

Introductory course
Qualitative approaches
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What are qualitative interviews?

- Data collection through conversation
- Specific form of conversation
- Qualitative - not quantitative

Data from conversation

Hearing - not reading data

- Useful when information is not available in written form.
- Triangulation: Oral sources in addition to written ones - or qualitative interviews in addition to surveys.
- Complex processes require multiple sources.
- But - resource demanding...

Form of conversation:

Distinguished from daily life talks

- **Rubin + Rubin 1995:**
 - Intentional way of learning about others
 - Between strangers as well as acquaintances
 - Guided by the researcher
- **Kvale 1996:**
 - Methodological awareness of question form
 - A focus on the interaction between interviewer and interviewee
 - A critical attention to what is said

Qualitative interviews vs surveys

Qualitative	Surveys
few interviewees	many respondents
unstructured or semi-structured - open answers	structured questions - predefined answers
depth, detail, nuance	overviews, correlations
complex phenomena	generalisations
qualitative analysis	quantitative analysis

Preparing for the interview

- Cultural or topical interviews?
 - Interview guide
- Select interviewees/informants
- Get access/make appointments
- Recording or notes?
- Prepare the interview

The interview

- **Establish the interview situation:**
 - Be on time!
 - Tell about your project and why the interviewee is selected. If recording - ask permission.
 - Tell about how you intend to use the material and agree on procedure for checking of quotations.
- **During the interview:**
 - Use the interview guide flexibly and establish a mode of conversation
 - Do not be afraid to ask naive follow-up question - do not trust that your understanding of a term is the same as the interviewee.
 - Ask for *examples of general statements*.
 - Balance your intention to understand by your intention to be neutral.
 - Finish within the time frame agreed!!

After the interview

- **Transcribe** the interview from notes/tape.
- **Analyze** the interviews:
 - *Let the research questions guide the analysis!!*

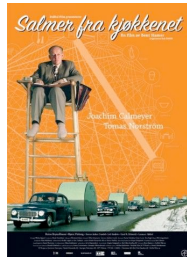
Report the interview

- **Keep your promises!**
- **Quote people respectfully.**
- **Open up your methodology.**
- **Assess** your sources critically.
- **Triangulation** of methods and data!!!

Observation

- **Participatory**
- Structured

- **Open**
- Hidden



Data from observation studies

- **Observation notes**
 - What is observed, what the researcher sees and hears.
 - Incl details and nuances.
- **Analytical notes**
 - Assessments and interpretations.
- **Methodological notes**
 - Assessments and discussions of methods.

Document analysis

4 criteria for assessing documents:

- **Authenticity**
 - Is the document what it appears to be.
- **Reliability**
 - Is the story told reliable - or partisan. First hand or second hand information.
- **Representative?**
 - Is the document representative of the organisation/institution? Where to find government policy?
- **Interpretation**
 - Source critique and hermeneutics.
