QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWING

Slides adapted from Dr. Gardner-McCune
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Help us explore and learn characteristics and features of new/uncharacterized phenomena

Are NOT

Soft
Psuedo – Science
Anecdotal Evidence
Less scientific than quantitative methods
usually characterized by large sample size
driven by hypotheses and testing

Are Used

To address broad and complex problems (descriptive).
when little is known about a topic, area, issue or phenomenon (exploratory).
Systematically to characterize human experiences, phenomena, and processes
In conjunction with existing literature to identify characteristics or attributes of a phenomenon that need to be better understood or defined by the proposed study
INTERVIEWING

is a basic form of inquiry that allows us to put behavior in context and provides access to understanding their action.

Many disciplines use interviews and they come in many different forms.

Interviews range from tightly structured to unstructured and conversational.
INTERVIEWING OBJECTIVES

Open-ended questions and probes

- Yield in-depth responses about people’s
  • Experiences
  • Perceptios
  • Opinions
  • Feelings
  • Knowledge

Data Consists of verbatim quotations
TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Structured (Very much like a survey)
• Follows a strict set of questions
• No deviation to ensure consistency across participants

Semi-Structured (A little wiggle room to discover new information)
• Uses an Interview guide is a means of maintaining consistency across interviewers & interviewees
• Use when you have an idea of the focus and scope of the topic you want to explore

Unstructured (A lot of space to explore and discover new information)
• General list of questions to guide conversation so that you can learn about a topic
• Use when you are not sure what is important to ask about a topic
• Not sure how to ask
CHOOSING THE TYPE OF INTERVIEW

Pick the Type of Interview that is right for your stage of research

- Exploratory
  - UnStructured
- Developing Theory
  - Semi-Structured
- Test Hypotheses
  - Structured
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Directs the Flow of Discussion - In general a list of topics to cover

**Organization**
- Explain to the participant what to expect in the interview
- Ask permission to record and take notes
- Explain the rights of the participants, eg., voluntary, can stop at any time etc
- Build Rapport with Participant
- Grand Tour Question
- Questions should start from General and move toward specific
- Always maintain an open door of communication to follow-up with additional questions of clarification

**Tips:**
- Try to eliminate all
  - redundant questions
  - Unnecessary questions
- Pilot Interview Guide
  - with a friend or colleague to tighten it up and rephrase questions to better target the information you want to elicit
  - To gauge the amount of time the interview will take
- No more than 90 minutes – 30 - 45 avg

Example: [http://courses2.cit.cornell.edu/fit117/CP_I_InterviewGuide1.htm](http://courses2.cit.cornell.edu/fit117/CP_I_InterviewGuide1.htm)
BUILDING RAPPORT

Goal

Gain the trust of participants
Build participants confidence to share information with you
- Encourage the participant to believe that their opinion really does matters
- familiarize the participant to taking a talking role in the interview

Techniques

Be pleasant
Engage in general pleasantries
- Ask how the participant is doing
- See if they need any water or to use the bathroom
- design a great Grand tour Question
GRAND TOUR QUESTION

Design a Question that is EASY to answer
- choose a topic that the participant will find easy to answer and to elaborate on
- phrase the question in such a way that promotes explanation or description

Example:
“Tell me about the work that you do?”
“What made you buy the Computer/Tablet/Smartphone?”
AVOID LEADING QUESTIONS

Leading is a threat because people want to do well

Leading Questions are those that are phrasing to elicit what you want to hear or a particular perspective

Instead ask neutral questions:
- E.g., What did you like or dislike about your experience with the iPad?

Avoid Questions or Follow-up that Show a Value Judgment

"Wouldn’t it be good if they liked the system you spent months building!"

“Yeah, I agree … is so awful! … or So Great!”

Avoid behavior that conveys that you are pleased or disappointed with responses
- E.g., expression of surprise, jumping to take notes
- this will make participants change their responses to fit you
EXPECTATIONS

- Don’t expect the interviewee to be able to directly answer your research question
- Ask questions that help you get at the information you need to answer your research questions
- Get comfortable with and allow silence, give the participant a chance to think
- The more interviews you do the better you will get and the more relaxed you’ll be
TRANSFORMING INTERVIEW DATA FOR ANALYSIS

474 JS: How would you describe your first reaction to the idea?

475 PR17: Well, hmm [pause], I'm going to have to think back here.

476 [pause] Ahh, I guess I was really worried about how much work it

477 would mean for everybody. The whole program meant doing things

478 in a new way — kind of starting over on some real basics.

479 JS: What's an example here? [knock on the door; someone enters

480 and leaves] Uhh — I was asking about an example.

481 PR17: Well, the curriculum [unclear], for one. All at once, we were

482 going to have to write out these justifications using new criteria.
TRANSCRIPTION: DETAILED & EXACT

Simple (Start here)

Do:
- Types the words spoken on the audio file
- Try your best to type every word.
- Trouble hearing, use square brackets to denote
  - [inaudible] or
  - use [your best guess at the words spoke]

If you have video, you can include notes about body posture, facial expression etc.

Don't:
- Add any interpretation of meaning

Sophisticated

All sorts of notation exists to denote voice inflection, volume, pauses, etc.

This is needed in some forms of analysis.

Use only when analysis requires.

- [ ] Indicates an overlap in speakers’ talk
- (0.5) Indicates a pause in speech, in this case of 0.5 seconds
- (.) Indicates a pause of less than one tenth of a second
- = Used at the beginning or end of a new line to indicate continuous speech
- word Indicates speaker’s gloss on a word or phrase
- *Word* Indicates a quietly spoken word or phrase
- (word) Indicates transcriber’s uncertainty about what was said
- word Indicates extension of the word or sound preceding
- ↓word Indicates a rise in intonation occurring after the symbol
- word↑ Indicates a fall in intonation occurring after the symbol
- h.h Indicates an outbreak
Contributors use notation based on the system established in conversation analysis and ultimately derived from the work of Gail Jefferson. This is the basic set. Other, infrequently used, symbols are explained in footnotes when they appear. For a full account, see Atkinson and Heritage, 1984, pp. ix–xvi, and Jefferson (2004).

( . )  Just noticeable pause
( .3 ), ( 2.6 ) Examples of timed pauses
word [ word  Square brackets aligned across adjacent lines
   [ word  denote the start of overlapping talk
.hh hh  In-breath (note the preceding fullstop) and out-breath
   respectively
wo(h)rd  (h) shows that the word has breathiness (or perhaps
   “laughter” or “crying”) bubbling within it
wor-  A dash shows a sharp cut-off
wo:rd  Colons show that the speaker has stretched the
   preceding sound
(word)  A guess at what might have been said
( )  Very unclear talk
A: word=  The equals sign shows that there is no discernible pause
B: =word between two speakers’ turns. If put between two sounds
   within a single speaker’s turn, shows that they run
   together
word WORD  Underlined sounds are louder, capitals louder still
°word°  Material between “degree signs” is quiet
>word<  Inwards arrows show faster speech, outward slower
<word>  Upward arrow shows upward intonation
word  Downward arrow shows downward intonation
#word#  Material between hash marks is delivered in a “croaky”
   voice
fwordf  Material delivered in a “smile” voice
QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS IS ABOUT FINDING PATTERNS IN DATA

Discovering Meaning
Uncovering New Phenomena & Processes
QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS
Can be descriptive and/or explanatory

- DISCOVERING PATTERNS
  - WAYS OF LOOKING FOR PATTERNS (Lofland, et al., 2006)
    some questions the researcher might ask himself, in order to make sense out of the data:
    - FREQUENCIES of the topic happens or experienced by the research participants
    - MAGNITUDES of the topic happens or experienced by the research participants
    - STRUCTURES or types/dimension of the topic happens or experienced by the research participants
    - PROCESSES of how the topic happens or experienced by the research participants
    - CAUSES of the topic happens or experienced by the research participants
    - CONSEQUENCES of the topic happens or experienced by the research participants
BASICS OF QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

**Systematic Coding of Data**
- Descriptive 1-2 word characterization of patterns/themes

**Systematic Code Refinement**
- A brief narrative description of code category, that identifies properties and features of the patterns/themes
- Review elements that are within the code category to ensure they match the description if not recode the data appropriately.
- Sometimes you need to break categories into

**Systematic Categorizing/Grouping**
- Identify the relationships between code groupings
- Merge groupings when appropriate

This can be an inductive or deductive process

- **inductive** (the codes emerge from reading through the data)
- **deductive** (the categories are informed by the theory or research question or analytic framework)

RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Thick Descriptions (Geertz, 1973)
- detailed account of field experience or interviews where the researcher makes explicit the patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context
- explains human behavior as well as context in which such behavior is meaningful

Explanatory Theories (Grounded Theory - Corbin & Strauss, 2008; 2014)
- explanations of social and cultural phenomena gathered from observation in context and discussion with key informants and derived from systematic analyses of these data
THREATS TO VALIDITY OF INTERVIEW DATA

**Deference Effect**
- People telling you what they think you want to hear
  - So as not to offend you
  - To be seen as competent

**Expectancy Effect**
- Tendency for experimenters to get the answers they were expecting
  - Not due to correct intuition
    - But due to them shaping the nature of the responses
  - Results are because of response, deference, and expectancy
    - We need to be prepared to find contradictions
    - Understand (Our biases) what we hope will happen before we interview ANYONE
VALIDITY & CREDIBILITY

However, qualitative researchers have tried to provide a framework for validity in qualitative research

**Transparency**
- awareness and articulation of biases and initial perceptions and intuitions
- awareness and articulation of the analysis:
  * process,
  * choices and interpretations the researcher makes during the inquiry process

**Systematic Methods**
- consistent use and reporting of data collection context, participants, and methods for analysis of the data
- Inter-rater Reliability

**Seek out Alternate interpretations & explanations**
- Data Triangulation
- Member Checking

VARIous Analysis Techniques for Interview Data

http://www.slideshare.net/mbakdos/pdu-211-research-methods-qualitative-data-analysis
DEFINITIVE RESOURCES: BOOKS


http://wtf.tw/ref/seidman.pdf

DEFINITIVE RESOURCES:

BOOKS


DEFINITIVE RESOURCES: ACADEMIC PAPERS

Quantifying Qualitative Data

http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327809jls0603_1

Thick Description – Ethnography


Excerpt #2: http://www.staff.u-szeged.hu/~magnes/downloads/greetz.pdf
PRACTICAL RESOURCES: SLIDES

Overview of Interviewing: Techniques for dealing with Different Types of Participants
(Slides by Dr. Beki Grinter – GA Tech – Qualitative Research Methods)

Qualitative Data Analysis – Different Types of Analyses (SlideShare – Lecturer: Agatha Ardhiati)
http://www.slideshare.net/mbakdos/pdu-211-research-methods-qualitative-data-analysis

How to Use Word To Analyze your Data
http://www.slideshare.net/jennacondie/working-with-word-for-qualitative-data-analysis
PRACTICAL RESOURCES: WEBSITES & PAPERS


Member Checking: [http://www.qualres.org/HomeMemb-3696.html](http://www.qualres.org/HomeMemb-3696.html)

Rigor in Qualitative Research (Really nice summary of Lincoln & Guba (1985))


How to Collect Data for Thick descriptions for Ethnographies & Case Studies


Tips for qualitative interviewing


Example Interview Guide:

[http://courses2.cit.cornell.edu/fit117/CP_1_InterviewGuide1.htm](http://courses2.cit.cornell.edu/fit117/CP_1_InterviewGuide1.htm)