Qualitative Research Methods
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Lecture 18
Qualitative Research Design (Contd.)

Welcome back to the NOC course title qualitative research methods, my name is Aradhna Malik and I am helping you with this course. In the previous lectures we discussed what qualitative research is? What qualitative research methods are? How they shape your inquiry? How, when you should pick these methods you know what the aim of your inquiry or how you can should decide to pick these methods etcetera.

In the very last class we discussed qualitative research design and what it involves and we talked about the different steps of qualitative research design, so if you just focus on this is here, we talked about different stages, we talked about warm up and preparations, deciding on the questions that guide the study, then we talked about the characteristics of qualitative research design.

We talked about exploration and exercises, first you decide what you want to do, how you want to do it, why you want to do it, then we talked about cooling down illumination, formulation and we talked about the last step out narration, now having said all that once the design is decided then we need to actually start taking the tools, strategies of inquiry and the first strategy that we are going to discuss, there are some more concepts in research design that will discuss, followed by be different strategies of qualitative inquiry.

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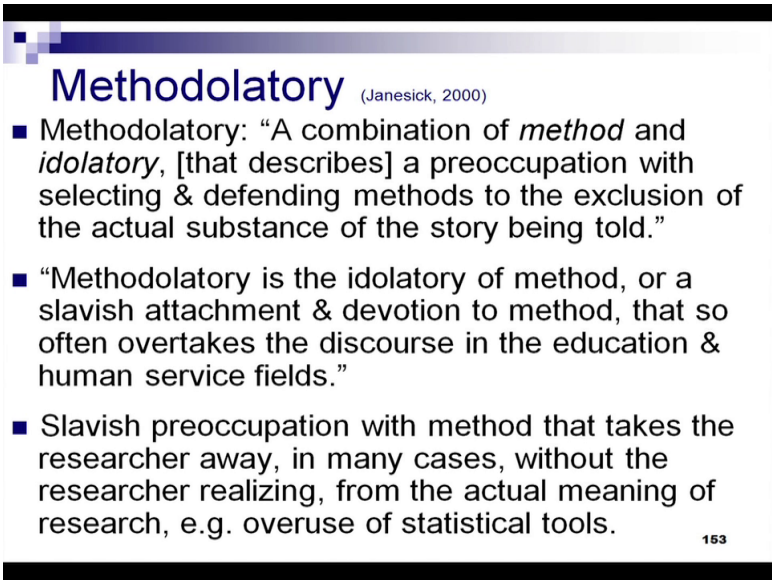

So we will start with method and methodolatory, methodolatory is "a combination of method and idolatory which describes a preoccupation with selecting and defending methods to the exclusion of the actual substance of the story being told." So its a preoccupation with method, methodolatory means that it's a slavish preoccupation with method that that takes the researcher away in many cases without the researchers realizing from the actual meaning of the research, For example overuse of statistical tools.

So "methodolatory is the idolatory of methods, is a slavish attachment and devotion to method, that so often overtakes the discourse in the education and human services fields." So methodolatory implies that we are so attached to methods, we are so attached to the idea of using, doing things the right way, you know it has its own significance, being so attached, being preoccupied with, methods has its own significance, it enhances objectivity.

But then when you talk about social sciences, where everything's a way, where everything that is being studied is so dynamic, everything is so dependent on everything else, this may not be the right course of action. So methodolatory is a concept that describes this preoccupation with the choice of method and with every step of the method, the preoccupation of doing everything, the way it is supposed to be done.

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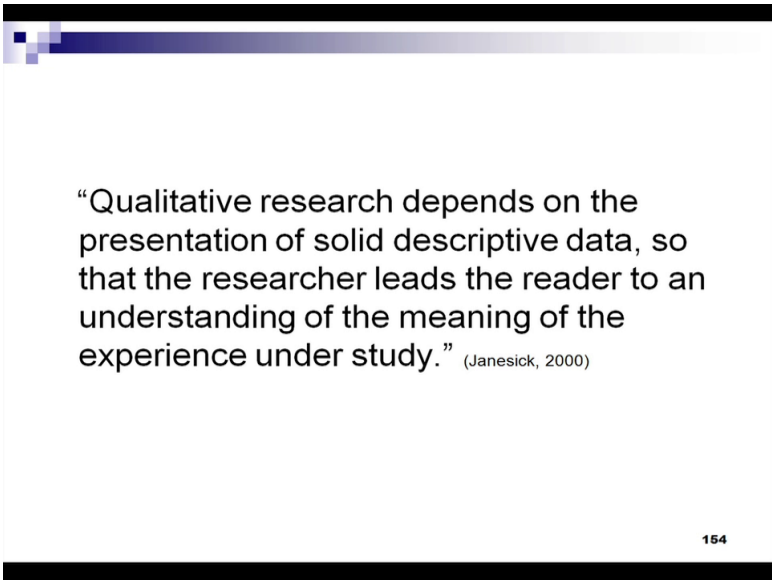

"Qualitative research depends on the presentation of solid descriptive data, so that the researcher leads the reader to an understanding of the meaning of the experience under study." So it depends on the presentation of the data, it depends on the presentation of actual descriptive data, so that the researcher leads the reader to an understanding of the meaning of the experience under study.

So that the researcher helps the reader understand what is really going on and what is really going on is so complex, I mean that there are so many things that are that just cannot be simplified, so qualitative research depends on how this very complex, very dynamic data is presented, so that the meaning filters through and is accepted and received by the reader.

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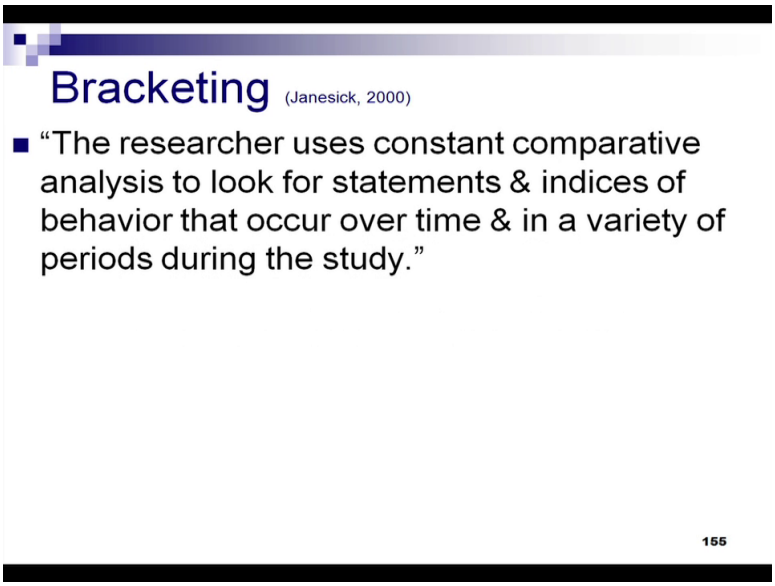

Bracketing “the researcher uses constant comparative analysis to look for statements and indices of behavior that occur over time and in a variety of periods during the study.” and these compare, these statements and indices are then bracketed. Bracketing is the first step here, so we just somehow you know we realize that that these statements, these indices, these pattern of behavior that are occurring over time belong together.

Bracketing is bringing things that belong together, closer to each other, so we can see that there are similarities and patterns of behavior in phenomena that are occurring etcetera. So bracketing means that we just sort of realize that you know these things belong together and these set of things belong together etcetera and that initial process of realizing how and where things belong with each other is called as bracketing.

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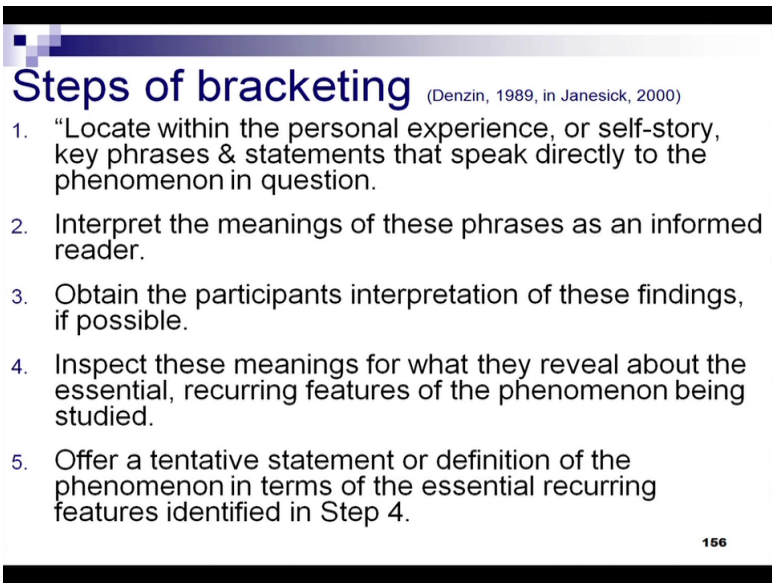

Steps of bracketing, “locate within the personal experience or self-story, key phrases and statements that speak directly to the phenomenon in question.” So how do we bracket the first step here is that we try and find out statements and phrases and indicators that speak directly, that address directly the phenomenon that is being studied, then the second step is Interpreting the meanings of these phrases and statements and indicators as an informed reader that is the second steps.

So first we identify what is going to indicate that it connects with the phenomenon, so indicating sorry, indicators of the things that indicate that whatever we are doing is actually going to help us answer the question that we want to answer. So we will look for these

indicators and then we interpret the meaning of these indicators. Then the third step here is to obtain the participants interpretations of these findings if possible.

So we have you know that is what qualitative research is, qualitative research is not always about observing phenomena, behavior, etcetera as a distant observer. It also includes the perceptions, reflexivity, cross checking, the connection between the observer and the observed, you know regarding the phenomena that have been studied. So what we do it after we have interpreted the meanings of the indicators that are connected to the phenomena that are being studied, then we cross check with the generators of these indicators.

So if its phrases and statements we talk to the participants, we talk to the people who we are observing, we talked to or we get in touch with the people who have generated these indicators and find out the interpretation of the meanings of these indicators, has connected with the phenomenon that is being studied, that is the third step.

Getting the participants perspective on how they interpret these indicators or whether they even consider what we considered as indicators, as researchers what we consider as indicators of phenomena under study, whether the participants the people actually in that phenomenon. The people actually being affected or doing that phenomenal are really you know how do they even consider what we consider as indicators, so are they all are we on the same page as far as the meaning of these indicators are concerned.

Then inspect, the fourth step is inspect these meanings for what is reveal about the essential recurring features of the phenomenon being studied. So once these two sets of interpretations are on the same page, then the next step is to find out what these meanings that we have arrived at, you know we were gone and cross check this meanings with the generators of this meanings also. What these meanings reveal about the essential recurring features of the phenomenon, how they indicate that this phenomenon or what their connection is with the phenomenon under study.

Then offer a tentative statement or definition of the phenomenon in terms of the essential recurring features identified in step four. Then once we have found out what is meanings are, how the indicators are really connected to the phenomenon in question, once we have

obtained the meanings of these indicators from the people, who are doing that phenomenon, who are effecting that phenomenon, then we get their perspective and then we come to a and informed understanding of how these indicators are connected to the phenomena that are being studied.

So words, phrases, that explain the phenomenon, author could be other indicators and then we put all of these meaning together and then we offer tentative statement or definition of the phenomenal in terms of the essential recurring indicators, in order for us to define the scope of the phenomenon under study, that is called bracketing. We need to first find out what it is that we are dealing with and this process helps us do exactly that.

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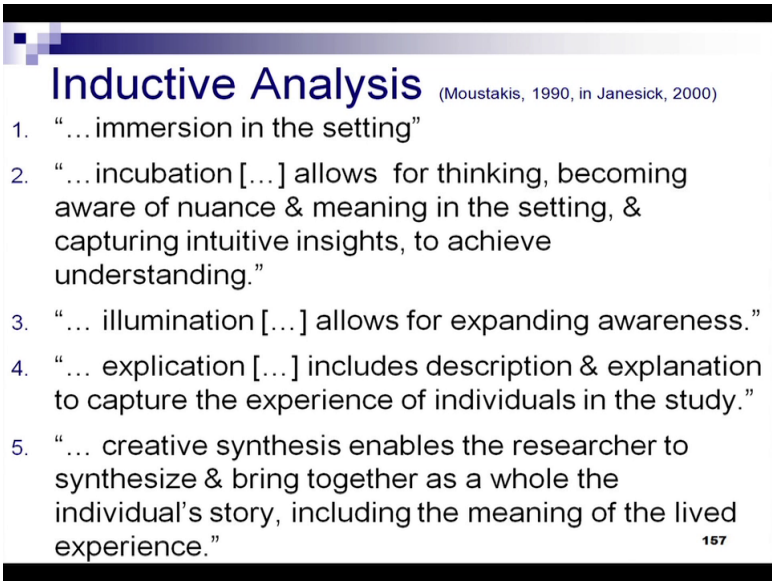

Inductive analysis is another, you know as another way of designing research, now how do we conduct in inductive analysis, inductive analysis means you know it refers to immersion in the settings. Incubation allows for thinking becoming aware of nuance and meaning in the setting and capturing intuitive insights, to achieve understanding. Illumination allows for expanding awareness.

Incubation means we think, we immerse ourselves in the setting, then we think, we become aware of what is happening, we observe everything that is happening in the setting and we capture intuitive insights and you know we just, we try and make sense of everything that we are observing. And then the next step in inductive analysis is illumination, which allows for expanding awareness, so illumination means the Aaha!! Moment, we realize okay this is what all of the material that we have observed means, that is illumination.

The actual aaha!! Moment Oh!! yes now it all fits together and make sense that is expanding awareness, then explication once we have realized and we have achieved that aaha!! Moment we got that aaha!! moment then what do we do, we go to the explication it includes description and explanation to capture the experience of individuals under study. And then we move on to "creative synthesis which enables the researcher to synthesize.

And bring together as a whole the individual story, including the meaning of the lived experience." Inductive analysis, analysis from the insight, so we take different parts of the phenomenon that is being studied, we observe everything, we arrive, we understand how these pieces fit together and then he makes sense of the whole, the individual story including the meaning of the lived experience that we are trying to explain that is called inductive analysis.

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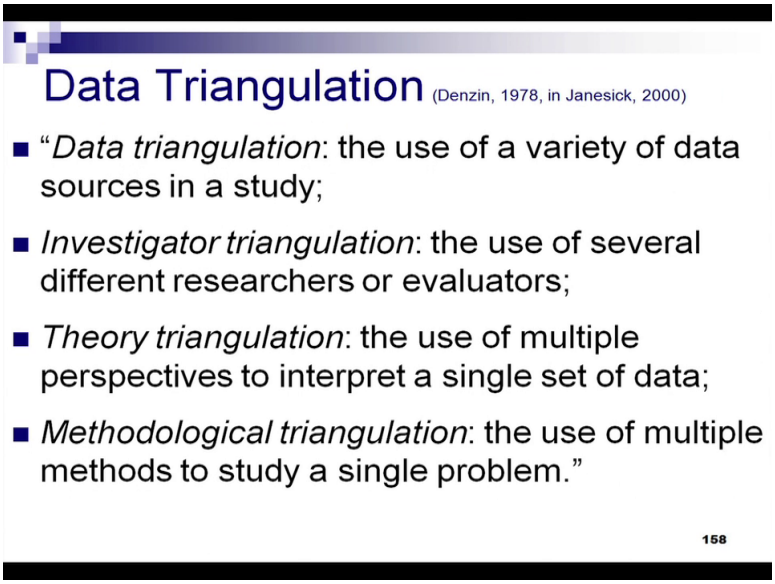

Then data triangulation, so "data triangulation is the use of a variety of data sources in a study; data triangulation refers to different sources within the study. Then investigator triangulation uses several different researchers or evaluators; So different people studying the same phenomenon from different aspects that is called investigator triangulation. Theory triangulation is the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data; and methodological triangulation is the use of multiple methods to study is single problem."

Why is it not quadrangulation? Why is it not pentangulation? Well triangulation would I am assuming that triangulation would refer to the three Axis, three-dimensional way of

approaching the same phenomenon; we try and cover all aspects. So data triangulation, we triangulate data, we triangulate we try and triangulate the investigator aspect, we try and triangulate theory that is being studied.

And we try and triangulate methods which are the reason why these days mixed methods approach is gaining importance, we say okay. We are doing our best to explain a phenomenon in as much detail, as objectively, as thoroughly as possible, when we use different methods to explain the same phenomena, our explanations, our description, our research becomes much more robust and these are some more ways of approaching our research, okay.

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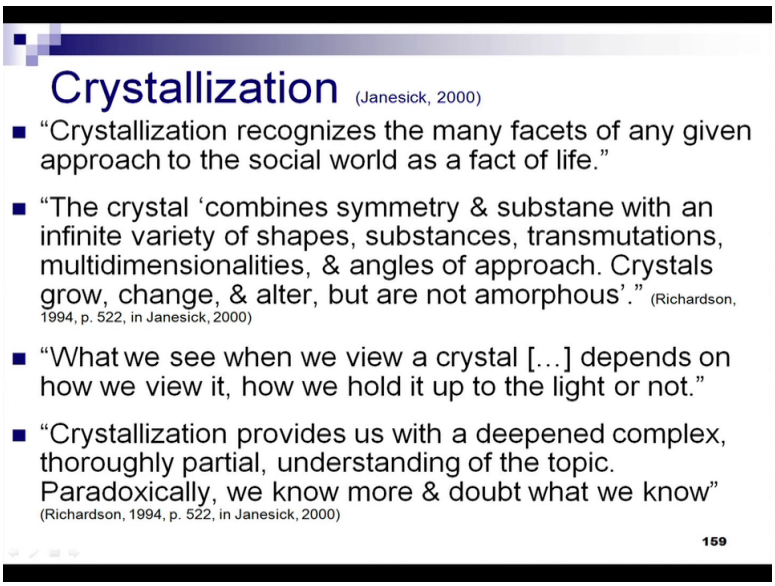

Crystallization, "crystallization refers to or recognizes the many facets of any given approach to the social world as a fact of life." "The Crystal combines symmetry and substance I'm sorry for spelling mistake, it should be substance, symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change and alter, but are not amorphous."

They don't disintegrate, they don't become powder, they grow, they have the capacity to retain their basic core and grow in the direction, any direction that offers them the opportunity to grow while maintaining the basic structure. So "what we see when we view a crystal depends on how we view it, how we hold up to the light or not."

What we see, when we talk about crystallization, we see different things when we hold of the crystals to light in at different angles, we see different things. "Crystallization provide us with

the deepened complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know."

Crystallization helps us realize, how much more there is for us to know that we may never know and that is thorough research, that's what I tell my students. Now I know I may be critiqued heavily for this, but I feel that you know when we talk about social sciences, when we talk about human behavior, there at least at this point in time and my colleagues have very often pulled me up for this, they say how do you know that, we will be never be able to do the in time.
As an IIT faculty member I should never use the word, never, but at this point in time I can confidently tell you that there is, I do not fore see anything in the near future that can completely predict human behavior, a hundred percent. So or any social phenomenon there are so many aspects, the deeper we go, the more we realize how much more there is that we will not be able to find out within the resources we have, within the time that we have, within our capacity of understanding and that is what crystallization does.

We see things, we have a research design, we are trying to see things from a perspective, even then the minute we change our perspective we see something different, then we change our perspective a little bit and we see another way of light and another you and another shade and all of this is part of research design, all of these are different aspects of research design. So triangulation of data, method, theory, investigator then crystallization, analysis, inductive analysis all of these are different aspects of research design.

And one must know what one needs to use, one must first know what it is that one is trying to find out and I get slammed by many of my students, Maam, why are you harping on identifying and clarifying the research question and I keep telling them that unless you know what your research question is, unless you know what your objective of study is, upfront you cannot move forward, there is no way, because only then can you actually probe deeper.

And deeper and deeper and deeper and unless that one statement is totally, clear cut and is understood the way you are understanding it, by anyone who reads that statement, you still haven't clarified your research question and thanks to Professor Frankance my PhD supervisor for making me such a perfectionist, when it comes to identifying research questions. So he immediately, you know anytime I would go to him with my PhD topic.

He would say why this? Why not this? Are you trying to carry out a lifetime project, what are you trying to do with this, can we cut it down, can we simplified and another person who help me do it was our, my late professor Alton Barber, who passed away last year and other he was my co-supervisor these two people style words in their own discipline, helped me identify this. And I'm telling you as students you must be able to zero in on that, all elusive research question and only then can you really do thorough research.

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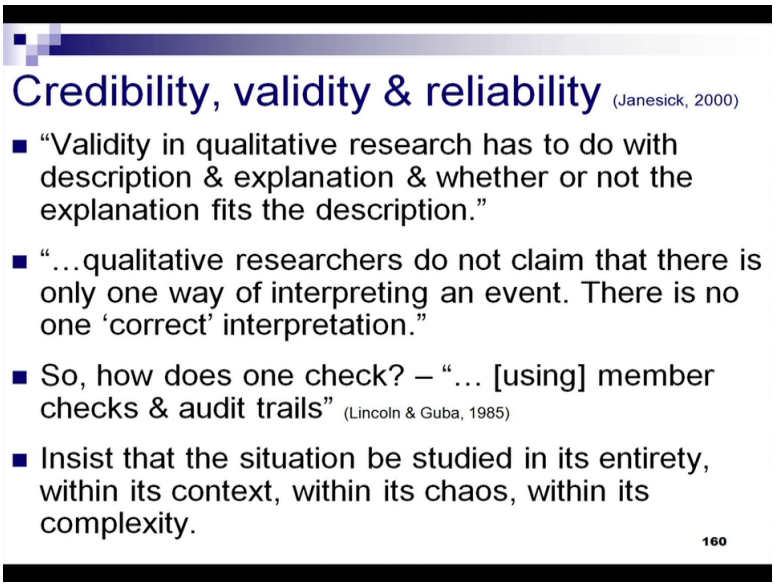

Credibility, validity and reliability is another aspect of qualitative research. Now "validity in qualitative research has to do with description and explanation whether or not the explanation fits the description." Validity means in very simple terms, in research terms, validity means whether, whatever we are doing, to answer the question we have asked, is actually going to answer the question we have asked.

Now when we talk about validity in qualitative research, we are talking about whether the description and explanation will really fit with whatever we are asking, so nothing can be definite, okay. "Qualitative researchers do not claim that there is not only one way of interpreting an event. There is no one correct interpretation."

There is no one correct explanation, so how does one check? We check using member check and audit trails; we insist that the situation be studied in its entirety, within its context, within its chaos, within its complexity. So that we can at least describe the context and let the reader

find out whether our explanation is valid or not. So we spend a lot of time is qualitative researchers on describing the context.

We spend a lot of time explaining to the reader what it is that we are trying to describe and why and within what context, within what limitations, etcetera. That is all we have time for today, so let's just go back into this a little bit, these are all aspects of Research Design, methodolatory, bracketing, inductive analysis, triangulation, crystallization and, credibility, validity and reliability.
How do we decide whether any research is credible, whether its believable, whether it's reliable, so reliability has to do with replicability of results. You do the same test and you get a similar result at the end of the same test every time that is possible in the pure sciences, with human behavior we cannot always be hundred percent sure, we have different measures of what counts as acceptable levels of reliability.

So when we talk about research methods, when you talk but qualitative research, it is the acceptance of the description within the context, by describing the count on context, the chaos, the complexity to the reader and then letting the reader make his or her own judgment about whether the description of the phenomenon really fits in, with whatever is set out to have been explored or whether it is the description really fits in with the objective of the research.

And that pretty much sums up our discussion on qualitative research design, in the next session we will take out the issue of some, more, some qualitative research, in strategies of qualitative research inquiry and we will start with ethnography, thank you very much for listening.