

Empowering interview

Listening to people - participatory methods in special needs education. Interview as an example.

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Goals

Qualitative research is an inquiry process, that aims at understanding a phenomenon (e.g. social and health problems) from the point of view of people who are studied.

- ▶ *The researcher attempt to build a complex, holistic picture of the phenomenon and conducts the study in an natural setting. (Flick 2009)*
- ▶ The main goal is to understand how we can support students, teachers (...others who???) in activating their participation...

Research strategies

► **Empirical research:**

causal relations between variables

-Sample from a broad population, testing of variables, measuring the changes quantitatively, testing of hypotheses

=explain the causes between phenomena

For example:

How material reward given by teachers affects childrens` learning motivation?

Data gathering is done:

-by taking a considered or random sample of school schildren of different age

-making two groups (one group is rewarded materially, one group not)

-pre- and after-tests on learning motivation are done

Research strategies, continues

- ▶ **Survey research:** data gathering in a standardized way from a group of people
 - sample from a broader population using structured questionnaires or interviews
 - =describe, compare and explain phenomena

For example:

What is the learning motivation of high school students?

The data gathering is done by

- taking a random sample of all high school students
- sending structured questionnaires to them

Research strategies, continues

- ▶ **Case study:** intensive, detailed data gathering on small sample of people
 - one case, situation, as a target an individual person, group or community
 - mixed methods (observations, interviews, documentary)
 - describe phenomena.

For example:

How are the expectations of women towards studying?

Data gathering:

-choose one community whose women are interviewed, observed and who are asked to keep a diary for a fixed time

How to do a research plan (in a quantitative or qualitative research)?

Define your **research purpose**:

- ▶ a short description of the topic, connections to a theory

For example: if you are researching childrens`motivation you should familiarize yourself with motivation theories

Find **previous researches** on the topic and ask yourself what new information your research will bring to this topic (added value of your research)

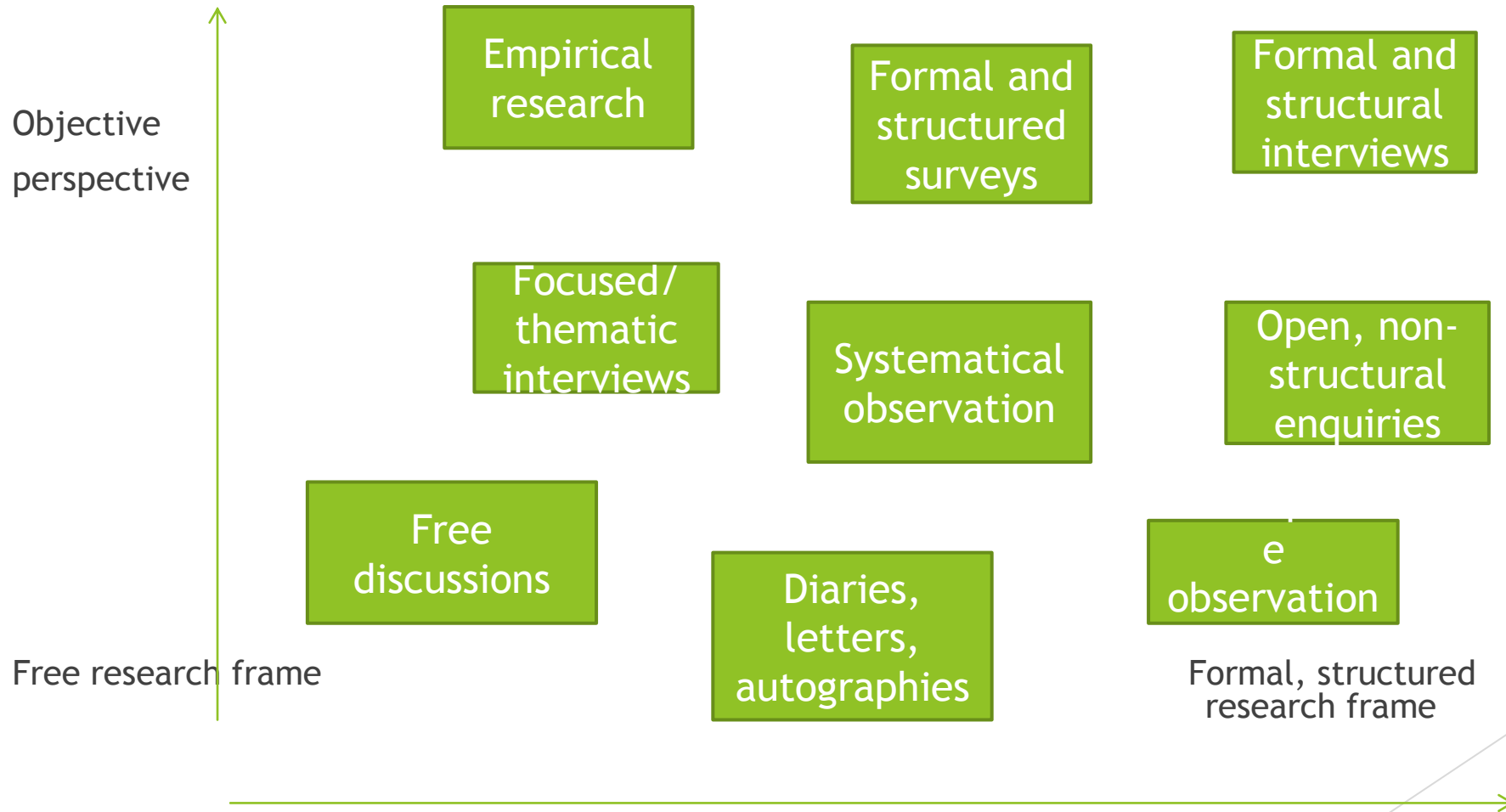
Formulate the **research questions**

Choose **research target group/groups** and the **number** of them

Plan how to gather **data**

Estimate the **resources** needed and Set **timetable**

Different research strategies



In a research (quantitative or qualitative or combined) we have to divide the phenomenal and the methodology level:

Quantitative research: Causative connections are expected



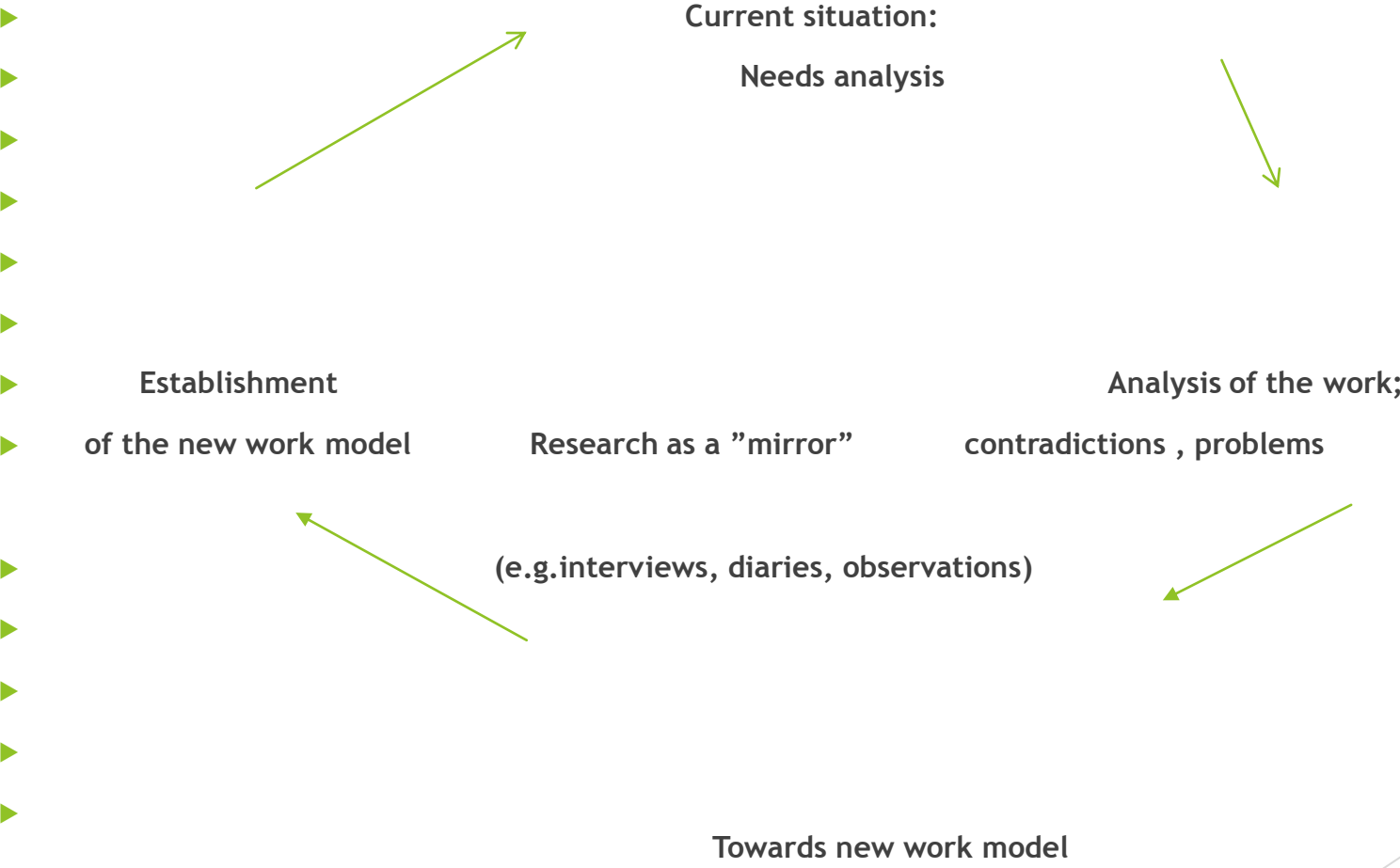
The phenomenal and the methodology level, continues

Qualitative research: No causal connections are expected

Phenomenal level:
Pedagogical methods
Childrens` self image

Methodology level:
Interviews of the parents
and children

Developing work with research



Seven research stages

- ▶ Thematizing
- ▶ Designing
- ▶ Interview situation
- ▶ Transcription
- ▶ Analysis
- ▶ Verification
- ▶ Reporting

Thematizing an interview study

= theoretical **clarification** of the research theme

= formulation of research questions

Why? What? How?

Why: clarifying the **purpose** of the study

What: obtaining **preknowledge** of the subject matter

How: -becoming familiar with different **techniques of interviewing** and analyzing

-deciding which technique to apply for the study

=designing the study

Designing an interview study (How?)

An example of a grade study (Kvale 2008)

- ▶ **Thematizing:** formulation of hypotheses about the influence of grading on pupils on the basis of previous studies
- ▶ **Designing:** Planning the interviews with 30 high school pupils and 6 teachers
- ▶ **Interviewing:** A detailed guide was used for the individual interviews, each of which lasted about 45 minutes and was tape-recorded
- ▶ **Transcribing:** All 36 pupil and teacher interviews were transcribed verbatim, resulting in about 1000 pages of transcripts
- ▶ **Analyzing:** The 30 pupil interviews were categorized with respect to different forms of grading behaviour. The interviews with the pupils and the teachers were also subjected to more extensive qualitative interpretations.
- ▶ **Verifying:** Reliability and validity checks were attempted throughout the project, including interviewer and scorer reliability and validity of interpretations.
- ▶ **Reporting:** The results were reported in a book and in journal articles.

From research questions to interview questions

Research questions	Interview questions
Which form of learning motivation dominates in a high school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you find the subjects you learn important?• Do you find learning interesting in itself?• What is your main purpose in going to high school?
Do the grades promote an external, instrumental motivation at the expense of an intrinsic motivation for learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you experienced a conflict between what you wanted to study and what you had to study to obtain a good grade?
Does learning for grades socialize to working for wages?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you been rewarded with money for getting good grades?• Do you see any connection between money and grades?

From research questions to interview questions/practice

Pair work: Choose a research topic; Formulate 3 research questions and make 3 matching interview questions

Research questions	Interview questions
1.	1. 2. 3.
2.	1. 2. 3.
3.	1. 2. 3.

1. Different surveys

- ▶ Survey per **post**/web page

For example: a posted survey to all social workers of a region

- ▶ Controlled survey

- informed enquiry: the researcher **deliveres** the enquiry (at work places, schools...)

- secured enquiry: the researcher has sent the enquiry and comes to **collect** it

For example: the researcher meets social workers at seminars, conferences and deliveres or collects the enquiries there

Questions of a survey enquiry

1. Open questions, e.g.:

Do you have wishes on the social services?

2. Multiple choice questions, e.g.:

The number of children. Do you have

No children

1 - 3 children

4 -6 children

7 children or more

3. Scale questions, e.g. What do you think of following claims?

Totally agree Agree to some point Neutral Disagree to some point Fully disagree I can't say

1. claim

2. claim

3. claim

2. Different interview types

Individual interview (for example a single mother)

Pair interview (for example both parents together)

Group interview (for example social workers)

Interviews:

- ▶ **Open/not structured:** proceeds with the course of the discussion
 - Difficult, requires training, several interview situations
- ▶ **Focused /Thematic:** between open and closed interview
 - Thematic structure is planned, the course is flexible
- ▶ **Closed:** form interview, structured list of questions, easy to carry out after the questions are ready.

Advantages of an interview

- ▶ Interviews are suitable if you want to emphasize **a research a person as a subject/active partner** in creating meanings for his/her experiences
- ▶ Research **theme is uncommon**, new, not investigated before
- ▶ If you want to **link** the interview to a wider context
- ▶ The research **theme is complex** and it is expected that the interview will produce multi levelled answers
- ▶ If you want to **clarify** answers
- ▶ If you want to **deepen** the topic (e.g. with additional questions)
- ▶ If the **theme is sensitive** or difficult

Disadvantages of an interview

- ▶ The **interviewer** should be experienced and qualified
- ▶ An interview is **time-consuming** (especially the transcribe phase)
- ▶ Risks: upon the interviewer, the interviewees, the interview situation....(**reliability** is doubtful)
- ▶ **Cost-benefit** ratio?
- ▶ There are no ready models for the **analysis**, interpretation and reporting the interview

Interview situation

- ▶ Establish credibility
- ▶ Demonstrate respect for the interviewee
- ▶ Listen actively and reflectively (balance between talking and listening)
- ▶ Think clearly, logically and in the moment (be flexible to change the topic)
- ▶ Remember what has been said
- ▶ Be curious, show interest

Interview situation/practice

Pair work:

Give examples how to act in an interview situation:

- ▶ Establish credibility
- ▶ Demonstrate respect for the interviewee
- ▶ Listen actively and reflectively (balance between talking and listening)
- ▶ Think clearly, logically and in the moment (be flexible to change the topic)
- ▶ Remember what has been said
- ▶ Be curious, show interest

Types of interview questions

- ▶ **Introductory questions:** "Can you tell me about...?"; "Do you remember an occasion when...?"
 - may be spontaneous, rich questions where the interviewees themselves provide what they have experienced within the theme investigated.
- ▶ **Follow-up questions:** The subject`s answers may be extended through the curious and persistent attitude of the researcher (pauses, nods, repeating a significant word..). Notice "red lights" in the answers such as unusual terms, strong intonations.
- ▶ **Probing questions:** "Could you say something more about...?" "Can you give a more detailed description of what happened?" (Pursue the interviewees to express more)
- ▶ **Specifying questions:** Try to get more precise descriptions ("What did you actually do when you felt yourself hurt?")
- ▶ **Direct questions:** The interviewer directly introduces topics and dimensions at the end part of the interview (after the subject has given his/her descriptions)

Types of interview questions, continues

- ▶ **Indirect questions:** Apply questions to something what the interviewee does not say directly ("How do you believe others think about...?")
- ▶ **Structuring questions:** The interviewer is responsible for the course of the interview: break politely long answers that are irrelevant to the theme ("I would now like to introduce another topic"), break the situation when the interviewee is exhausted, distressed.
- ▶ **Silence:** Do not make a cross-examination, allow pauses, allow silence in order to give the subject time to think and formulate his/her answers.
- ▶ **Interpreting questions:** Rephrase an answer ("You mean that...?"), ask for a clarification ("Did I understand it correct that you?").

Types of interview questions/practice

Pair work:

Choose interview themes

Imagine that you are in an interview situation

Practice different types of questions:

Introductory questions

Follow-up questions

Probing questions

Specifying questions

Direct questions

Indirect questions

Structuring questions

Interpreting questions

Interview situation/practice

Discuss in small groups what factors there are to be taken into account when designing an interview!

(e.g. location, environment, with or without family members etc...)

What does silence tell us in an interview situation?

What do you do when facing silence/resistance, refusal...?

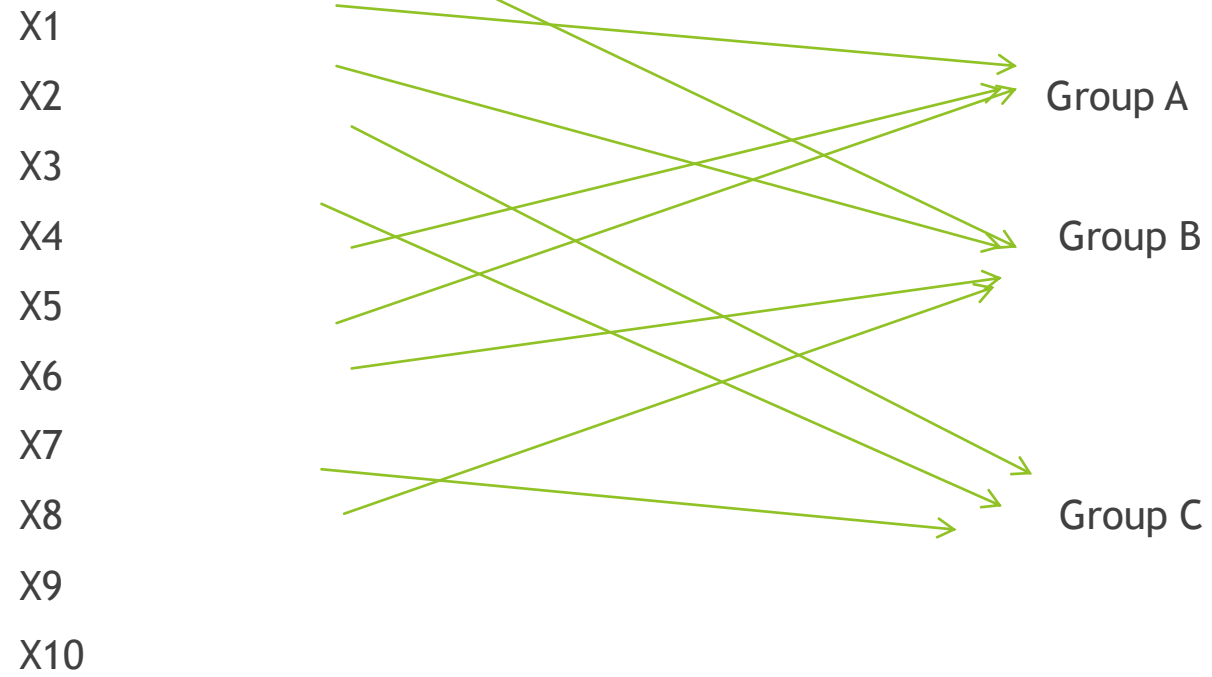
Analysis of an interview

- ▶ Recording the interview
- ▶ Listening the interview carefully
- ▶ Transcribing the interview literally
- ▶ Classification
- ▶ Thematic grouping
- ▶ Typological grouping

The goal of the analysis phase is to systematize the data gathered by an interview, condense the data to a shorter form and find out the implicit (hidden) meanings.

Analysis of an interview, continues

Classification



Thematic grouping

- ▶ Different themes are derived from the transcribed text

Xxxxxxx**XXXX**xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx**XXXX**xx**XXXX**xxxx
Xxxxxxx**XXXX**xxxxxx**XXXX**xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx**XXXX**xx
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX**XXXX**XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX**XXXX**XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX**XXXX**XXXXXXXXXXXX

- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3

Typological grouping

- ▶ X1, X9 Type A
- ▶ X2, X7, X8 Type B
- ▶ X5 Type C
- ▶ X4, X6 Type D

Structuring an Interview Report

- ▶ Introduction - Thematizing clearly
- ▶ Method - Designing, Interviewing, transcribing and Analyzing: described in sufficient detail
- ▶ Results - Analysis and verification - the results are reported in a form which gives a clear and well structured overview of the main findings
- ▶ Discussion - The overall implications of the results are discussed; the relevance of the findings to the original research questions; the theoretical and practical implications of the findings.

Ethical issues at seven research stages (Kvale 2008)

- ▶ **Thematizing:** in addition to the scientific value of the knowledge the study should be targeted to **improve the human situation** investigated
- ▶ **Designing:** ensure **subjects` participation** in the study, secure **confidentiality**, consider the possible consequences for the subjects
- ▶ **Interview situation:** take into account the possible **stress**, changes in self-understanding
- ▶ **Transcription:** the **confidentiality** of the interviewees needs to be protected carefully (whether the transcribed text is loyal to the interviewee`s oral statements)
- ▶ **Analysis:** ensure that the interviewees have the **possibility to a say their opinion** on how their statements are interpreted
- ▶ **Verification:** report knowledge that is as secured and verified as possible
- ▶ **Reporting:** when reporting private interviews in public make sure that the possible consequences have been taken into account.