

LSE Department of Methodology,
MY428/528 - LT 2014

Qualitative Text Analysis

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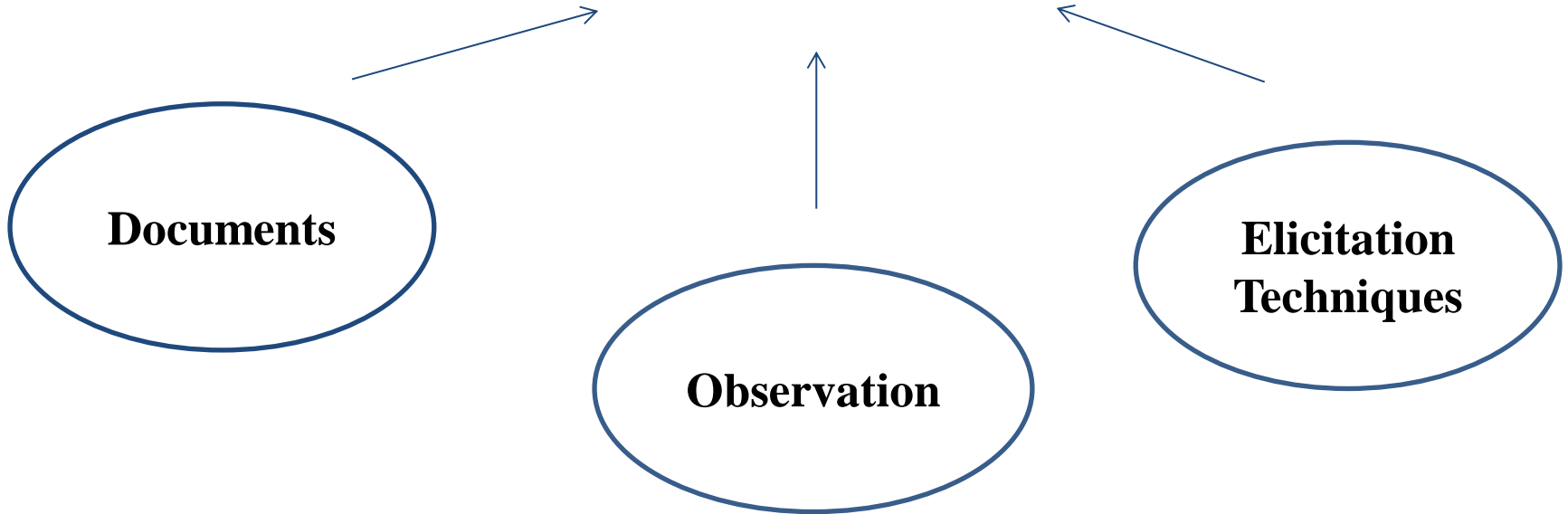
Office Hours:
Thursday 11:30-13:30

Seminar 1: Overview & Introduction

Week 1

Textual Data: Methods of Data Collection

Data Collection



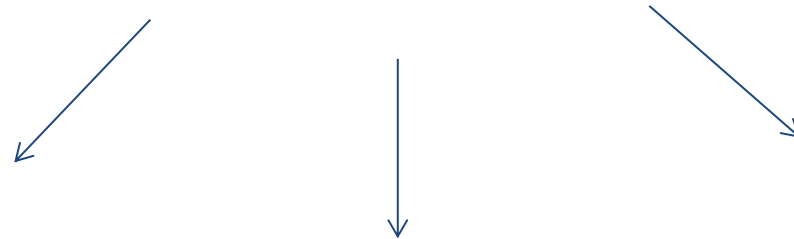
Textual Data: Methods of Analysis

Data Analysis

Descriptive
/Inductive
Approaches

Hypothetico-
deductive
Approaches

Structural/
Critical
Approaches



Characteristics of Qualitative Research

- **Subjectivity has value.**

Views of participants and researchers are to be acknowledged.

Interpretation constructed by both (researcher not distant neutral being).

- **An holistic view is essential**

Structures impacting on a setting (policies, culture...) need to be considered.

- **Every study is time and context-bound**

Replication and generalisation are unlikely outcome.

- **Power lies with the researched**

Viewed as being experts on the research topic.

Which areas are best for researching?

- **Culture**

Behaviours, 'rituals' of a group people in a particular setting.
i.e.: Patients and clinicians in a hospital ward.

- **Phenomena**

Detailed investigations over time of a particular experience.
i.e.: marriage breakdown, illness.

- **Structural processes**

Investigation of policy change and impact on a setting or group.
i.e.: increasing taxes or closure of mental institutions

- **Historical changes**

Documented changes in discourses.
i.e.: changes in treatment of an illness as recorded in medical journal articles.

In Practice...

Qualitative Research

- Give insight into people's individual experiences
- Can help assessing the impact of policies on a group/population
- Can enable the exploration of little known behaviour, attitudes, values
- Can serve as an exploratory phase or springboard for larger quantitative studies.
- Can help explaining surprising/unexpected quantitative results.

Research paradigms

- **Interpretivism/ Constructionism**
No objective knowledge independent of thinking.
Focus on exploring how different people experience 'realities'.
- **Realism/Positivism**
Possible to gain some understanding of reality.
Focus on neutrality, objectivity. Theory testing.
- **Critical Theories**
Reality does not exist 'out there' but is produced by
exploitative political systems.
Focus on revealing power relationships.

Qual. v Quant – A false debate?

- **No Quantification without Qualification.**
- **No Qualification without logic and rationalization.**
- **No statistical analysis without interpretation.**
- **No interpretation without formal detachment**

Presentations

Formative & Summative Assignments