

Qualitative Research Methods
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Lecture 41
Writing

Welcome back to the NOC course on qualitative research methods, my name is Aradhna Malik and I'm helping you with this course. We have done various you know we've covered a lot of ground in qualitative research methods and we are nearing the end of the course we are consolidating whatever we have talked about today, in this lecture will talk about writing as a method of inquiry. Now writing helps us represent whatever we have interpreted it also adds to the inquiry, you know it's an iterated process.

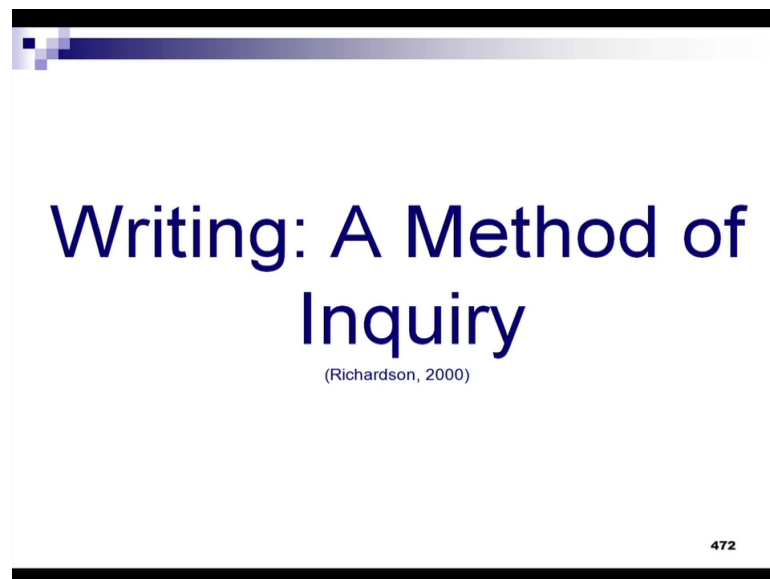
Qualitative research especially is you know in qualitative research we keep gaining insights as we progress, that happens with quantitative research also, but qualitative researcher is more it's more open ended and it's more interpretive more in line in tune with the ground reality, so we discover things as we interpret them, knowing full well that by the time we interpret the phenomenon that we are studying the situations, that we are studying, we will be whatever you're studying will be historically situated.

So it will be in the past, by the time we understand what we set out to understand and we represent it, we provide our interpretation of the phenomenon we have tried to understand, the phenomenon itself will have passed and it would have evolved into something new, it would have taken a very different kind of shape, by the time we start talking about it by the time we start writing about it and that is the beauty of qualitative research, that we say yes inner life is going on and we are taking a slice of life.

We are studying it within the context we are situated within the context, studying the interactions knowing fully well, that by the time we understand it, we represent it, we share it with the stakeholders, we share it with the people who wanted to know more about it, it could have evolved into a shape, we cannot probably accurately, hundred percent accurately predict.

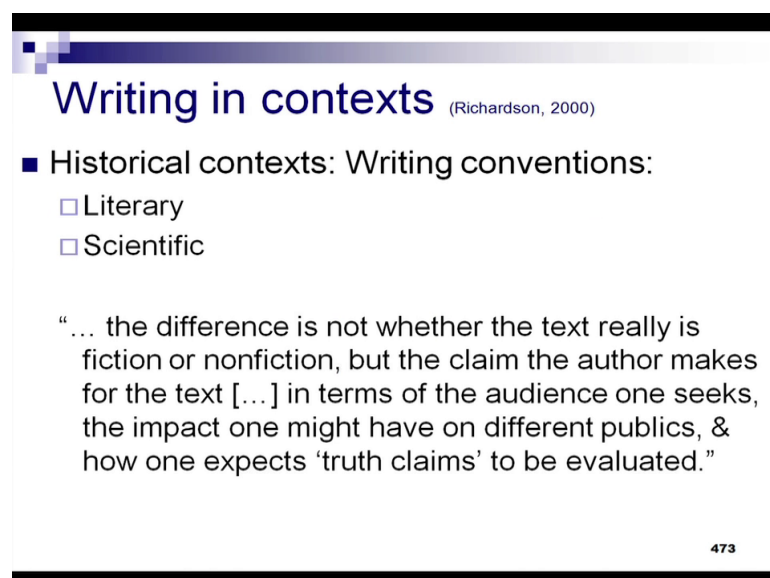
So when we talk about writing as method of inquiry, writing is way of sharing a results, writing all this is also a way of helping us thinks some more, writing stimulates our thought process, when we talk about things, when we write memory express them, it stimulates our thinking process and helps us develop insights into whatever it is that we are talking about or writing about, so its called reflexive, it feeds into itself and helps us clarify whatever we are talking about okay.

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Now this is from a paper by Richardson in the handbook of qualitative research methods.

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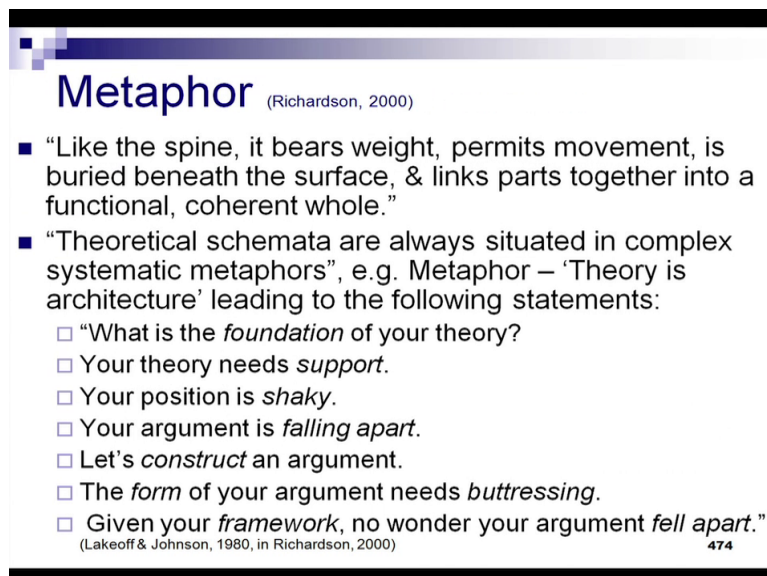
Writing in contexts Richardson says, that there are two broad categories of context in which we write a literary and scientific contexts, “the difference is not whether the text really is fiction or nonfiction, but the claim the author makes for the text in terms of the audience one

seeks the impact one might have a different publics, and how one expects truth claims to be evaluated.”

So we are looking at you know this these two ways, these two methods of writing differ in the way, that in the way that the claim the author makes for the text, in terms of who's going to read what is written, in terms of the impact what is written will have on the people it is meant for and how one expects these claims of the truth to be evaluated, you know we make claims, we say this is like this, but depending on how we want to share it with the people who are going to read it we will write it in a very different way.

And when people read it they make the evaluated, they make judgments, they make their own meaning out of whatever is written, so the meaning of a meaning in a way, so we be write with that purpose in mind and the differences in the way these two, these two forms of, or the differences in the way the reader would like to interpret it, so we write according to that, okay.

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Metaphor (Richardson, 2000)

- “Like the spine, it bears weight, permits movement, is buried beneath the surface, & links parts together into a functional, coherent whole.”
- “Theoretical schemata are always situated in complex systematic metaphors”, e.g. Metaphor – ‘Theory is architecture’ leading to the following statements:
 - “What is the *foundation* of your theory?
 - Your theory needs *support*.
 - Your position is *shaky*.
 - Your argument is *falling apart*.
 - Let’s *construct* an argument.
 - The *form* of your argument needs *buttressing*.
 - Given your *framework*, no wonder your argument *fell apart*.”
(Lakeoff & Johnson, 1980, in Richardson, 2000)

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Metaphor: “Like the spine, it bears weight, permits movement, is buried beneath the surface and links parts together into a functional, coherent whole.” So a metaphor is a relationship, it is a representation of, it helps us get to the core of the activity, now I am using in another metaphor, so it helps us to get to the core whatever it is that we are talking about.

It bears weight like the spine bears, wait permits movement, is buried beneath the surface and links parts together into functional coherent whole and the metaphor really helps us share the essence of whatever it is that we are talking about.

“Theoretical schemata always situated in complex systematic metaphors,” for example metaphor - theory is architectural leading to the following statements; when we talk about theory, when we talk about the different beliefs or the way we understand theory, we situate it in different metaphors, the most common metaphor that is used for theory is architecture, so we use words like *foundation* reminds us of a building.

We use words like support that reminds us of a building again, your position *shaky* again a building and architectural structure, your argument is *falling apart*, let's construct an argument, the form of your argument needs *buttressing*, given your *framework*, no wonder your arguments *fell apart*. Now all these words that are in italics, help us visualize theory as an architectural structure.

Similarly when we take any construct, any idea, any believe, that we are talking about, we take a similar idea, familiar concept I'm not trying very hard to not use difficult words here, so we take something that is very familiar to all was, the metaphor that I personally like to use most is that of a mammal, a living being, you know so and I may talk about tree and then I will say roots and branches and leaves and flowers and fruits and all of those things or a mammal, a spine, a skeleton, meat, muscle, skin, so these are the things that I would like to use.

So I personally like this, you may have a different reference, but it's something that everybody can relate to, it helps you capture the essence, so for example if I am talking to my students about writing, any documents, say writing an essay, lets simplify this, writing an essay, I like them to start with an outline, so I say okay what is it that you're talking about namely animal, I am an animal lover, shall say name the animals, okay dog, fine dog.

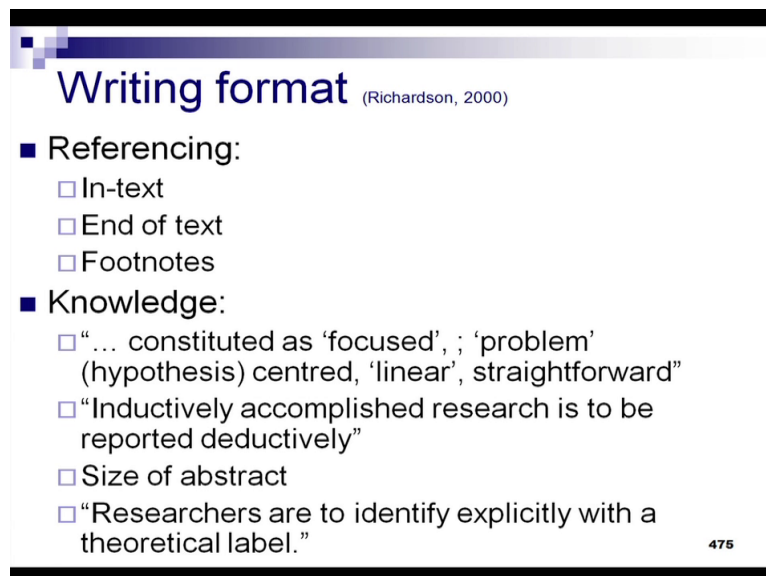
Now dog, when you write the outline, the outline gives you the skeleton of the dog, so it will tell you where the skull of the dog, it will tell where the teeth of the dog are in that skull, it will tell you where the limbs of the dog are, it will tell you where the tail of the dog is, it will

tell you where the main spine of the dog is, so where are you starting from, then you add meat to the body of the dog.

What do you want to emphasize on, is it? Is it the dogs growl, is it the wagging tail, is it the bark, what exactly are you trying to emphasize on? So that is how I talk to my students about writing, so this is you know one of the way in which we write whatever that we are talking about, it just adds flavor, now I'm using the metaphor of food, so these adjectives, these descriptions, add flavor to whatever we are talking about and they help us consolidate whatever we are talking about give us the essence.

Now I am using me again the metaphor of food it give us gives us the flavor, its gives the aroma of the paradigm we are using, etcetera. So you know what kind of spices you have used this is what metaphor does to writing okay.

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Writing format (Richardson, 2000)

- Referencing:
 - In-text
 - End of text
 - Footnotes
- Knowledge:
 - "... constituted as 'focused', ; 'problem' (hypothesis) centred, 'linear', straightforward"
 - "Inductively accomplished research is to be reported deductively"
 - Size of abstract
 - "Researchers are to identify explicitly with a theoretical label."

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Writing format various formats are used in writing referencing in text, end of text and footnotes. Then when we talk about formats, when you're talking about qualitative research, the primary is elements of the format are, we would want to know how to reference in text references, end of text references and footnotes. How are we addressing the knowledge we have created, so the knowledge is "constituted as focused, problem of hypothesis centred, linear, straightforward"

That is the most preferred way of presenting the new knowledge that has been created, it may also be presented as "inductively accomplished research that is to be reported deductively",

the size of the abstract will matter and this is again governed by the publications, by the way in which we publish, what we have written and “researchers are able to identify explicitly with the theoretical label.

This is the most preferred way of presenting the knowledge that has been created, so we talk about references, we talked about presentation of knowledge in an through our writing.

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Conventions used in traditional ethnographies

(Van Maanen, 1988, in Richardson, 2000)

- *Experiential authority*: “... the author exists only in the preface to establish ‘I was there’ & ‘I am a researcher’ credentials.”
- *Documentary style*: “... a plethora of concrete, particular details that presume to represent the typical activity, pattern culture member”
- *Culture member’s point of view*: “... putatively presented through quotations, explanations, syntax, cultural clichés, and so on”
- *Interpretive omnipotence of the ethnographer*” 476

Some conventional that conventions that used in traditional ethnographies are, one is: Experiential authority: “the author exists only in the previous to establish ‘I Was There’ and ‘I am researcher’ credentials.” So you say that yes I was there and I observed XYZ, the other way of presenting traditional ethnographies documentary style: which is “a plethora of concrete, particular details that presume to represent the typical activity pattern culture member.”

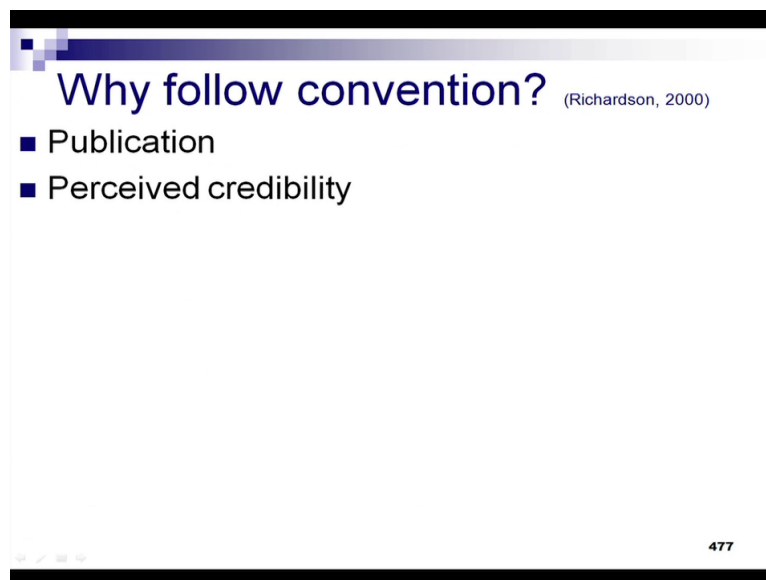
So you say okay and this is a totally third person account, this is what happened, that is what happened and you present it in the form of a documentary and culture member’s point of view: “putatively presented through quotations, explanations, syntax, cultural clichés and so on”,

Assuming that the other person or the person who is reading your text will be able to relate to your position, in that ethnography as an insider, will be able to understand your position as an insider, so if you write it as from the culture members point of view you will use the terms that the culture members use.

And you may use quotations that the members of that culture are using in an attempt to convey that you understand what you're talking about, as an outsider you will attempt to clarify things, but as an insider you will you are likely to use the same kinds of terminologies, the same kind of quotations would likely to talk in the same manner as an insider, then the interpreter omnipotence of the ethnographer.

Which means the other style is that the ethnographer is present as an outsider and as an insider and his reflexively going back and forth, is going out of the situation understanding the situation, going back in and then writing about it, then going out and observing it in third person to various ways in which we present the knowledge that has been created, okay.

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Why do we follow convention? Now let's get out of the nuts and bolts, why do we follow convention? We want to get published, we want our work to be known, and through publication our credibility, the believability of our work increases, so that is why we follow these conventions, we follow the tried and tested roots of sharing the knowledge that we claim to have created in and through our efforts, with people who can use that knowledge.

To either further that knowledge or take that knowledge forward and build on that knowledge or use that knowledge to solve their day to day problems we will talk about it in policy making in the upcoming lectures.

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Writing Conventions - Text based on life histories or in-depth interviews (Richardson, 2000)

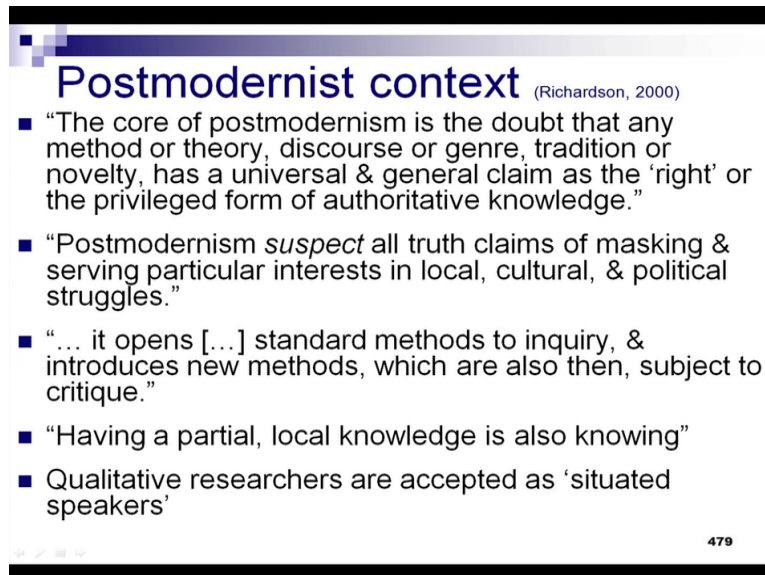
- “Researchers establish their credentials in the body of the text
- They write the body of the text as though the document & quotation snippets are naturally present, valid, reliable, & fully representative, rather than selected, pruned, & spruced up by the author for their textual appearance.”

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Writing conventions - text based on life histories or in-depth interviews: “Researchers established their credentials in the body of the text that they write body of the text as though the document and quotations snippets are naturally present, valid, reliable and fully representative, rather than selected, pruned and spruced up by the author for their textual appearance.

So when we talk about when we describe life histories or in-depth interviews, we write these things naturally, we don't had quotations, we also do not take out these quotations, we write as if we are just taking a slice of life and presenting It to the reader, without spicing it up and without over simplifying, or over clarifying whatever it is that we have dealt with okay, alright.

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Postmodernist context (Richardson, 2000)

- “The core of postmodernism is the doubt that any method or theory, discourse or genre, tradition or novelty, has a universal & general claim as the ‘right’ or the privileged form of authoritative knowledge.”
- “Postmodernism *suspect* all truth claims of masking & serving particular interests in local, cultural, & political struggles.”
- “... it opens [...] standard methods to inquiry, & introduces new methods, which are also then, subject to critique.”
- “Having a partial, local knowledge is also knowing”
- Qualitative researchers are accepted as ‘situated speakers’

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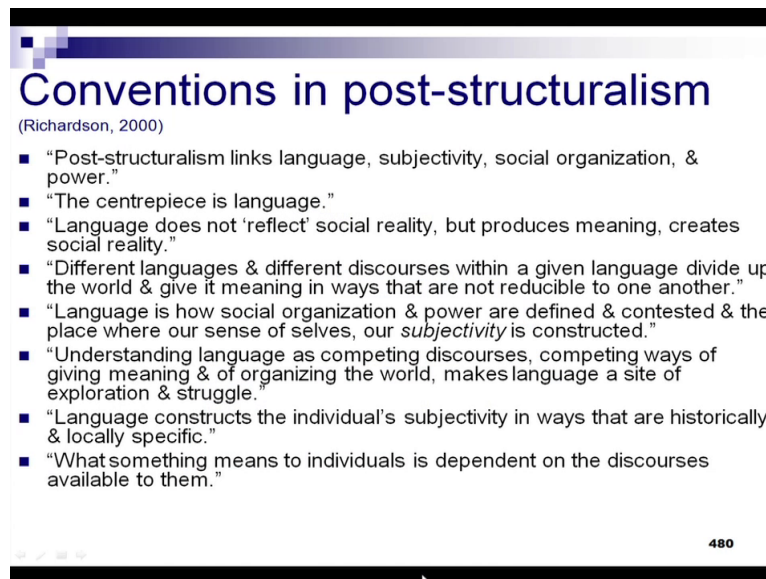
In the postmodernist context, “the core of postmodernism is the doubt that any method or theory, discourse or genre, tradition or novelty, has a universal and general claim as the right or the privileged form of authoritative knowledge.” “Postmodernism suspect all truth claims of masking and serving particular interest in the local, cultural and political struggle.” So “it opens standard methods to inquiry and introduces new methods which are also then, subject to critique.

And when we talk about when we write from the postmodernist perspective, we are open to critique, we say yes this is something new that I created, but I am open to critique this is we try and balance out whatever we are writing, we accept that there may be points of view that are likely to oppose what we have written and we also doubt whatever, not doubt but take the way we represent our understanding of the particular phenomenon with a pinch of salt.

We don't appear to be shaky, we don't appear to be to be unsure what we have written, but we make no secret of our openness to critique, our openness to different points of view, our openness to revising whatever we have learnt in light of new information that can help us interpret, whatever we have understood differently okay. “Having a partial local knowledge is also knowing and that is what postmodernist believe.” “Qualitative researchers are accepted as situated speakers.”

So we are accepted as situated speakers, we are in the social context that we are talking about and the qualitative researchers are accepted as the speakers from that specific context okay.

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Conventions in post-structuralism

(Richardson, 2000)

- "Post-structuralism links language, subjectivity, social organization, & power."
- "The centrepiece is language."
- "Language does not 'reflect' social reality, but produces meaning, creates social reality."
- "Different languages & different discourses within a given language divide up the world & give it meaning in ways that are not reducible to one another."
- "Language is how social organization & power are defined & contested & the place where our sense of selves, our *subjectivity* is constructed."
- "Understanding language as competing discourses, competing ways of giving meaning & of organizing the world, makes language a site of exploration & struggle."
- "Language constructs the individual's subjectivity in ways that are historically & locally specific."
- "What something means to individuals is dependent on the discourses available to them."

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Conventions and post-structuralism: "Post-structuralism links language, subjectivity, social organization and power." and "the centerpiece is language." So we use language to highlight the language subjectivity, we use language to highlight whatever we are talking about. "Language does not reflect social reality, but produces meaning, and creates social reality." "Different languages and different discourses within a given language divide up the world and give it meaning in ways that are not reducible to one another."

And 'language is how social organization and power are defined and contested and the place where our sense of selves our subjectivity is constructed.' So language assumes the most important place in post-structuralist writing then we understand, we focus on text, we focus on competing discourses, we "understand language is competing discourses, competing ways of giving meaning and of organizing the world, makes languages a site of exploration and struggle."

"Language constructs the individual's subjectivity in ways that are historically and locally specific." "What something means to individuals is dependent on the discourses available to them." This is really the meat of this whole idea of post-structuralist writing, so when we are talking about post-structuralist writing we say yes based on the information I received and my understanding of that information that my usage of the language in which I received this information, my usage of the language, my understanding, my interpretation of whatever was spoken, the texts that were written, will help me interpret the phenomenon in a way that I can understand it.

And that is where this whole style of writing comes from, so we refer to text, we refer to what was spoken, as opposed to our interpretation of what we observe, we use language, we use language to understand the phenomenon, we write from the perspective of our, we put you know if we focus most on language when we talk about post-structuralist writing okay.

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The slide features a blue header bar with a small graphic on the left. The title 'Conventions in post-structuralism (Contd.)' is in blue, with '(Richardson, 2000)' in smaller black text below it. Three bullet points are listed in black text, each preceded by a blue square. The slide number '481' is in the bottom right corner.

Conventions in post-structuralism (Contd.)
(Richardson, 2000)

- “Experience & memory [of individuals] are open to contradictory interpretations governed by social interests & prevailing discourses.”
- “The individual is both the site & subject of these discursive struggles for identity & for remaking memory.”
- “Because individuals are subject to multiple & competing discourses in many realms, their subjectivity is shifting & contradictory, not stable, fixed, rigid.”

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Conventions in post-structuralism: “Experience and memory of individuals are open to contradictory interpretations governed by social interest and prevailing discourses.” I may remember something my rendition today is a result of how it is interpreted the phenomenon and stored it in my memory and how I was able to retrieve it, it is dependent upon my interpretation of what I read, what I heard and how do I interpret it and store it in my memory by using language.

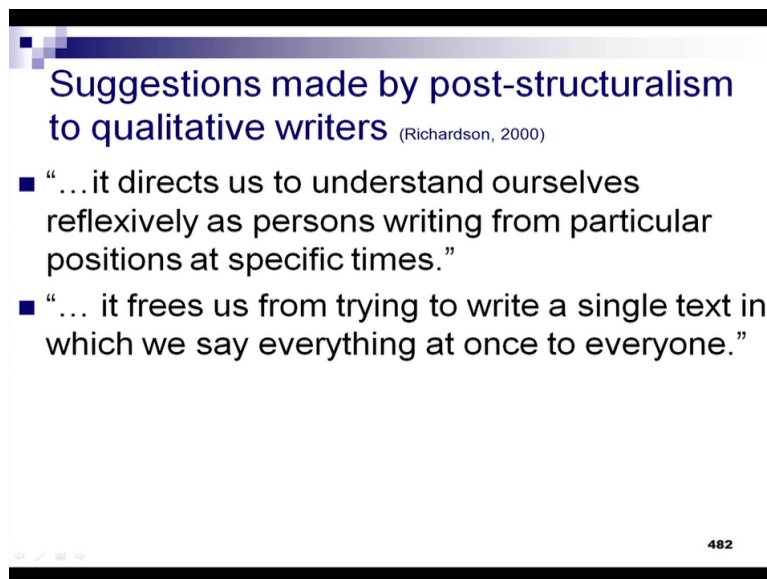
So we use language to store the information in our memory, we use language to interpret whatever we need to interpret and that is really what everything revolves around. “The individual is both the site and subject of these discursive struggles for identity and for remaking memory.” I understood something, and then I went back and said that did I understand it right? Maybe, maybe not.

Why did I understand what I understood? What led to my interpretation of this situation? Okay it was this; it was not that so we change. we modify the way we store things in our memory, we attach more tags, now I am using the metaphor of a computer file, so we may attach tags to whatever we have stored in memory, so we say okay maybe another tag needs

to be added to it and when we attach that again using language, so we are using language to remake our memory.

“Because individuals are subject to multiple and competing discourses in many realms, their subjectivity is shifting and contradictory, not stable, fixed and rigid.” So we allow ourselves to understand the phenomena differently every time we revisit those phenomenon that is really the whole crux of this. So every time we write something we interpret it, we go back we think about it and then we present a much more reflected upon interpretation of what we have interpreted earlier okay.

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Suggestions made by post-structuralism to qualitative writers (Richardson, 2000)

- “... it directs us to understand ourselves reflexively as persons writing from particular positions at specific times.”
- “... it frees us from trying to write a single text in which we say everything at once to everyone.”

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Suggestions by post-structuralism to qualitative writers: “It directs us to understand ourselves reflexively as persons writing from particular position at specific times.” “It also frees us from to write trying to write a single text in which we say everything at once to everyone.” So we say yes today I am writing this but I will leave room for revising, for revisiting whatever it is that I have written.

So we don't claim to know everything at the same time and we say we don't claim that whatever we have been interpreted today, based on the knowledge we had today is the only truth, we say okay maybe tomorrow in light of fresh information, in light of fresh understanding this is going to change that's okay.

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Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) Ethnography (Richardson, 2000)

- Creative analytic practices produce ethnographies that include "... poetry, drama, conversations, readers' theatre, & so on."
- CAP Ethnography includes the above and any new ways of analyzing and expressing ethnography to enhance the richness and depth of the analysis and bring it as close to the real, experienced reality.
- "CAP ethnography displays the *writing process* & the *writing product* as deeply intertwined; both are privileged."

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Creative Analytic Practice(CAP) Ethnography: so "Creative analytic practice produce ethnographies that include" poetry, drama, conversations, readers theatre and so on." CAP ethnography includes the above and any new ways of analyzing and expressing ethnography to enhance the richness and depth of the analysis and bring it as close to the real, experienced reality. And this type of "ethnography displays the writing process and the writing product as deeply intertwined; both are privileged." So we talk about the writing process and we also talked about the outcome.

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CAP Ethnography can include (Richardson, 2000)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Autoethnography• Fiction-stories• Drama• Performance texts• Polyvocal texts (use of multiple voices as a narrative mode) within a text• Readers' theatre (Actors do not memorize their parts- only vocal expressions are used to help the audience understand the context)• Responsive readings (alternative reading of a text between the leader of the group & other members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aphorisms: (Clever crisp memorable definition of a commonly known truth)• Comedy & Satire• Visual presentations• Allegory: (Story or picture with hidden meaning)• Conversation• Layered accounts: Polyvocality informed by several layers of consciousness• Writing-stories: "Narratives about contexts in which writing is produced" e.g. Rachel Toor's WORK http://www.chronicle.com/article/What-WritingRunning-Have/147193/• Mixed genres
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Now it may include various things, autoethnography, fiction-stories, drama, performance texts, polyvocal texts which is the use multiple voices as a narrative mode within a text, Readers' theater, actors do not memorize their parts – only vocal expressions are used to help

the audience understand the context. Responsive readings alternative reading of a text between the leader of the group, and other members.

Aphorisms: which is clever, crisp memorable definition of a common known truth, comedy and satire, visual presentations, allegory which is the story or picture with hidden meaning, conversations, layered account: which is polyvocality we talked about polyvocal texts, so polyvocality informed by several layers of consciousness. Writing-stories: which are “narratives about contexts in which writing is produced.” For example there is a writer by the name of Rachel Toor’s and her work is about writing she compares writing to running.

She is a runner and she is also a writer, she is a professor, she is a faculty and so she writes about writing and compare it to running and she is written several articles, so this is a writing story, a narrative a story about writing, and mixed genres and this is one of the examples of or these are some of the ways in which CAP ethnography can happen okay.

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Evocative representations (Richardson, 2000)

- “... display interpretive frameworks that demand analysis of themselves as cultural products & as methods for rendering the social.”
- Through Evocative Representations, “We find ourselves attending to feelings, ambiguities, temporal sequences, blurred experiences, & so on; we struggle to find a textual place for ourselves & our doubts & uncertainties.”
- “Through [Evocative Representations] we can experience the self-reflexive & transformational process of self-creation.”
- e.g. autoethnography & writing stories

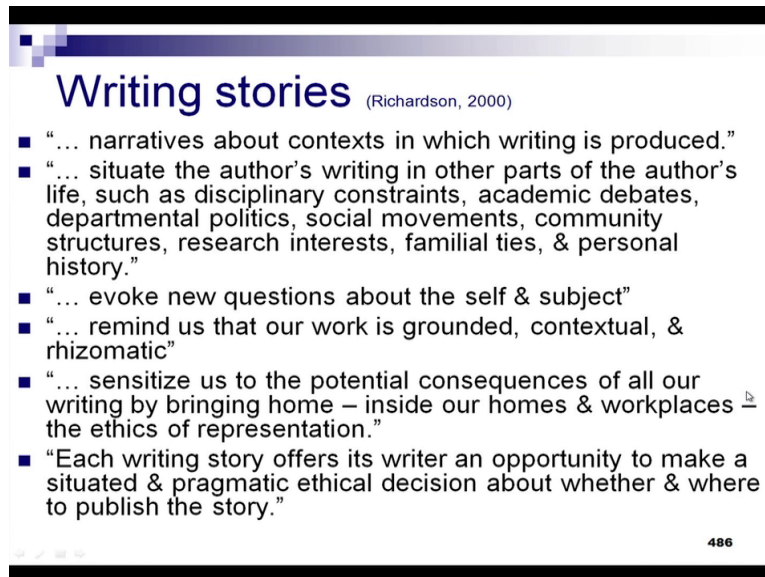
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Evocative representations: “display interpretive frameworks that demand analysis of themselves as cultural products and as methods for rendering the social.” “Through Evocative representations, “we find ourselves attending to feelings, ambiguities, temporal sequences, blurred experiences, and so on; we struggle to find a textual place for ourselves and our doubts and uncertainties.”

And we can “experience self-reflective and transformational process of self creation.” For example autoethnography and writing stories, so these are stimulating our writing process,

Evocative representations stimulate our writing process and help us bring out something different okay.

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Writing stories (Richardson, 2000)

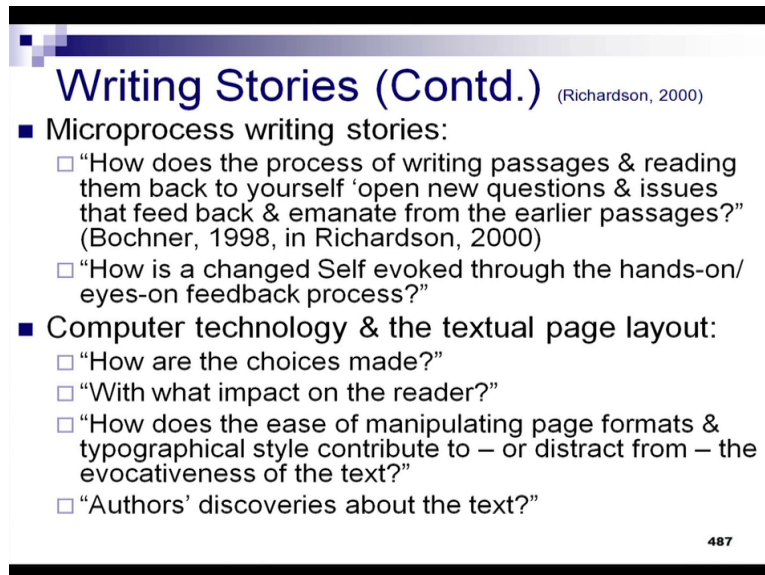
- "... narratives about contexts in which writing is produced."
- "... situate the author's writing in other parts of the author's life, such as disciplinary constraints, academic debates, departmental politics, social movements, community structures, research interests, familial ties, & personal history."
- "... evoke new questions about the self & subject"
- "... remind us that our work is grounded, contextual, & rhizomatic"
- "... sensitize us to the potential consequences of all our writing by bringing home – inside our homes & workplaces – the ethics of representation."
- "Each writing story offers its writer an opportunity to make a situated & pragmatic ethical decision about whether & where to publish the story."

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Writing stories: are "narratives about contexts in which writing is produced." "Situate the author's writing in other parts of the author's life, such as disciplinary, constraints, academic debates, departmental politics, social movements, community structures, research interests, familial ties and personal history." They "Evoke new questions about the self and subject." I would really encourage you to drive to read Rachael Toor's work to see what writing stories look like.

They "sensitize ask to the potential consequences of all are writing by bringing home inside our homes and workplace is the ethics of representation." and it offers "each writing story offers its writer an opportunity to make a situated and pragmatic ethical decision about whether and where to publish the story." Okay.

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Writing Stories (Contd.) (Richardson, 2000)

- Microprocess writing stories:
 - “How does the process of writing passages & reading them back to yourself ‘open new questions & issues that feed back & emanate from the earlier passages?’” (Bochner, 1998, in Richardson, 2000)
 - “How is a changed Self evoked through the hands-on/ eyes-on feedback process?”
- Computer technology & the textual page layout:
 - “How are the choices made?”
 - “With what impact on the reader?”
 - “How does the ease of manipulating page formats & typographical style contribute to – or distract from – the evocativeness of the text?”
 - “Authors’ discoveries about the text?”

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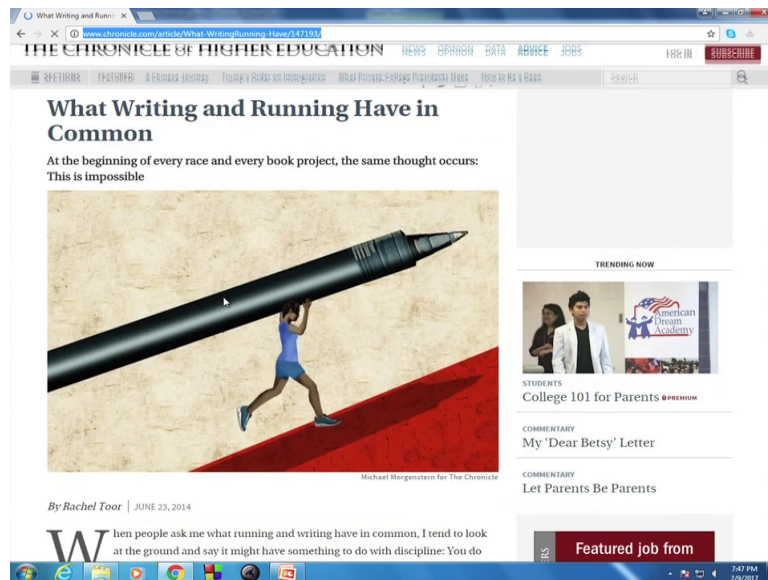
Micro process writing stories about “how does the process of writing passages and reading them back to yourself open new questions and issues that feedback and emanate from the earlier passages?” Now “how is a changed self evoked through the hands-on or Eyes-on feedback process?” and Computer technology helps us think more about writing: “How are the choices made?” “With what impact on the reader?”

“How does the ease of manipulating page formats and typographical style contribute to or distract from the evocreativeness of the text?” “Authors discoveries about text? What is this technology doing to the way I am thinking about writing? How is it facilitating my writing? Is it hampering my writing if so, how? the color I choose, the style writing, style I choose, animations I may like to add you know, so what how is this impacting the way I am thinking about writing in expressing my writing okay.

And that is all we have time for in this Lectures do think about the two points we have discussed and I would maybe I can spend a minute showing you Rachel Toor’s work I think we have that time, let me just show you. It will take maybe every 30 seconds at this computer works okay, let's see, let me show you Rachel Toors work, she's done very you know she writes lot about writing and so she talks about writing and running and maybe we can see this what writing and running have in common and she publisher her work in the chronicle of Higher Education.

Some parts of the chronicle of Higher Education are available free of cost to non subscribers, if you want to subscribe it may be a library can subscribe to it, there is a difference subscription rate for students, so lets see the page opens up if not then maybe you can go through it on your own, I have a link that have put in the slides, okay

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So what writing and running have in common, at the beginning of every race and every book project the same thought occurs this is impossible, She talks about you know how running has helped her become a good writer and she is written many, many articles about this, so you can maybe read this, she is a associate professor of creative writing at Eastern Washington University and her website address is mentioned here.

So maybe you can go through her work and see what writing stories look like, what writing narratives look like and will be very interesting for you to see how this is also another form of qualitative inquiry. So thank you very much for listening and will continue with this discussion on writing as a method of inquiry in the qualitative research in the next class, thank you.