

Interviews, Focus Groups; Using Artifacts, Archives and Other Texts

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EDU 603 Introduction to Qualitative Research

Warm-up



Please take the next two-three minutes to read the following questions below. Take a moment and silently record your answers. We will ask you to share one of your responses below to the class.

1. How would you describe the type of relationship you have with your academic advisor(s)/instructors/student mentor(s)?
2. In your opinion why do you think advisors/instructors/ student mentors behave in this way?

Reading #1 Madison, D. S. (2005). “Formulating Questions.”



Patton Model

- Behavioral and Experiential
- Opinion or Value
- Feeling
- Knowledge
- Sensory
- Background/Demographic

Spradley Model

- Descriptive
- Structural Explanation
- Contrast

Extra Tips for Formulating Questions



Advice Questions: *What advice would you give to graduate student...*

Quotation Questions: *I heard someone mentioned earlier that they disliked school what are your thoughts?*

Once-Upon-A-Time Descriptive Questions: *Can you tell me about a time you felt a degree of uncertainty during this global pandemic?*

Brainstorm: Reread your research question and ask yourself if this is what I like to understand, what do I need to learn to address the problem (connect the dots)

Attributes of the Interviewer and Building Rapport



- **Anticipation:** Use this sense of energy/urgency towards positive planning
- **Positive Naiveness:** Acknowledge when you do not know something
- **Active Thinking and Sympathetic Listening:** Listening with an open heart
- **Status Difference:** You have the power to tell your participants story
- **Patiently Probing:** Avoid interrogating participants. If unclear ask participants respectfully to share more

The Gordon Model: Tips for Interviewer



“Check your ego” Be mindful of how your identity influences your interviewee

Degree of Forgetting: Honor the fact that each memory will be remembered in different forms

Degree of Generalization: Avoid generalizing data for a singular truth

Degree of Subject Experience: What is significant for participant(s) can be mean different things to the researcher

Degree of Trauma: Anticipate what type of experiences might elicit a moment of sorrow, anger or grief. Use eye contact and sensitive language

Reading #2 Dialogic Exchanges and the Negotiation of Differences: Female Graduate Students' Experiences of Obstacles Related to Academic Mentoring



Literature Review:

- **Definitions of mentoring in an academic context**
- **Mentoring of graduate students**

Mentorships are often viewed as the first stage in an academic career, and graduate students who report a strong mentoring relationship are more likely to be productive scholars, both before and following graduation (Paglis, Green, & Bauer, 2006).

- **Obstacles related to mentoring**
- **Obstacles specific to the responsibilities of mentors and mentees**
- **Obstacles specific to mentoring women with multiple roles**

Reading #2 Dialogic Exchanges and the Negotiation of Differences: Female Graduate Students' Experiences of Obstacles Related to Academic Mentoring



Research questions:

- How do female graduate students co-construct a dialogue regarding mentoring relationships and the obstacles encountered with regard to mentoring at their institution?
- How do the differences (e.g., in opinions, approaches, experiences, feelings, values) that are articulated, shared, and negotiated in mentor-mentee dialogue influence and shape students' co-constructed story of mentoring?

Reading #2 Dialogic Exchanges and the Negotiation of Differences: Female Graduate Students' Experiences of Obstacles Related to Academic Mentoring



Theoretical (Conceptual) framework

- Social constructionism
- The overall study design doesn't fit in any particular methodology (e.g., action research, case study, appreciative inquiry, narrative inquiry).

Data collection methods and sampling procedures

- Individual interview and focused group
- Ten female doctoral students with qualitative research experience and future academic goals were solicited via flyers at a large southern research university.

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The 5 stages included in the focus group interviews by Finch and Lewis(2003)

- (a) establishing ground rules
- (b) individual introductions
- (c) the opening topic, which all participants answered individually
- (d) discussion
- (e) the final topic, which all participants answered individually

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Data analysis

- Read the transcripts multiple times
- The text units we selected for analysis, at a minimum, demonstrated dialogue between two participants.
- The text units were analyzed according to two elements of Fairclough's (1992, 1995, 2003) critical discourse analysis.
- The text units were coded with regard to the type of exchange and the speech function.

Reading #2 Dialogic Exchanges and the Negotiation of Differences: Female Graduate Students' Experiences of Obstacles Related to Academic Mentoring



Findings/Conclusions

- The participants were open to the differences expressed, focusing on commonalities, rather than accentuating or suppressing stated differences.
- This negotiation of difference enabled our participants to co-construct more complex and legitimate understandings of mentoring.
- A need for mentoring that addressed psychosocial, as well as career functions and mentoring relationships that supported the development of both mentor and mentee as scholars and researchers.

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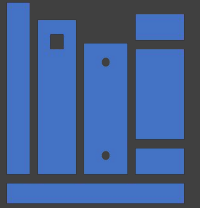


Personal reactions/Critique

- Impressed by the introduction, which contextualizes the research by introducing the reader to the notions including Mentoring, Mentees, and the roles and relationships between mentors and mentees.
- Specific and clear guideline for researchers who would like to conduct focused groups.
- Findings are conducive to both mentors and mentees like us to have an effective relationships.

Reading #3 Bogdan & Biklen (2007)

Qualitative Research for Education



Transcripts from Taped Interviews Formatting:

- Choose title that summarize the material covered
- New line for a new person speaks

Recording Equipment:

- Select a device with adequate memory, usb port, dictation software
 - iPhone “Voice Memos”
 - Google Keep
- Placement of microphone. Ensure each participant is close to equipment

Reading # 3 Bogdan & Biklen: Documents



Personal Documents: any first person narrative.

- **Intimate Diaries**
- **Personal Letters**
- **Autobiographies**
- **Official Documents**
- **Internal Documents**
- **External Communication**
- **Student Records and Personnel Files**

Bogdan & Biklen: Popular Culture Documents



Multimedia: video, songs, films,

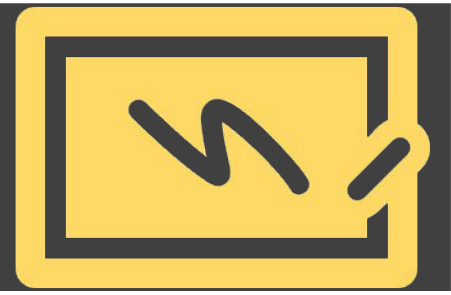
Print material: magazines, advertisements, lyrics

Photography:

- Found Photographs
- Researched-Produced Photographs: photographs of a location: a classroom, an office layout, a home, anything that might facilitate the collection in a cultural inventory

Photographs as analysis

Wrap up Activity



Small group activity:(3/4 students in a group for 10 minutes)

Please take turns in your small groups to discuss your approach to developing your research questions. Identify which model (Spradley/Patton) best captures your project's research question/problem.

Identify at least one element in the interviewer/interviewee relationship you are most concerned about in developing? Each person should share and provide feedback before we return to the main session room.