are “qualitative wholes” enabling the understanding of various elements of a particular situation observed during participant observation (e.g., the process of becoming a marijuana user (Becker 1953) or the process of becoming a physician (Becker et al. 1961)).

Qualitative Sociology

- Qualitative sociology is then a theoretical and methodological orientation in sociology and not only practical use of qualitative methods of research.
- When we practice qualitative sociology we try to be very close to participants of research.
- We avoid assuming apriori categories about researched objects/subjects and collectivities.

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Qualitative sociology

- The concepts in analysis are sensitizing concepts that direct us in explicating the phenomena and show us the „places“ where they happen.
- We use often the „**embodied concepts**“, that help to understand the phenomenon through individual experiences connected with the concrete space and time.

Paradigms and perspectives

- Is there a discrepancy between qualitative and quantitative research?
- There are two possible answers (problem of technical and paradigm discrepancy)
- Methodology is neutral
- Normative and interpretative paradigm (Wilson)
- The meaning of methods and data depends on paradigm that we accept

The beginnings

- Chicago University (Park, Bughess)
- W. Thomas and F. Znaniecki (process of adjustment and social organization)
- Sociological ethnography and anthropological ethnography
- Robert Park - „getting your hands dirty in real research“
- Nels Anderson, Paul Cressey, Frances Donovan

The beginnings

- Ethnography in ethnomethodological research (Sudnow 1967; Garfinkel 1967; Goode 1994)
- Influence of Herbert Blumer (1969) and Symbolic Interactionism – exploration and inspection
- Ethnographers according to Robert Prusa (Grills, Prus: 24 - 25), concentrate mainly on the three sources of data: **observation, participant observation, and interviews** they try in this way to get the *intimate familiarity*, (Blumer, 1969).

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Continuation

- Focused ethnography
- Multi-sited ethnography
- Types of ethnography: postmodernistic ethnography (Denzin 1993, Fontana, 1993), reflexive ethnography (Burawoy, 2003) feministic ethnography (Visweswaran, 1997)
- Grounded theory – theories are discovered and generated or constructed

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Continuation

- Autoethnography –evocative and analytic
- Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz)
- Visual grounded theory –multislice imagining, research of visual processes
- “**Transformational Grounded Theory: Theory, Voice, and Action**”, Michelle Redman-MacLaren, Jane Mills 2015
- There is still developing the classic grounded theory – theories are discovered (Barney Glaser and his school and journal and publishing house)
- **Classic Grounded Theory: Applications with Qualitative and Quantitative Data** by Judith A. Holton and Isabelle Walsh (Sage, 2017)

Continuation

- Holistic ethnography – embodied meditation practice (Davis, Breede 2015; 1. embodied experience, 2.Emotion/transcendence. 3. Contemplation/Reflection, 4. Dialogue)
- Valerie Janesick, *Contemplative qualitative inquiry* (make sense of people life, tentative conclusions, holistic, emphasis on thoughts in every moment of research, no-self in interviewing, no-harm ethics etc. (see also Valerie Malhotra Benz, Jeremy J. Shapiro (1998) *Mindful Inquiry In Social Research*, Thousands Oaks: Sage.
- Etc.



Continuation

- Phenomenological research
- Explication of data, Groenewald; Hycner
- Transformational phenomenology (Valerie M. Bentz)

Continuation

- The analysis of discourse close to sociological approach – interactional linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis

Institutionalization

- Legitimization of methods and qualitative research through institutionalization of qualitative sociology
- There is increase of acceptance, but there is still resistance to qualitative methods of research in academic world (Denzin, Lincoln, 2011: 2).
- Emergence of specialized, qualitative Journals

Institutionalization

- *Qualitative Sociology*
- „“The journal *Qualitative Sociology* is dedicated to the qualitative interpretation and analysis of social life. The journal offers both theoretical and analytical research, and publishes manuscripts based on research methods such as interviewing, participant observation, ethnography, historical analysis, content analysis and others which do not rely primarily on numerical data.”
- Thus, a difference between qualitative and statistical analysis is here elucidated by indication that qualitative sociology relies on the use of qualitative methods and the qualitative interpretation of social phenomena.

Institutionalization

- *Qualitative Sociology Review*
- “In order to enable a free flow of information and to integrate the community of qualitative sociologists, we have decided to create an open-access, international scientific journal. Qualitative Sociology Review publishes empirical, theoretical and methodological articles applicable to all fields and specializations within sociology... All sociologists who make use of an interpretative paradigm and a qualitative research methodology are welcome to submit their articles and support our initiative.”
- Three features are accented: integration of qualitative researchers and interpretative paradigm, and qualitative methodology of research.

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Qualitative Sociology Review

Friday, October 5, 2018

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'We must put ourselves in the position of the subject who tries to find his way in this world, and we must remember, first of all, that the environment by which he is influenced and to which he adapts himself is his world, not the objective world of science.'

**W.I. Thomas
and**

 **FACULTY
OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIOLOGY**
University of Lodz

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Welcome to a new sociological journal website!

For a long time, we have observed an increased interest in qualitative sociology, and the use of an interpretive frame to understand human actions, social processes, meanings and definitions, and new social theory generally.

In order to enable a free flow of information and to integrate the community of qualitative sociologists, we have decided to create an open-access, international scientific journal.

Qualitative Sociology Review publishes empirical, theoretical and methodological articles applicable to all fields and specializations within sociology. Every submitted paper is blind reviewed and quality-controlled by two reviewers. The Editorial Staff and Consulting Editors strive to operate at a high level of scientific quality.

Volume XIV July 2018 is already available!

All sociologists who make use of an interpretative paradigm and a qualitative research methodology are welcome to submit their articles and support our initiative.

Editorial Board

**Frequency: 4 times a year
Published: January, April, July, October.**

Institutionalization

- Other Journals: *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *Qualitative Research*, *Symbolic Interaction*, *Qualitative Inquiry*, *FQS – Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *Qualitative Report*.
- Publication of handbooks: David Silverman (2010), Barney Glaser (1998), Kathy Charmaz (2006), Uve Flick (2014), Denzin and Lincoln (2011), Atkinson et. al. (2007), Howard Becker (1998), Konecki 2000 etc.
- Dictionaries:
 - „The Sage Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry, Sage, 2007.
 - “Słownik Socjologii Jakościowej” , 2012, Difin; (in Polish)

Some examples of qualitative research

- Robert Prus, C. Sharper, "Road Hustlers" (1977).
- The description of life, activities and language of the group (exploration), classification: *mechanic, shoot up man, muscle man, contact man* and *boss*.
- These observations led to analytical conceptualization (inspection): deviance involvement, perspectives, opportunity structures, options stabilizations, disinvolvement, reinvolvement

Some examples of qualitative research



- Robert Prus, C, Sharper, "Road Hustlers" (1977).
- The use of the 10 years of experience of participant, ethnography
- The authors present five stages of hustling: (1) selecting the target (victim); (2) establishing contact; (3) encouraging the targets to invest in the game; (4) taking over the target's share; and (5) calming the target – if the target has been properly "cooled out," he/she may again become the victim of a scam (Prus and Sharper 1977: 2) (cooling out of the target; *ibid.*: 2; see also Goffman, 1952).
- What we see here are general concepts referring to a specific action (process).

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Some examples of qualitative research



- David Goode (1994) *World Without Words: The Social Construction Of Children Born Deaf and Blind*.
- One year of observation in hospital plus video recording and observation at home and school (200 hours).
- Goode's research reveals that bodily expressions and gesticulations can substitute for spoken language.
- The author obtained ethnographical evidence of mental processes in the examined children, contrary to the opinion of experts and teachers, and showed that intersubjectivity with children is possible if we seriously take their communication in interaction in specific situations (touching, autosenory stimulation and exaggerated motor behaviors and routines)
- Goode also experimented with himself in the role of the participants.

Some examples of qualitative research

- Magdalena Wojciechowska (2015) *Men who Like Using and Abusing Women: The Perspective of Clients on Escort Agency Workers*, in: *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*.
- *Snowballing* as a method of sampling
- The conclusions from the research are based on qualitative research, 45 in-depth interviews, 14 observations (mainly in two escort agencies) and 28 informal conversations via Skype (ibid.: 4, 19).
- The example refers to the discourse analysis (during interaction) of men (both clients and security guards) with employees of escort agencies
- Rhetoric of infantilization (woman as a toy)

Some examples of qualitative research

- Magdalena Wojciechowska (2015) *Men who Like Using and Abusing Women...*
- Another script keeps the division between normal women and prostitutes
- The discourse and actions of men (e.g. testing new employees of the agency by security guards) commodify the female body to gain control over it
- Women, on the other hand, separate themselves (self) from bodies to cope with doing their job.

Continuation

- Decolonized research and epistemologies.
- Bainbridge, R., Whiteside, M., & McCalman, J. (2013). Being, knowing and doing: A Phronetic approach to constructing grounded theory with aboriginal Australian partners. *Qualitative Health Research*, 23(2), 275–288.
- Thus, decolonizing or anticolonial research needs to move beyond theory to inform the ethics of practice and the practice of ethics in everyday action.
- Research presented in an anticolonial framework must concentrate on both colonial relations and practice and create a critical link between theory and practice
- Researcher positionality.

Continuation

- The values and ethics (Aristotelian's phronesis) are the part of the research situation.
- Researcher takes into consideration the pragmatism, focus on context and particular.
- The researchers took the approach of decolonizing methodologies where the equality of the participants and the researchers is stressed and the participants knowledge and resilience for change are put at the center of investigation.
- The researchers reflect on the issue of power in the research situation
- “Decolonizing research advocates building a coalition of knowledge, relevance, practical application, and vision for Aboriginal people.” (276)

Conclusions

- Research and qualitative methods are becoming more and more popular and acceptable (institutionalization of methods and research)
- There is a huge variety of approaches and research methods
- They require placing them in a specific orientation, for example, qualitative sociology, or as part of "qualitative pedagogical research", critical theory of organization, etc.
- The research itself and the qualitative methods without the discipline's background / or as in the transdisciplinary study of several disciplines / do not have a comprehensive interpretation framework, they can then easily depart from the scientific interpretation towards the interpretation of data and categories from the position of colloquial theories.

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Conclusions

- Currently, there is an increasing use of *introspection* and *first person perspective* in qualitative research (autoethnography, holistic ethnography, contemplative qualitative research).
- The concept of personal or community transformation and change is important
- The cause is the epistemological crisis in social sciences (problem of ethics and decolonizing research methodologies)

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Thank you very much

