

# Qualitative Methods-Part2

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- To consider the philosophies associated with qualitative methods.
- Qualitative approaches: how to use data from case studies, ethnographic studies and other types.
- Types of qualitative analysis processes
- Research ethics

Normally based on the:

- **Ontological** (theory of being) belief that the world is socially constructed and subjective
- **Epistemological** (theory of knowing) belief that phenomena are observable through human interaction
- **Methodological** (theory of discovery) belief that discovering new knowledge involves the researcher as part of the observed

- Attempts **to discover** new phenomena, logics and structures, and **conceptualising those**
- Any research that doesn't involve numerical data
- Words, pictures, photos, videos, audio recordings. Field notes. Peoples' own words.
- Tends to start with a broad open question rather than a specific hypothesis, explores under-researched phenomenon typically rather than testing a theory
- Often Inductive rather than deductive: Develop new conceptions

## Quantitative Methods ?



## Qualitative Methods ?



Image source: IKON International Associates

- Explorative Case Studies → **Semi-structured interview guide**
- Single case study / in-depth case study / Grounded theory → **Unstructured interview guide**
- Observation (of group) → **Focus groups**
- Observation (of individual) → Recorded (**video/audio**)
- Ethnography → Use of **Diaries, self-reporting, written accounts of past events**
- Action research → **Participation** in events and communications and documentation of such via diaries, memos and/or recordings
- Historic account → **Archive data**

**To observe a phenomenon (case) in its organisational context and analyse multiple dimensions in order to discover a rich story**

## Benefits:

well-suited to the study of phenomena that are not well-understood or theorised  
(ambiguous, dynamic, complex, unpredictable)

## In-depth investigation

- But unique benefits compared to quantitative studies:
  - ✓ Does answer the WHY question
  - ✓ Gain in-depth understanding
  - ✓ Explorative

- Limitations
  - lacking scientific rigour
  - generalisation?
- The **Issues:**
  - Difficult to analyse
  - Skills ?
  - Objective?



Think about

- researcher's influence
- objective/ subjective?
- accessibility to the “organisation”

- Empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context
- Boundaries between phenomenon and context aren't evident
- Using multiple sources of evidence (selected cases)

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989) Building theories from case study research.  
*Academy of Management Review* 14(4) 352–550.

Stake, R. E. (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research*. Sage.

Yin, R. K. (1984) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Sage.

- Individual interviews
- Group discussions (Focus group interviews)
- Internal documents, e.g. committee minutes, strategy documents
- Annual reports (front end material) published
- Policy and procedure documents, e.g. budgeting guides
- Data points created in-process over the past: Social networks, Events...
- Archival materials

**An informed investigation & involvement into a real business issue in an organisation by a researcher, resulting in an actionable solution**

**Benefits:** well-suited to the study of phenomena that are not well-understood or theorised (ambiguous, dynamic, complex, unpredictable)

Direct access to novel practice that is just unfolding in business or non-market organisation ⇔ Involvement

**Issues:** lack of prior theory, researcher as a participant (lack of critical distance?), often undertaken in researcher's own organisation, responsibility for the impact of intervention

**To develop an understanding of a social phenomenon from within a social group (a form of anthropology)**

**Benefits:** well-suited to the study of phenomena that are not well-understood or theorised (ambiguous, dynamic, complex, unpredictable)

**Issues:** role of theory, role of researcher as an ‘infiltrator’, access to organisations and networks, length of time needed in the field, skills needed to collect & analyse relevant data

**Ethnographic study goes well when developed as a case study of a particular phenomenon of researcher's interest:**

- Ethnographic study should be framed by case interest
- Justify why cases are needed
- Reflect upon scope of cases and materials, number of cases chosen
  - Given that ethnography needs a very detailed documentation of the anthropologic observation

- **Summarising** of meanings
- **Categorisation** of meanings
- **Structuring** of meanings using narrative



- Data **reduction**
  - Data display
  - Conclusions and verification
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- Discover **themes** and subthemes
  - Condense to a manageable number
  - Build hierarchy of themes
  - Link to **theory**

- **Defining themes and codes**
- ‘To us, themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs that link not only expressions found in texts but also expressions found in images, sounds, and objects.’ (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p.87)
- Categories, labels, codes, concepts, etc...

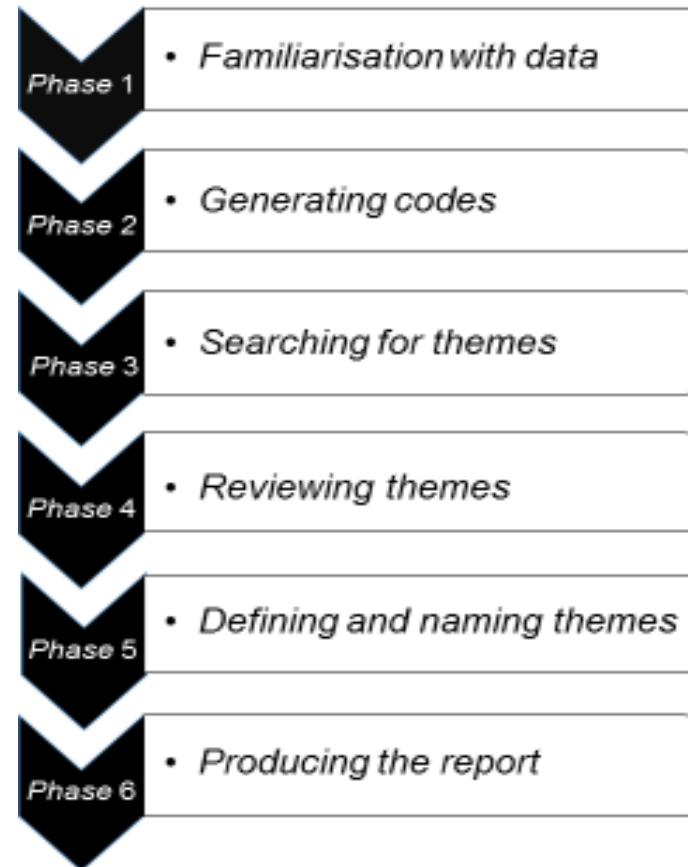
# Identifying Themes-how?

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- Repetitions
- Categories
- Transitions
- Similarities and differences
- Metaphors and analogies
- Missing data
- Theory related materials

# Thematic Analysis

‘Theoretical Freedom’ (Braun & Clarke, p. 78)



(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.87)

# Need for Ethics Procedure



Source:

<http://reo.mcmaster.ca/1612YouGetToBeFirst.jpg/view>

<http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/research/ethics/>

## Research

Research  
Environment and  
Ethics

Making an ethics  
application

Assessment  
process

Health and Safety  
Risk Assessment

Ethics Contacts

Ethics forms and  
guidelines

Good Clinical

# Ethics Applications for Undergraduate, MA and MSc Students

Ethics applications for undergraduate, MA and MSc students are not generally dealt with via the central ethics process but by the course Programme Convenor. The Undergraduate/ MA/ MSc Ethics Application form is a condensed version of the main Ethics Application Form, and also incorporates the consent form and debriefing form templates, which can be amended as necessary for individual applications. Please note that Programmes may adapt these documents to suit their specific needs. An Ethics Risk Assessment form and a Health and Safety Compliance Declaration should also be completed, as well as an overseas background information form if the research is taking place overseas (these three documents do not need to be sent to the Health & Safety Office, and you do not need to obtain a risk reference number. They should be submitted to the Programme Convenor along with your application form). The templates for all the forms can be found below.



► Open all ▾ Close all

## ▼ Ethics form submission

An ethics application should be submitted for review and approval by anyone conducting research at, or under the auspices of, the University of Roehampton that involves human beings, animals or personal data relating to human beings.

The completion of this form below should not be seen as an end in itself but as a vehicle to ensure that you have gone through a process of considering the ethical implications of your research in detail and that you are able to communicate this clearly.

You should not start data collection until your ethics application has been given final approval by your dissertation supervisor which is also meant to confirm that all conditions have been met. This form is specific for the Dissertation module, not for the Consultancy Project. Not filling in this form can be considered as bad research method and hence implicit can affect your marking.



[Open Form and Submit](#)

- Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, J. D. (2018) Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. Sage.
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2017) The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research. Sage.
- Emmel, N. et al. (2018) Doing Realist Research. Sage.
- Krippendorff, K. (2018) Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology. Sage.
- Piekkari, R. & Welch, C. (2005) Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business. Edward Elgar.
- Warren, S. (2018) Research using Secondary Sources: A guide for Business, Management and Organization. Routledge.
- Yin, R. K. (2015) Qualitative Research from Start to Finish. Guilford Press.



- Phenomenology
- Instruments of qualitative research methods
- Case studies
- Action research
- Ethnographic studies
- Research ethics