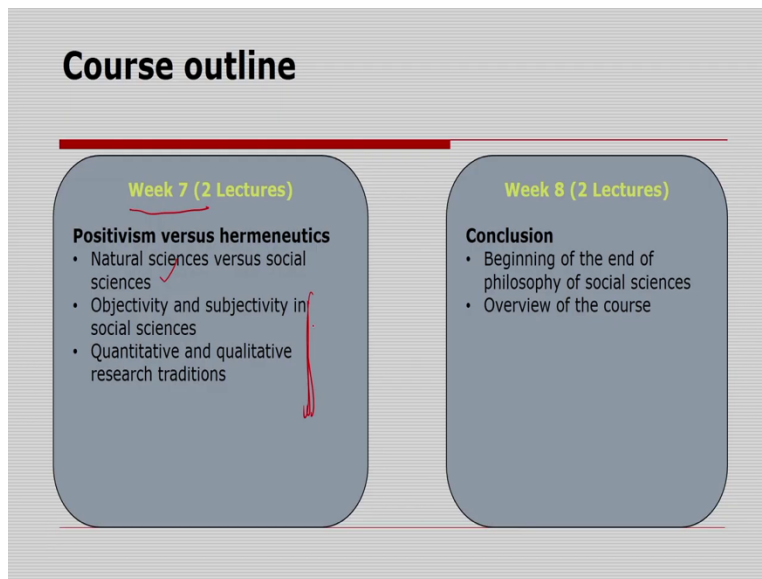


**Philosophical Foundations of Social Research**  
**Professor Sambit Mallick**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati**  
**Week 7 : Lecture 19**  
**Positivism Versus Hermeneutics – II**

Hello everyone, welcome to the 19th lecture of this Massive Open Online Course on Philosophical Foundations of Social Research.



As you know that we are in the seventh week of this course, we are discussing the controversies between positivism on the one hand, and hermeneutics and phenomenological sociology on the other and we have already discussed positivism versus hermeneutics in the context of natural sciences versus social sciences. And and we are going to discuss these two parameters objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences, and quantitative and qualitative research traditions.

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#### □ **Dilthey:** Two methods

- In the first, the focus was on the relationship of the creator of an act, a book or a picture to the interpreter. The latter understands by putting herself/himself in the position of the former. Understanding is possible because both share a common humanity or, in another formulation, because they are both expressions of the Spirit.
  - In the second, the characteristics of individuals are disregarded. Instead, **hermeneutics** understands human action in relation to some wider whole which gives it meaning. For example, a painting is understood by reference to the outlook or worldview of the society in which it is problem. Similarly, the analyst can construct such a worldview out of its individual manifestations. This circular relationship between a whole and its parts is known as a hermeneutic circle.
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We have discussed hermeneutics in terms of meaningful human action. Dilthey argued that there is a marked difference between the study of nature on the one hand, and the study of human action on the other hand. That is why, Dilthey suggested that studying human action must involve two methods: in the first the focus was on the relationship of the creator of an act or book or a picture to the interpreter. And the interpreter understands, by putting herself or himself in the position of the author or the creator. Understanding is possible, because both share a common humanity or in another formulation because, they are both expressions of the spirit. And in the second method, Dilthey argued that, the characteristics of individuals are disregarded, instead hermeneutics understands human action in relation to some wider whole which gives it meaning.

For example, a painting is understood by reference to the outlook or worldview of the society in which it is a problem. Similarly, the analyst can construct such a worldview out of its individual manifestations and this circular relationship between a whole and its parts is known as a hermeneutic circle.

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- Mannheim: Individual and cultural manifestations, part of larger world view
  - Documentary meaning to Human actions
  - No intentions but worldview
  - Critique of positivism in sociology
  - Human actions caused by social structures
  - Validity
  - Hermeneutics circle
- 

Then we have discussed, how Mannheim posited individual and cultural manifestations as part of a larger worldview. Documentary meaning to human actions; there was no intention but worldview and he took a more positivistic stand- that is why he said all knowledge except scientific knowledge is socially and culturally conditioned on the contrary what we today know that know all knowledge including scientific knowledge is socially caused, that is why there was a critique of positivism in sociology.

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- Gadamer
    - Part and whole
    - Interpreter and author
    - Fusion of horizons
    - Tentative interpretations
- 

We have already discussed Gadamer's part and whole interpreter and author, fusion of horizons. And how interpretations are always tentative. Interpretations cannot be completely accurate that is why interpretations are always tentative.

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### □ Phenomenological sociology

- Analysis and description of everyday life
  - Bracketing off
  - No causal powers of social structure
  - Critique of Positivism
- 

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### □ Schutz

### □ Berger and Luckmann

- Everyday life
  - Typification
  - Practical problems
  - Institutionalized knowledge by others
-

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#### □ Critique

- Trivial topics
  - Purely descriptive
  - Very little empirical application
  - Neglects the notion of social structure
- 

We have discussed, phenomenological sociology. We have discussed Berger and Luckmann.  
And a critique.

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#### □ Schutz's phenomenological sociology:

- wanted to construct an adequate theory of social action, partly based on a critique of Weber
  - carried out a series of investigations into the construction of the life-world
  - tried to investigate the manner in which a sociology that took human action as important could be scientific
-

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#### □ Verstehen:

- Critique of positivist or naturalist sociology
  - Not from outside
  - Not based on natural sciences
  - Individual/social actions
  - Meanings / meaningful social action
  - Cognitive empathy
  - Interpretations
- 

And then, Schutz phenomenological sociology. And then, we have discussed Weberian, Verstehen critique of positivist or naturalist sociology. We cannot understand society if we keep ourselves outside the purview of our economic culture and polity. Verstehen is not based on natural sciences, it always talks about individual social actions; not simply individual social actions but those actions must attach certain meanings actions, when I say action there must be meaningful social action and there must be cognitive empathy understanding the need of the other, understanding the role of the other. And thereby we tend to have multiple interpretations, in Weberian term it is interpretation of interpretations.

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#### □ Critique

- On the one hand, sociologists have argued that there is no way of validating *Verstehen* interpretations
  - On the other hand, it has been suggested that the attempt to reconcile causal and *Verstehen* analysis actually ends up by denying the actor's point of view
-

And a critique also we have discussed: how sociologists have argued that there is no way of validating Verstehen interpretations. And it has also been suggested that the attempt to reconcile causal and Verstehen analysis or positivistic and neo-kantian positions or positivistic and phenomenological or hermeneutics analysis, actually ends up denying the actors point of view.

**Objectivity and Subjectivity**

*Positivism*

*Hermeneutics*

□ Objectivity:

- Scientific investigation
- Freed of bias or prejudice

□ Critique:

- Phenomenological Sociology - *Authors' own experiences*
- Ethnomethodology; Indexicality - *limited to their meaning*
- Mannheim; Relativism - *Context*
- Popper; Rationalism
- Value-freedom; Value-neutrality; Value-relevance

And today's lecture, what we are going to do? We are going to debate the controversies surrounding positivism on the one hand, and hermeneutics or phenomenological sociology on the other through two more parameters, one is objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences, and the the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research traditions we will.

But, ultimately we will see whether these distinctions are tenable. Now, whether these distinctions can be sustained or not we will see. Prima facie when I say objectivity it comes under positivistic tradition. And when I say subjectivity, it comes under hermeneutic tradition. The goal of scientific investigation sociological or otherwise is often said to be objective knowledge free of bias and prejudice.

There is a division of opinion here some holding that objectivity in sociology is possible, and others suggest that objectivity in social sciences is not possible; objectivity in social sciences in general, and objectivity in sociology in particular is not possible. And there are some scholars they also argue that objectivity in social sciences in general and in sociology in particular is not only not possible but also not desirable.

Five different kinds of arguments are advanced for social sciences in general and sociology in particular for not being objective. The first one is phenomenological sociology that we have already discussed: sociological judgments, social science judgments are subjective being colored by actors own experiences, that is phenomenological sociology. That is why I said, if I have to look at actors own experiences then, I will always say that my experience will be different from your experience, your experience will be different from somebody else experience, and so on. That is why sociological judgments are subjective in nature, being colored by actors own experiences that is phenomenological sociology.

Secondly, when I say ethnomethodology or indexicality: all propositions are limited to their meaning to particular language contexts. Ethnomethodology is nothing but people's methods propounded by Harold Garfinkel within the symbolic interactionist approaches, micro-sociological approaches. And indexicality implies that ethnomethodologists argue, that all actions and utterances are indexical. Our all actions and utterances are indexical that is they depend for their meaning on the context, it may be the context of language, it may be the context of nationality, it may be the context of region, it may be the context of religion and so on.

When I said ethnomethodologists argue that, that all actions and utterances are indexical that is they depend for their meaning on the context in which they occur. This feature implies that actors will normally make sense of actions and utterances of others by referring to their context, an activity which requires work even if unconscious particularly as each context is unique.

That is why context determines the content not the other way around. Each context is unique. If somebody asks you that what is the context of India's freedom struggle? What is the context of Cuban Revolution? What is the context of The French Revolution? What is the context of The Industrial Revolution? What is the context of the October Revolution or Russian Revolution? These contexts vary.

As our context vary, then our approaches should also vary. That is why it is the objective that determines our methods not the other way around. That is what we have already discussed when we were discussing empiricism, rationalism, Popper, Kuhn and other that the purpose of the such kind of historical survey is to make a point that there cannot be any straight jacketed methods of science rather it is the objective, it is the purpose, it is the intension, that should determine what kind of methods that we are going to adapt.



## Objectivity and Subjectivity

### □ Objectivity:

- Scientific investigation
- Free of bias or prejudice

### □ Critique:

- Phenomenological Sociology
- Ethnomethodology; Indexicality
- Mannheim; Relativism
- Popper; Rationalism
- Value-freedom; Value-neutrality; Value-relevance

*social groups/social location*  
*observations are theory-laden*

## Objectivity and Subjectivity

### □ Objectivity:

- Scientific investigation
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### □ Critique:

- Phenomenological Sociology
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- Value-freedom; Value-neutrality; Value-relevance

Thirdly, all sociological theories are produced by and limited to particular social groups. Such a doctrine is often taken to be an outcome of the sociology of knowledge, Mannheimian position, a relativistic position; that which treats all knowledge as a function of social location. That is why knowledge is not absolute, knowledge is relative.

Fourthly, all observations are necessarily theory laden. Empiricists and positivists argued that, observations are pure in the sense that observations lead to theory generation, but the converse is not true. In other words, theories are dependent on observations, whereas observations are theory independent.

But Popper and rationalists suggested that no observation is theory free, there is nothing called presuppositionless observation; observations are always theory laden for rationalists, for Popper, and so on.

And finally, a critique that has emerged: value neutrality and value relevance in that all members of society have different values; sociologists will unconsciously, but necessarily have their arguments influenced by their values.

Some sociologists argue that objectivity in all of these five senses phenomenological sociology, ethnomethodology, indexicality, Mannheim position relativism, Popperian position, or value freedom, value neutrality and value relevance- you will find that in all of these senses the objectivity is not necessarily desirable. They suggest that the sociologist, for example, should be critical and espouse particular values.

Yet others argue that objectivity in sociology is both possible and desirable. Positions here range from the claim that sociology is like natural science and objectivity can be protected by open debate and their use of rigorous methods, to more complex arguments like those of Weber who argues for the positions of value relevance. Now, we will go one by one: will first discuss value freedom, then value neutrality, and then value relevance.

### **Value-freedom**

- ☐ Exclusion of ideological or non-scientific assumptions
- ☐ Not making evaluative judgments about empirical evidence
- ☐ No value-judgments
- ☐ Indifference to the moral implications of research
- ☐ Make own values open and clear
- ☐ Refrain from advocating particular values

When you come to value freedom in sociology, this has a variety of meanings. Sociology can successfully exclude ideological or non-scientific assumptions from research: this is a position in favor of objectivity and in favor of positivism. Then sociologists should not make evaluative

judgements about empirical evidence. Value judgements should be restricted to the sociologist's area of technical competence.

Sociologists are indifferent to the moral implications of their research. Sociologists should make their own values open and clear. And sociologists should refrain from advocating particular values; this is a more positivistic position, this is a more objective position, that is being propounded by the proponents of positivism, by the proponents who suggest that objectivity is possible, objectivity is desirable in social science research.

**Value-neutrality**

- Personal level ✓
- Institutional level ✓
- **Objections:**
  - Obtrusion in research
  - Impossibility of neutrality
  - Desirability of 'not' being neutral.

*Handwritten notes in red ink:*  
logical gap between  
empirical evidence  
moral actions

That is why value neutrality also assumes greater significance. While, research topics approaches and perspectives are selected according to the criterion of value relevance which we will discuss a little while later, social sciences are not in a privileged position to pronounce social values. Because there is a logical gap between empirical evidence and moral actions.

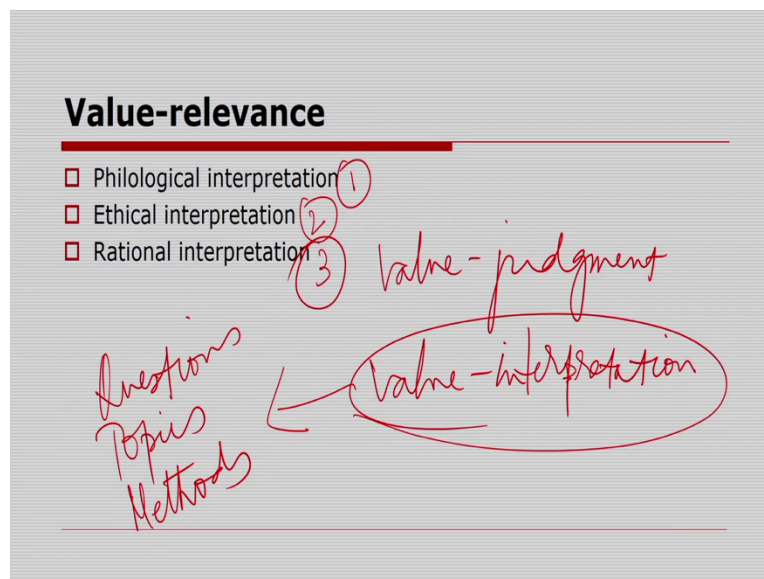
Empirical discoveries about the nature of poverty, inequality or suicide for example, do not tell us what we ought to do. It is prescriptive. It is consequently argued that sociologists have to strive for value neutrality with respect to research and policy formation and value neutrality operates at two levels: at the personal level and at the institutional level.

At the personal level, sociologists should make clear their own values. And secondly, at an institutional level, sociologists should not use their professional status as teachers to dictate values to students.

There are three objections to this conventional account. Despite personal declarations of neutrality values may unknowingly obtrude in research.

Secondly, it is not clear that neutrality even in principle is possible. Perhaps in certain cases, absolute neutrality is a myth. Let me give you an example, I hope all of you know Sati. Sati was absolutely practiced in Indian social cultural milieu some 200 years back or so. But today also in some parts of the country they practice. But it is absolutely unethical and illegal in the case of sati, sociologists are not expected to maintain neutrality. In the case of farmer suicide one is not expected to maintain neutrality. In this kind of thing, it is not possible, even in principle to maintain neutrality.

Secondly it is not always evident that value neutrality is desirable; on some questions nobody should be neutral. That is why I say it is not simply impossible to maintain neutrality, but it is also not desirable to maintain neutrality in this sense.

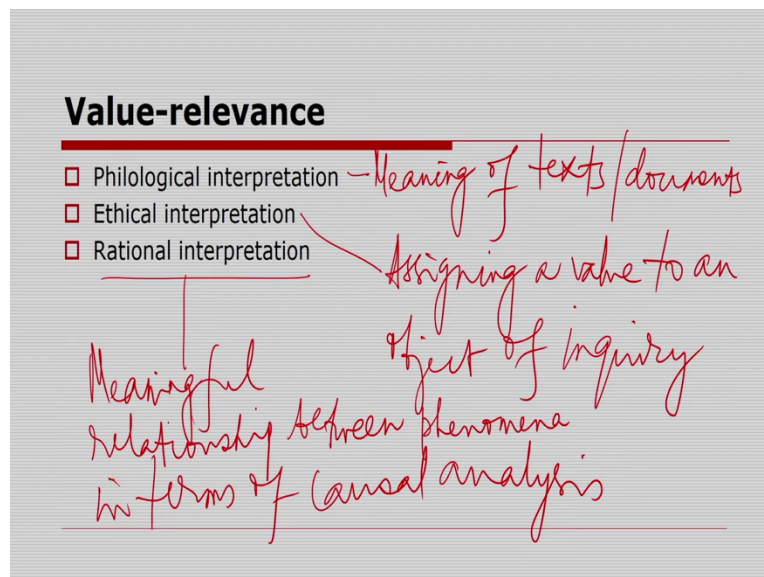


When we are going to discuss value relevance, we are going back to Max Weber's position. In Weber's discussion on philosophy of social science there is a definite, but complex distinction between value judgment and value interpretation.

As social scientists, sociologists have to avoid making ad-hoc personal value judgments on social phenomena and in particular they are not in a position to recommend courses of action by suggesting that their recommendations are necessary and inevitable deductions from objective facts. However, given that Weber thought sociology involved the interpretative understanding of

social action. Interpretation depends upon, value interpretation. Because, the way we tend to interpret a particular event, a particular phenomenon, values are closely embedded in these interpretations.

The values of a social scientist determine which questions will be asked in any inquiry. Which topics will be selected for investigation? And which methods that we are going to deploy to gather data. For Weber value relevance operates at three levels. One is philological interpretation, secondly ethical interpretation, and thirdly rational interpretation. What are these?

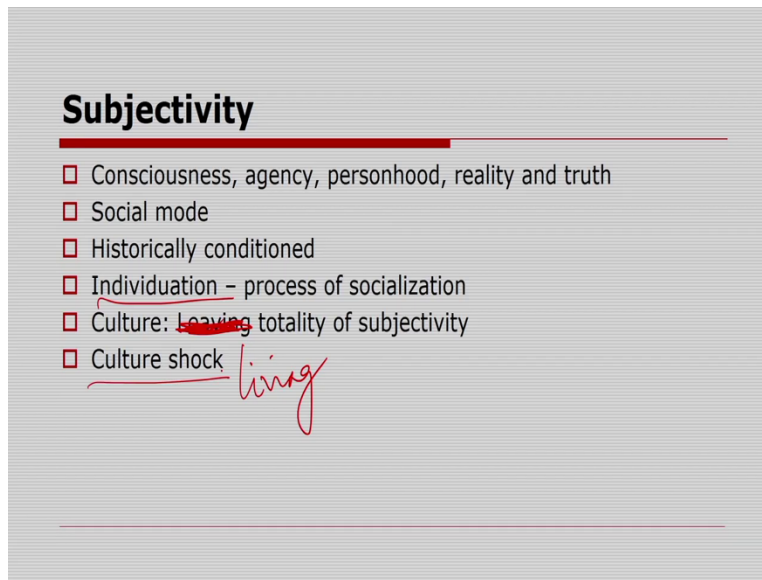


When I say philological interpretation that establishes meaning of texts and documents. When I say ethical interpretation, I tend to assign a value to an object of inquiry. When I say rational interpretation, there is rational interpretation in which the sociologist seeks meaningful relationship between phenomena in terms of causal relationship or causal analysis; cause and effect relationship or there must be explanation.

Let us go, one by one. When I say there is philological interpretation which establishes the meaning of texts and documents. There is ethical interpretation, in assigning of value to an object of inquiry. And there is also rational interpretation in which the sociologist seeks the meaningful relationship between phenomena in terms of causal analysis.

The point of value interpretation, is to establish the values towards which an activity is directed; it is not to judge such activities as either good or bad and therein lies the significance of a

counter argument which has been posed in contradistinction with objectivity that is namely subjectivity.



Subjectivity is central philosophical concept related to consciousness, agency, personhood, reality and truth. Subjectivity is an inherently social mode that comes about through innumerable interactions within society as much as subjectivity is a process of individuation, it is equally a process of socialization, the individual never being isolated in a self-contained environment but endlessly engaging in interaction with the surrounding world. Culture is a living totality of subjectivity at any given society constantly undergoing transformation. See that is why I always give this example to students that culture is not static. culture is pretty dynamic. Why it is very dynamic?

Please try to understand that people very often say that, it is not our culture or their culture or our people very often take an ethnocentric approach which is absolutely unethical, illegal; we will say that our culture is superior to other cultures or something that is wrong. Cultures cannot be measured, culture should not be evaluated, you cannot compare cultures; it is unethical. When I say culture, culture is not like a tree, once a tree is uprooted it dies; culture is like a stream that flows from one generation to another.

You will find that it is a process through which we not only accept or we not only follow certain cultures, but we also constantly revise our cultures, we update, we try to negate some few parts of culture.

Culture is also about acceptability, relevance, and certain traits of a particular culture may not be relevant after 100 years, may not be acceptable by the community of practitioners after 100 years, may not remain elegant after 100 years, culture changes. Culture is a living totality of subjectivity at any given society, at any given economy, culture and polity constantly undergoing transition, transformation and so on.

And hence, subjectivity is both shaped by it and shapes it in turn, but also by other things like the economy, political institutions, communities as well as the natural world. Though the boundaries of societies and their cultures are indefinable and arbitrary, the subjectivity inherent in each one is palatable and can be recognized as distinct from others.

Subjectivity in part, is a particular experience, or organization of reality which includes how one views and interacts with humanity, objects, consciousness and nature. So, the difference between different cultures brings about an alternate experience of existence that forms life in a different manner.

A common effect on an individual of this disjunction between subjectivities is nothing but culture shock where the subjectivity of the other culture is considered alien and possibly incomprehensible or even hostile. And that is how you tend to compare cultures, which is wrong.

That is why people very often say that our culture is superior to others culture, our food pattern is superior to other food pattern. See food is always a cultural activity, it is not a religious activity. Culture is a very broad term, religion is a part of culture, culture is not a part of religion. But, those who try to intertwine food with religion, actually that is not religion or something, but that is politics as such.

Then we will now move on to the last parameter through which we want to debate the controversies between positivism on one hand, and hermeneutics traditions, phenomenological sociology on the other that is quantitative and qualitative research traditions.

## Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Bases for Comparison	Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Meaning	Numerical data, facts by employing statistical, logical and mathematical techniques	Understanding about human and social sciences to find the way people think and feel
Nature	Particularistic	Holistic
Approach	Objective	Subjective
Research type	Conclusive	Exploratory
Sampling	Random	Purposive
Data	Measurable	Verbal
Inquiry	Result-oriented	Process-oriented
Hypothesis	Tested	Generated
Elements of analysis	Numerical data	Words, pictures and objects
Objective	Causal relationship	Explore and discover ideas
Methods	Structured	Non-structured
Result	Final course of action	Develops initial understanding

## Positivism versus Hermeneutics

- ☑/ Natural Sciences and Social Sciences ✓
- ☑/ Objectivity and Subjectivity in Social Sciences ✓
- ☑/ Quantitative and Qualitative Research Traditions ✓

Please do not think that these are distinctions absolute or something, these distinctions are also equally relative, but for the time being you think that they are absolute. But we will discuss a little while later, what is the problem in making this kind of crude distinction.

The bases of the first column suggest the bases of comparison and the second column suggest quantitative research and the third column suggests qualitative research. What is the meaning of quantitative research? It is based on numerical, quantitative research based on numerical data and facts by employing statistical, logical and mathematical techniques.

On the contrary qualitative research is about, how to understand human and social sciences to find the way people think and feel. Quantitative research is based on positivism, whereas



qualitative research is based on, hermeneutic tradition, or you can say phenomenology sociology or Verstehen method. Then when you look at this that, quantitative research is based on numerical data, hard facts by employing statistical, logical and mathematical models, mathematical techniques of data collection.

Qualitative research suggests that, we must try to understand human and social world to find the way in which people tend to think, people tend to feel. What is the nature of quantitative research? The nature of quantitative research is very much particularistic in nature. An approach, whereas the nature of quantitative research is pretty holistic in character.

The approach that quantitative research undertakes is objective in nature, whereas the approach that qualitative research undertakes is quite subjective in nature. When you tend to generate numbers then you are speaking about a particular local, particular phenomenon, and so on. But when you look at qualitative research, it provides us with a larger world to make a claim. The approach when I said that quantitative research is objective whereas qualitative research is subjective in nature, quantitative research tends to aim at objectivity, tends to aim at neutrality, value free, whereas qualitative research suggests that no the research is always value laden. Qualitative research always says that no it is not simply possible to it is not simply not possible to maintain objectivity, but also not desirable to maintain objectivity. But the proponents of quantitative research suggest that it is not only possible. But, also desirable to maintain objectivity. And thereby when the proponents of quantitative research try to make their research very conclusive, the proponents of qualitative research suggest that research must be exploratory in nature. In research you cannot say that this is the conclusion; absolute conclusion is a myth in qualitative research.

When you look at sampling, quantitative research always starts with random sampling, whereas qualitative research starts with purposive sampling alternatively known as theoretical sampling.

In quantitative research, data are measurable, data can be calculated, data can be measured, you can look at validity and reliability of the data, in quantitative research. In qualitative research, data are dependent on verbal communication, oral tradition, archival research, and so on. A research type is conclusive in quantitative research that is why as it is conclusive it is much oriented to results. But qualitative research is more oriented towards processes.

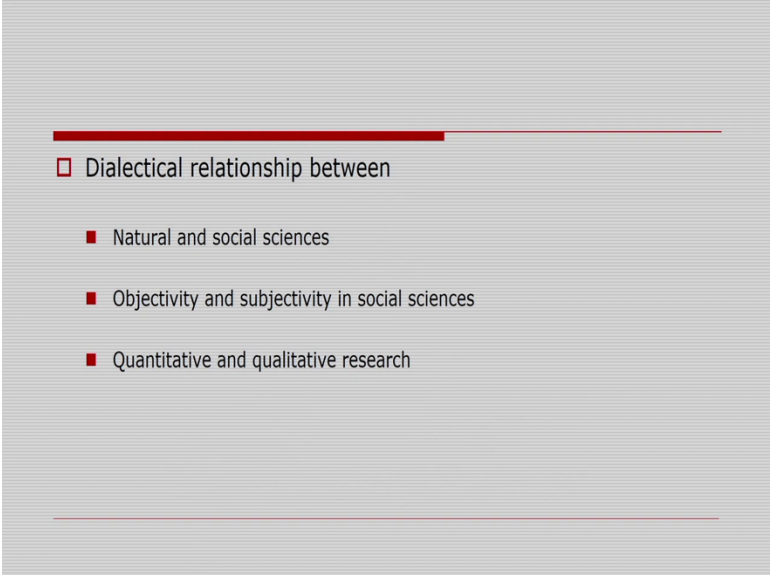
In quantitative research, a hypotheses that is a tentative solution to a problem or hunch is often tested; in qualitative research, hypotheses are generated. If you look at the elements of analysis in quantitative research we tend to have numerical data; in qualitative research, we tend to have words, pictures and objects of inquiry. What is the objective?

The objective of quantitative research is to provide a causal relationship, to provide an explanation, to provide a cause and effect relationship. On the contrary, the objective of qualitative research is to explore and discover ideas. The methods that quantitative research deploys it is a structured questionnaire method whereas qualitative research designs non-structured interview schedules.

The result that quantitative research aims for, is a final course of action and on the contrary qualitative research develops initial understanding about human and social sciences to find the way in which people tend to think and feel.

In this sense, we have tried to try look at controversies between positivism on the one hand and phenomenological sociology or hermeneutics on the other in terms of natural sciences and social sciences, objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences and quantitative and qualitative research traditions; positivism is based on natural sciences, aims at objectivity, aims at neutrality and so on and positivism tends to generate numerical data. Whereas hermeneutics is based on social sciences, hermeneutics and phenomenological sociology always suggests that this world is not objective, this world is absolutely subjective in nature; there must be a marked difference between the study of nature on the one hand and the study of human action on the other. And human action cannot be absolutely objective in nature as you know, human action must be very subjective in nature.

And hence, phenomenological sociology, hermeneutics tradition is based on qualitative research traditions. That is why I tried to provide this kind of distinction between positivism and hermeneutics in terms of these three parameters namely natural sciences on the one hand social sciences on the other, one. Secondly, objectivity on the one hand and subjectivity in social sciences on the other. And thirdly, quantitative research tradition on the one hand, and qualitative research traditions on the other.

- 
- Dialectical relationship between
    - Natural and social sciences
    - Objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences
    - Quantitative and qualitative research

Now, before winding it up I want to make a very serious comment on this that please do not think that there is absolute crude distinction between natural sciences and social sciences or objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences, or quantitative and qualitative research traditions- please try to understand that there must be a dialectical relationship in between natural sciences on the one hand and social sciences on the other. There must also be a dialectical relationship between objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences and there must also be dialectical relationship between quantitative and qualitative research. In other words, there must be a dialectical relationship between positivistic philosophy as well as phenomenological sociology.

That there must be a dialectical relationship between these two- you just cannot have an opinion that we will just go ahead with one parameter, we will go ahead with only one perspective; we live in a world of multiple perspective, multiculturalism is the ethos of a world outlook that we must have. There is dialectical relationship between natural sciences and social sciences, or objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences, or quantitative and qualitative research traditions.

Let me give you an example, if I say that I want to frame the literacy policy in India, or the state wants to do that literacy policy. How are you going to, how does the state do this? How does the government do this? If I do not know the number of illiterates in the country, how can I frame the literacy policy?

Suppose, I want to check population growth in India; I want to understand population policy. How does the government or how can the government frame population policy without knowing

the number of population, without knowing the demographic profile of the country? That is why the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research techniques or traditions is not rigid is in fact porous, is opaque; porousness of the distinction between natural sciences and social sciences must be understood the distinction between or the porousness of the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences must be understood. What is objective may not be objective may not remain objective for all time to come.

That is why I said whether it is objective or subjective, they are historically conditioned, they must be examined in certain specific local that is very important. In this sense what we are trying to do? We are trying to go beyond the narrow confinements of the distinction between natural sciences and social sciences, objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences, quantitative and qualitative research traditions and so on.

We must go beyond the narrow confinements of such distinctions. We must try to integrate natural sciences with social sciences, we must try to integrate quantitative and qualitative research traditions and so on. Because research cannot be reduced to only one viewpoint, research must take into account various viewpoints, various perspectives at hand. Because having a single view will make you more authoritarian in nature. And in this sense we have discussed the controversies between positivism and hermeneutics.

Then what have we discussed in the seventh week? In the seventh week we have discussed the distinction between positivism and positivism on the one hand and phenomenological sociology on the other or hermeneutics on the other; we have discussed these differences, these distinctions on the basis of three parameters, one natural sciences versus social sciences. Two, objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences, and three quantitative and qualitative research traditions.

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□ **Dilthey:** Two methods

- In the first, the focus was on the relationship of the creator of an act, a book or a picture to the interpreter. The latter understands by putting herself/himself in the position of the former. Understanding is possible because both share a common humanity or, in another formulation, because they are both expressions of the Spirit.
  - In the second, the characteristics of individuals are disregarded. Instead, **hermeneutics** understands human action in relation to some wider whole which gives it meaning. For example, a painting is understood by reference to the outlook or worldview of the society in which it is produced. Similarly, the analyst can construct such a worldview out of its individual manifestations. This circular relationship between a whole and its parts is known as a hermeneutic circle.
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- Mannheim: Individual and cultural manifestations, part of larger world view
  - Documentary meaning to Human actions
  - No intentions but worldview
  - Critique of positivism in sociology
  - Human actions caused by social structures
  - Validity
  - Hermeneutics circle
-

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#### □ Gadamer

- Part and whole
  - Interpreter and author
  - Fusion of horizons
  - Tentative interpretations
- 

And in terms, of natural sciences versus social sciences we have looked into Dilthey's reflections on this, on the distinction between study of nature on the one hand and study of human action on the other. Mannheim position we have discussed. We have discussed, Gadamer's position.

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#### □ Phenomenological sociology

- Analysis and description of everyday life
  - Bracketing off
  - No causal powers of social structure
  - Critique of Positivism
-

- 
- Schutz
  - Berger and Luckmann
    - Everyday life
    - Typification
    - Practical problems
    - Institutionalized knowledge by others
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- Schutz's phenomenological sociology:
    - wanted to construct an adequate theory of social action, partly based on a critique of Weber
    - carried out a series of investigations into the construction of the life-world
    - tried to investigate the manner in which a sociology that took human action as important could be scientific
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We have discussed, phenomenological sociology. We have discussed, Berger and Luckmann position. Schutz's phenomenological sociology.

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#### □ Verstehen:

- Critique of positivist or naturalist sociology
  - Not from outside
  - Not based on natural sciences
  - Individual/social actions
  - Meanings / meaningful social action
  - Cognitive empathy
  - Interpretations
- 

## Objectivity and Subjectivity

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#### □ Objectivity:

- Scientific investigation
- Free of bias or prejudice

#### □ Critique:

- Phenomenological Sociology
  - Ethnomethodology; Indexicality
  - Mannheim; Relativism
  - Popper; Rationalism
  - Value-freedom; Value-neutrality; Value-relevance
- 

Weberian Verstehen. Objectivity and subjectivity, we have discussed in terms of scientific investigation in terms of free of bias and prejudice and the critique of such reflections in terms of phenomenological sociology, ethnomethodology and indexicality, Mannheim position, Popper, relativism, rationalism.



## Value-freedom

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- Exclusion of ideological or non-scientific assumptions
  - Not making evaluative judgments about empirical evidence
  - No value-judgments
  - Indifference to the moral implications of research
  - Make own values open and clear
  - Refrain from advocating particular values
- 

## Value-neutrality

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- Personal level ✓
  - Institutional level ✓
  - **Objections:**
    - Obtrusion in research
    - Impossibility of neutrality
    - Desirability of 'not' being neutral
- 

*logical gap between  
empirical evidence  
and moral actions*

## Value-relevance

- Philological interpretation
- Ethical interpretation
- Rational interpretation

*- Meaning of texts/documents*  
*Assigning a value to an object of inquiry*  
*Meaningful relationship between phenomena in terms of causal analysis*

And in terms of value freedom, value neutrality. And value relevance.

## Subjectivity

- Consciousness, agency, personhood, reality and truth
- Social mode
- Historically conditioned
- Individuation – process of socialization
- Culture: ~~Leaving~~ totality of subjectivity
- Culture shock

*living*

And then we have discussed subjectivity in terms of consciousness, agency, personhood, reality and truth, social mode, individuation as well as a process of socialization; culture as representing a living totality of subjectivity at any given society constantly undergoing transformation and how subjectivity is both shaped by it and shapes it in turn. But also by other things like economy, like the economy, political institutions, communities as well as the natural world and though the boundaries of societies and their cultures are indefinable and arbitrary the subjectivity inherent in each one is palatable and can be recognized as distinct from others. Subjectivity in part is a

particular experiences or organization of reality which includes how one views and interacts with humanity, objects, consciousness and nature.

So, the difference between different cultures brings about an alternate experience of existence that forms life in a different manner. A common effect on an individual of this disjunction between subjectivities is nothing but culture shock which the subjectivity of the other culture is considered alien and possibly incomprehensible or even hostile.

Quantitative and Qualitative Research		
Bases for Comparison	Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Meaning	Numerical data, facts by employing statistical, logical and mathematical techniques	Understanding about human and social sciences to find the way people think and feel
Nature	Particularistic	Holistic
Approach	Objective	Subjective
Research type	Conclusive	Exploratory
Sampling	Random	Purposive
Data	Measurable	Verbal
Inquiry	Result-oriented	Process-oriented
Hypothesis	Tested	Generated
Elements of analysis	Numerical data	Words, pictures and objects
Objective	Causal relationship	Explore and discover ideas
Methods	Structured	Non-structured
Result	Final course of action	Develops initial understanding

And then we have tried to make a distinction between quantitative and qualitative research traditions in terms of meaning, nature, approach, research type, sampling, data, inquiry, hypothesis, elements of analysis, objective, methods, result, reasoning, and so on.

And having discussed this we have also tried to demonstrate how perhaps these distinctions between natural sciences and social sciences, between objectivity and subjectivity in social research, or the distinctions between quantitative and qualitative research, they are not tenable, they are not sustainable such as distinctions are not sustainable.

And we must try to understand, the dialectical relationship between these phenomena, dialectical relationship between natural sciences and social sciences, dialectical relationship between quantitative and qualitative research traditions, dialectical relationship between objectivity and subjectivity in social sciences and we must understand the porousness of the distinction between these three parameters.

## **Beginning of the end of philosophy of social sciences**

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And then, in the next week that will be the last week of this course, in terms of two lectures we are going to discuss beginning of the end of philosophy of social sciences and from there we will start overview of the course. Thank you.