

Qualitative Research Methods

Note Title

10/30/2008

- data collected is not numeric; instead, it is text or other non-numeric media (images, audio, videos, etc.)

TYPES

- ① Fieldwork (Participant Observation)
 - observe phenomena first-hand
 - researcher becomes a part of the community being observed

almost always used to induce hypotheses

PROs: rich description
can be used to study things otherwise difficult to study.

CONS: hard to generalize,
hard to reproduce,
researcher biases results

- ② Interviews
2 special types
- Contextual Inquiry Interview
 - Cognitive Task Analysis Interview

- ③ Non-participant Observation Fieldwork
- study something non-numeric but you're not actually physically present

QUALITATIVE OR QUANTITATIVE

- ① Surveys ② Interviews

QUALITATIVE DATA, QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

- ① Enumeration / Content Analysis
- count events
 - analyze event order

Observational Field Research

- subjective
- person-oriented
or community-oriented

goal: thorough, systematic collection, classification, and reporting of events + relationships between events. You may induce hypotheses about people, organizations, communities, and cultures.

output possibilities

- ① ethnography - rich, qualitative description of events and quotes made by people involved
- ② enumeration of events
- ③ using coded data to answer questions

ALMOST ALWAYS: induced hypotheses

Doing Fieldwork

① Who to observe, when, and why?
- "hunches" - "biases"

② Duration?

- traditional anthropology
ethnographies written after
years of fieldwork

- "rapid ethnography"
"mini ethnography" } popular
among
HCI
researchers

③ Researcher's Role?

- complete observer
- participant observer

- How do participants view you?
- How does your presence affect people?

TIPS

- ① do not take on the role of expert or advisor
- ② wait to absorb environment before involving yourself actively too much or asking too many questions
- ③ Write ACCURATE, DETAILED FIELD NOTES.
 - describe the setting
 - describe the individuals
 - quotes
 - conversations you have
 - conversations you overhear
 - record events
 - record anything confusing.

INDUCTIVE NOTES

- ① your personal feelings
- ② your hunches, hypotheses
- ③ guesses on people's motivations, feelings
- ④ start to write down ideas for a theme, organizational structure, explanatory theory

THEORETICAL MEMO

- portion of data and
- inferred explanations

formalized
inductive
note
with data

Refine, Refute Memos as you Go.

↳ Seek out information that **SUPPORTS** or **CONTRADICTS** your inferences as your observation continues.

If data makes you think of a theory learned in class, make a note of it.

METHOD MEMO

- record your fieldwork approach
- successes
- failures
- planned changes / improvements

How to Take Notes

- ① Take as detailed notes as possible as events occur. → RAW NOTES

BEFORE YOUR NEXT OBSERVATION SESSION, AND WITHIN 12 HOURS OF THE LAST SESSION:

- ② Revise / extend raw notes.
good idea to create soft copy at this time
↳ FIELD NOTES
- ③ Write all inferences that come to mind, expand on inferences in raw notes
↳ INDUCTIVE NOTES, THEORETICAL MEMOS
- ④ Update method memos as needed.
- ⑤ Plan targets of interest for next observation.

When to Stop

- ① Saturation
- when new information
does not surprise you