SOC 575 Intermediate Qualitative Analysis: Grounded Theory Method/PPS 506 Qualitative Analysis and Needs Assessment

Fall 2014 DRAFT (8-15-2014)

Time: 4:20-6:50pm, Tuesday
Room: Room 222L, Beracha Hall
Instructor: Hisako Matsuo, Ph.D.
Office Room: TBA (the Department is in the process of moving)
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Office hours: 3:00-4:00pm on Thursday or by appointment

Objectives

The qualitative approach in scientific research uses non-numerical data collected through face-to-face interviews, focus groups, participant observations, ethnographic studies, content analysis, and so forth. This approach has become an effective tool for data collection and analysis in Behavioral Science, Educational Research, Historical Studies, Medical Studies, Psychology, and Public Policy Studies. The primary purpose of qualitative approach is to explore and interpret phenomena which are not observable through quantification and statistics. This course is recommended to faculty and students who are interested in learning the qualitative approach, who are using or going to use a qualitative approach for their research, who have been using statistics but want to expand their methodological skills, and who want to compare strengths and weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The course will focus on hands-on learning of grounded theory method, with an emphasis on sampling, data collection and analyses, and interpretation and presentation of the results. The class will be divided into several groups, and each group will select a research topic and submit an IRB protocol. It is recommended that students have studied inferential statistics at the introductory level in order to appreciate the strengths of the qualitative approach. The materials to be covered during the semester are as follows;

1. Competing paradigms in scientific research,
2. Designing qualitative studies (sampling, data collection, and issues of validity and reliability),
3. Theoretical sampling
4. Coding, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative data, and
5. Summarizing and presenting qualitative data.

The course schedule remains flexible. There are so many potential areas for discussions that there may be times when we deviate from the schedule. At the end of this course, students will have a good understanding of the process of grounded theory method and will produce a presentable/publishable paper as a group project.
**Required Textbooks**


**Recommended Readings**


**Evaluation**

Course grades are based on three elements: mini projects, a term paper, and presentation/class participation. Course grade will be given according to the following weights:

- Mini Projects 1/3
- Term Paper 1/3
- Presentations/class participation 1/3
Mini Projects: Students will submit about three short project reports, focusing on different aspects of qualitative approach, including 1) a proposal with outlines of design, 2) an IRB protocol with associated materials, 3) a report on preliminary data analyses. Each paper will contribute to a term paper to be submitted at the end of the semester. Detailed explanations will be given in the class.

Term Paper: Students will develop a publishable/presentable paper based on the material available from mini papers. There will be the 12th International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, May 2015 (http://www.icqi.org). There will also be Perspectives on Interculturality at SLU, March 2015 (http://www.slu.edu/center-for-intercultural-studies-home/conferences) and SLU Graduate Student Association’s Research Symposium in April 2015. These three conferences are good outlets for a presentable paper.

Presentations: There will be two semi-formal presentations; 1) presentation on a selected article, and 2) presentation on the final paper. Detailed explanations will be given in the class.

Class Participation: Students are expected to present informally their research ideas to receive some comments from peer students and the instructor(s). There are so many potential areas for discussions that there may be times when we deviate from the schedule. The students are encouraged to raise questions or make suggestions for discussion.

Lecture Schedule

Week 1 August 26: Introduction and Course Overview
IRB Protocol
Discussions on Project Topic, Instrument, and Data Collection

Week 2 September 2: Designing Qualitative Research (Grounded Theory Method)
Preparation of IRB protocol

Strauss and Corbin. Chapters 1 through 4
Creswell. Chapters 5 and 6.

Week 3 September 9: Deductive and Inductive Approaches
Conceptualization and Instrumentation
Competing Paradigms

Creswell. Chapters 1 through 4 and Appendix B through F
**Mini Project (1), draft of IRB protocol, is due**

**Week 4**
September 16: Use of Grounded Theory Method
Examples of Data Analysis and Grounded Theory Method
(data from focus groups and face-to-face interviews)

*Needs Assessment of Refugee Youth, Children, and Parents. (Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service)*
*Interview Study of Award Winning Professors. (Center for Teaching Excellence)*

**Week 5**
September 23: Students’ Presentations on Journal Articles and Discussions

**Week 6**
October 4: Sampling and Data Collection in Qualitative Studies
Preparation for Data Collection

Creswell. Chapter 7.
Strauss and Corbin. Chapter 13.

**Week 7**
September 30: First-round data collection
Transcribing and Cleaning Data

**Week 8**
October 7: Open-coding and Memo Writing
Reflection and discussions on instrument, sampling, data collection

Strauss and Corbin. Chapters 5 through 8.

**Week 9**
October 14: Second-round data collection

**Mini Project (2), transcribing and cleaning data, is due.**

**Week 10**
October 21: Catch-up day

**Week 11**
October 28: Creating Categories and Axial Coding
Finding and Interpreting Meanings

Strauss and Corbin. Chapters 9 and 14.
Creswell. Chapter 8.

**Week 12**
November 4: Selective Coding
Various Ways of Summarizing and Presenting Results
(Taxonomy, Matrix, Diagram, Causal Model)

Strauss and Corbin. Chapters 10 through 12.
Mini Project (3), list of categories and themes with descriptions of each

Week 13  November 11: Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Approach
          Second-round data collection
          Theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation

          Creswell. Chapter 10
          Strauss and Corbin. Chapter 16.

Week 14  November 18: Creating additional categories and themes

Week 15  November 25: Theorizing the Findings
          Writing Results and Preparing Articles
          Presenting Qualitative Findings

          Creswell. Chapter 9, and 17.
          Strauss and Corbin. Chapter 15, and 17.

Week 16  December 2: Students’ Presentations

Term paper is due by 9:00am Friday, December 12th.

Student Success Center Updates Academic Support Statement

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

* Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
* University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 314-977-8885 or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.
Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

**Relevant References**

**Grounded Theory Method**


Observational Method


**Face-to-face Interview**


Case Study


Content Analysis


Phenomenology
