Academic Skills II – Lecture 2

Qualitative Research

B-BCI 2020

Summersemester 2022

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Agenda

- **What is qualitative research?**
  - Characteristics
  - Research Questions
  - Methods
  - Sampling
  - Data Protection

- **Methods in more detail**
  - Interviews
  - Focus Groups
  - Online Data Collection

13:30 – 14:30
- 15 min Break

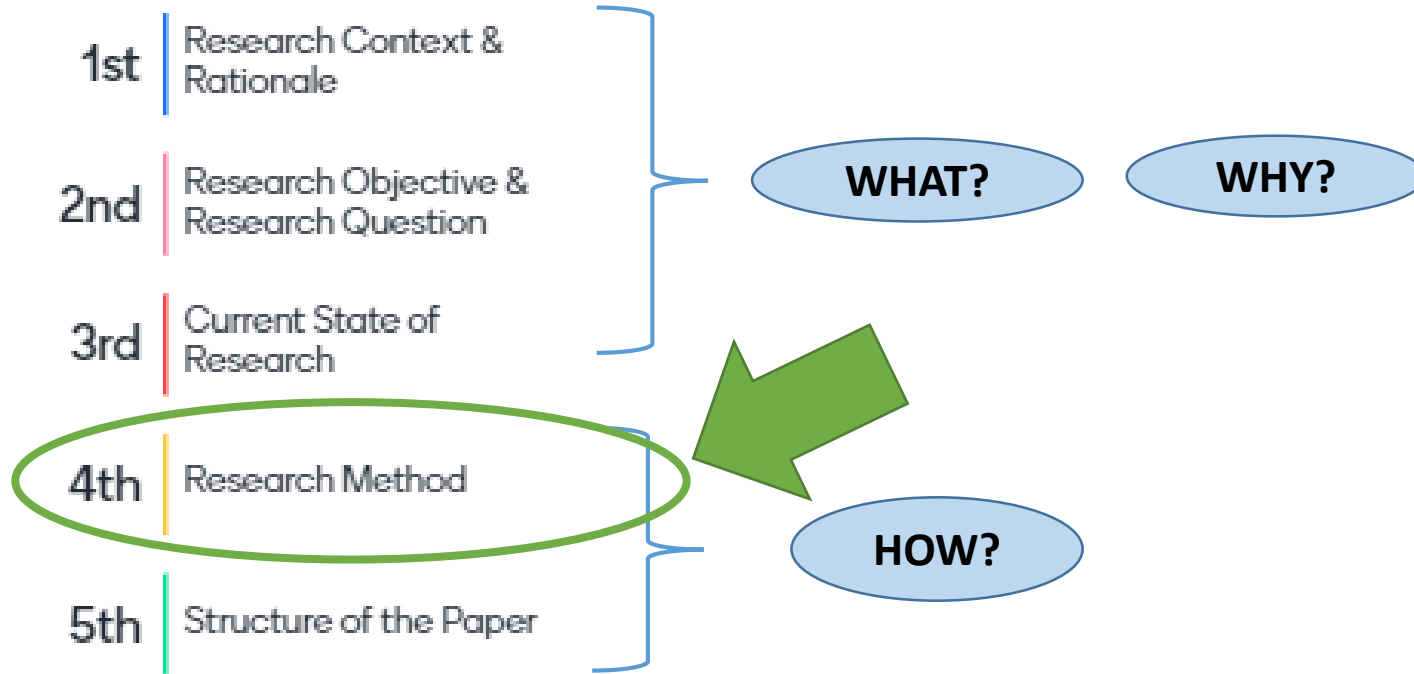14:45-15:45
- 15 min Break

16:00 – 17:00

2. Why do I need a research proposal?

1st	Research Context & Rationale
2nd	Research Objective & Research Question
3rd	Current State of Research
4th	Research Method
5th	Structure of the Paper

WHAT? **WHY?**

HOW?

Recap: STRUCTURE OF AN EMPIRICAL BACHELOR PAPER

- Title page
- Declaration of Integrity
- Abstract
- Preface
- Table of Contents
- Additional directories
- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Method
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- List of References
- Appendix

- Empirical research design
  - Qualitative / quantitative
  - Longitudinal / cross sectional design
  - …
- Data collection approach or data basis
  - How was the data compiled (from which sources) or
  - How was the data collected?
    - (e.g. questionnaire, qualitative interviews …)
  - Sampling

- Data analysis method(s)

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- Report findings

- Focus on answering the research question

- Optionally, tables and graphs for better understanding

Recap: STRUCTURE OF AN EMPIRICAL BACHELOR PAPER

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- Appendix

- Results are „brought to life" only through interpretation and discussion
- Results are interpreted in relation to research question
- Comparing the findings with the findings of others as outlined in the literature section
- Are there contradictions between the different sources or is there a consistent picture?

Recap: What kind of research design/methods are there to answer my research question?

I can formulate a research question aims at a **theoretical/conceptual scientific thesis.**

I can formulate a research question that aims at an **empirical scientific work.**

I can formulate a research question that aims at an **systematic literature review (Academic Skills I).**

Science Lab Day in April

empirical = observed/measured/tested with scientific methods = Academic Skills II

i.e: experiment, questionnaire, interview, group discussion

Literature Review = a comprehensive summary of previous research findings (from journals, books, etc.) on a topic = Academic Skills I

Recap: What kind of research design/methods are there to answer my research question?

Empirical Research Methods

1. Introduction to qualitative research

1. Introduction to qualitative research

– Do you think **you've already done qualitative research**?
Everybody who thinks so: Please raise your hand!!!

– Have you already **asked your parents for an opinion** on why they do certain things the way they do - for example, why they prefer to save some of their money instead of going on a very expensive holiday with you, right?

– Or have you **already discussed a certain topic in your group** of friends - even if it is only whether you prefer to buy Apple or Android products and why?

– Congratulations, **you have already done (more or less) qualitative research** - namely in the form of an interview - the question to your parents - and a focus group - the discussion in your circle of friends!

1. Introduction to qualitative research

Characteristics

1. **Understanding a phenomenon, getting to know opinions and background information primarily through texts and conversations (and also images, observations, ...)**

Understanding WHY AND UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS a certain proportion of parents prefer to save their money or prefer Hofer over Spar (or vice versa). Quantitatively, we would predominantly explore THAT a certain proportion of parents save the money or THAT my circle of friends prefers Apple over Android or vice versa, but would not be able to filter out deeper information about the motivations.

2. There is not only 1 correct answer

It is of course clear that my parents, for example, may have a different reason for saving their money than your parents. Moreover, I might interpret your parents' answers differently than you would. So you would try to compare my parent's answers with those of your parents and we would probably discuss our interpretation together.

3. Flexible and needs time

Your parents might bring up other reasons you haven't thought about before. So you might decide to ask them about those in more detail during your conversation.

4. Smaller number of participants

Now, of course, it is clear that you would most likely only interview your parents and, for instance, possibly the parents of your best friends or your grandparents and aunts/uncles on the topic but not ALL the parents in your social environment. Rather, you would choose a cross-section of similar or different parents

Characteristics

Summary

– Qualitative research is about

  – finding out the **respondents' own motives and backgrounds** without giving them predefined answers like in a questionnaire → questions can be given but no answers
  – getting a **deeper understanding of phenomena**
  – "revealing" the mess and confusion of opinions of different people
  – finding out things, approaches and ideas that I as a researcher might not have thought of
  – getting an **idea of unexplored phenomena**

> → *Researching with words, documents, videos/pictures*

2. What kind of questions can I answer with a qualitative research design?

What do you think?

2. What kind of questions can I answer with a qualitative research design?
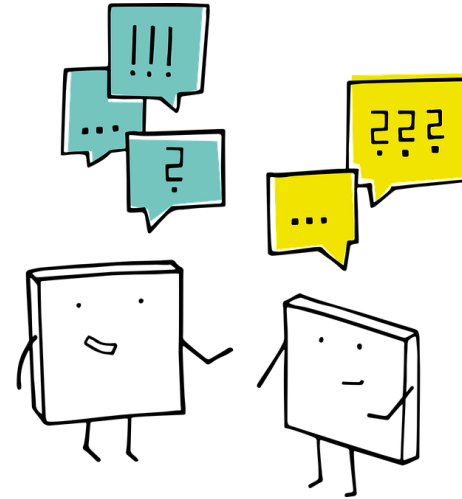
Questions about…

- Experiences
- Understandings & perception
- Practices
- Influencing factors
- Representation
- Construction
- Language practice
- How is/do/…
- What barriers / motives/ influences/factors….

(Braun & Clarke 2013, 45 ff.; 51-52)

2. What kind of questions can I answer with a qualitative research design?

Table 3.1 Design by type of research question

Type of research question with real life examples	Suitable types of data	Suitable size of sample
Experience Such as: women's experience of polycystic ovarian syndrome (Kitzinger & Willmott, 2002); the experiences and needs of men affected by infertility (Malik & Coulson, 2008)	Interviews (both face-to-face and virtual) are ideal; researcher-directed diaries, qualitative surveys and some secondary data sources (e.g. bulletin boards, personal blogs) are also good; focus groups may be appropriate for some research questions	Small/moderate (large enough to convincingly demonstrate patterns across a date set; small enough to retain a focus on the experiences of individual participants)
Understandings and perceptions Such as: perceptions of the impact of air travel on climate change (Becken, 2007); expert professionals' views of risk in relation to sexual coercion for men who have sex with men (Braun, et al., 2009)	Focus groups, qualitative surveys, story completion tasks, vignettes and some secondary data sources (e.g. bulletin boards, personal blogs), are ideal; interviews are good when the participant has a personal stake in the topic (e.g. black people's views on inter-racial adoption [NB most inter-racial adoptions involve white people adopting non-white children]).	Moderate/large (large enough to capture a range of perspectives; not so large that you are drowning in data)
Practices/accounts of practice Such as: the appearance and clothing practices of non-heterosexuals (Clarke & Turner, 2007); the gendered dynamics of sleep (Hislop & Arber, 2003)	Interviews, focus groups, qualitative surveys, researcher-directed diaries, some secondary data sources (e.g. bulletin boards, personal blogs)	Moderate/large (large enough to capture a range of accounts; not so large that you are drowning in data)

(Continued)

(Braun & Clarke 2013, 45)

2. What kind of questions can I answer with a qualitative research design?

Table 3.1 (Continued)

Type of research question with real life examples	Suitable types of data	Suitable size of sample
Influencing factors Such as: identifying the factors that influence people's decisions to continue regular genetic screening (Michie, 1987); factors that influence parents' food purchasing behaviours (Maubach, Hoek, & McCreanor, 2009)	Interviews, focus groups, qualitative surveys, researcher-directed diaries, some secondary data sources	Moderate/large (enough to identify relevant influencing factors; not so large that you are drowning in data)
Representation Such as: representations of male and female sexuality in women's magazines (Farvid & Braun, 2006); representations of masculinity and the 'metrosexual man' in men's magazines (Hall & Gough, 2011)	Secondary sources	Small/moderate
Construction Such as: young people's constructions of eating disorders in a story completion task (Walsh & Malson, 2010); constructions of 'New Zealanders' in accounts of sexual health and risk (Braun, 2008)	Secondary sources, story completion tasks, vignettes, interviews, focus groups, qualitative surveys, researcher-directed diaries	Small/moderate

(Braun & Clarke 2013, 46)

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2. What kind of questions can I answer with a qualitative research design?

Type of research question with real life examples	Suitable types of data	Suitable size of sample
Language practice Such as: how people construct, manage and undermine 'healthy eating' talk in dinnertime conversations (Wiggins, 2004); how veganism is constructed as 'normal' in online discussions (Sneijder & te Molder, 2009)	Naturalistic data are ideal – both mundane (e.g. audio recordings of someone's home telephone conversations) and institutional (e.g. audio or video recordings of counselling sessions); some secondary data sources (e.g. broadcast media); interviews and focus groups also used	Small/moderate

(Braun & Clarke 2013, 47)

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2. What kind of questions can I answer with a qualitative research design?

Examples

– How do unskilled industrial workers perceive digitalisation/industry 4.0?
– What do students of economics understand by meaningful work?
– How do marketing specialists perceive flexible working time models?
– What motivates students to use gaming apps?
– What are the underlying motives of investors to invest in green bonds?

Not suitable are:

– Yes/no Questions
– Questions that aim at quantification
– Questions that aim to investigate generally applicable laws
– Questions that are so broad that they cannot be answered within the framework of the seminar
– Questions that implicitly raise a multitude of further questions and are thus not well delimited
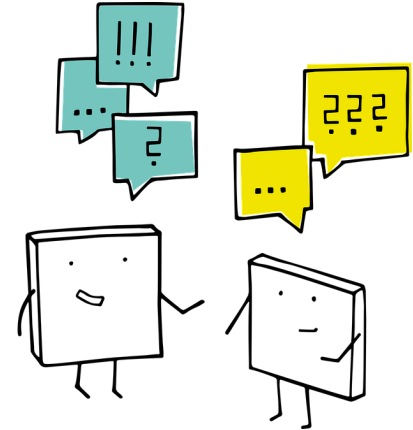
3. What methods do exists when researching qualitatively?

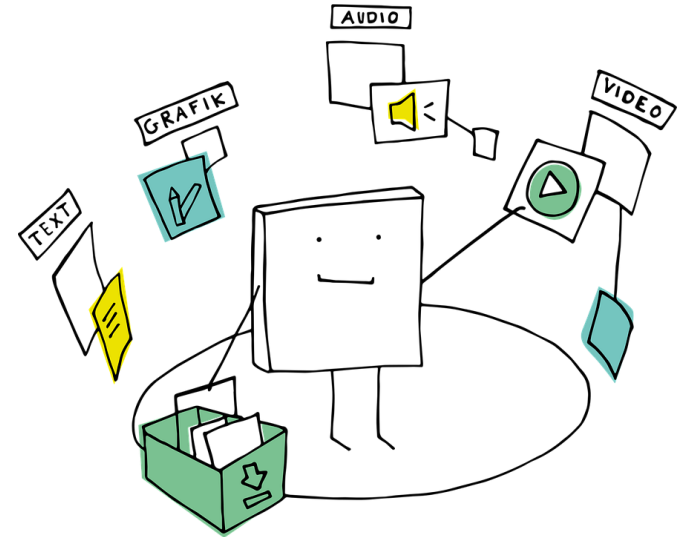**Discuss with your neighbour**

What qualitative research methods can you think of
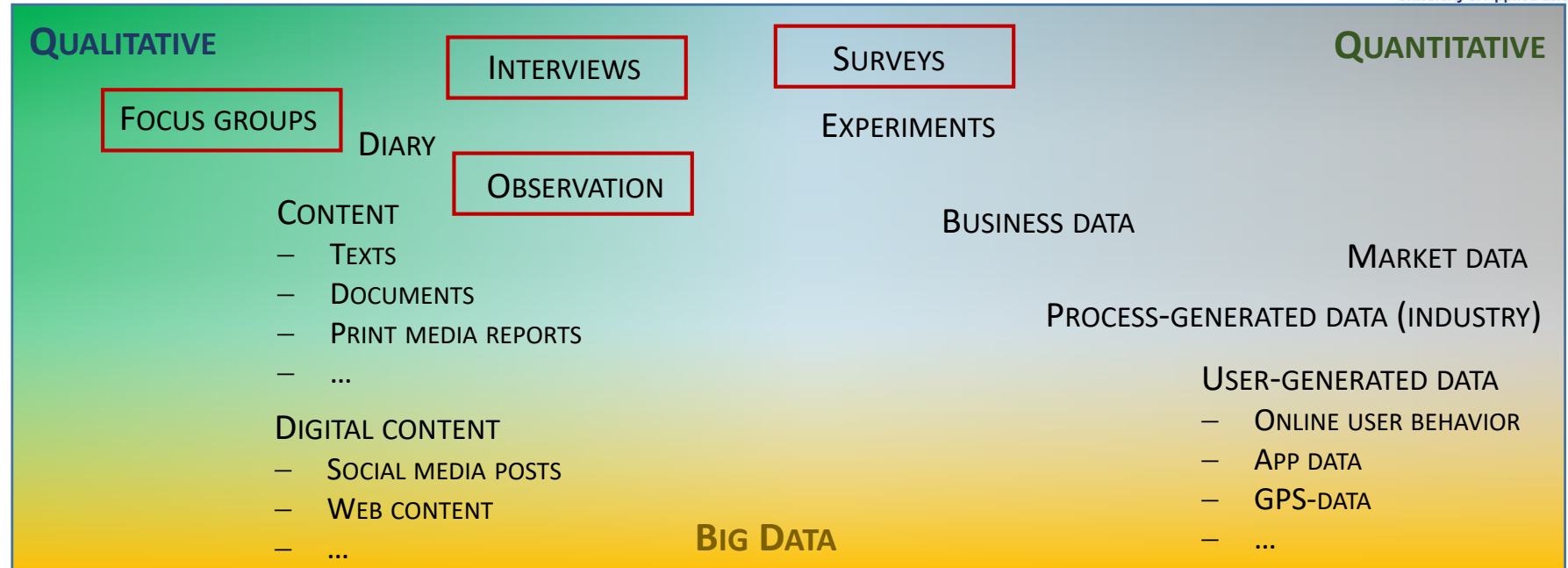& why do you think it counts to a qualitative method?

5 min.
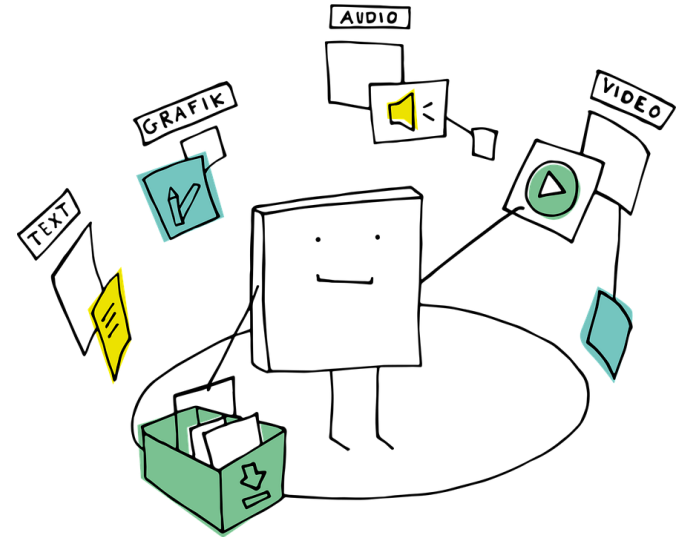
3. What methods do exists when researching qualitatively?

- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Observation
- Document Analysis
- Analysis of marketing material, videos, pictures, texts…
- Diary Study
- Apparative Methods: Usability Tests, Eye Tracking, …
- …..

Methods of Data Collection (Selection)

QUALITATIVE   **QUANTITATIVE**

INTERVIEWS

SURVEYS

FOCUS GROUPS

EXPERIMENTS

DIARY

OBSERVATION

BUSINESS DATA

CONTENT
- TEXTS
- DOCUMENTS
- PRINT MEDIA REPORTS
- …

DIGITAL CONTENT
- SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS
- WEB CONTENT
- …

MARKET DATA

PROCESS-GENERATED DATA (INDUSTRY)

USER-GENERATED DATA
- ONLINE USER BEHAVIOR
- APP DATA
- GPS-DATA
- …

BIG DATA

4. How do I define my sampling method?

4. How do I define my sampling method?

Discuss with your neighbour

You decide to conduct a study which seeks to understand young people's experiences of starting „dating". Who would you choose as participants and why? How would you make sure that the views beyond those of the „usual suspects" were (also included) in the study? (Braun and Clarke 2013, 73)

5 min.

4. How do I define my sampling method?

Step 1: Decide & define what you want to find out

- Do you want to analyse the use of language? Identify the main arguments used in advertising texts? The motives of a group of people to do something? Someone's attitude towards something? Or find out something completely different? Your research question, which you have already formulated, should guide you along this path.

Step 2: Decide & define what/who/how many xxx you need to answer your research question

- A specific group of people? Specific documents? Certain situations?

Step 3: Decide & define where to collect/recruit the data/participants from

- →recruitment plan / search strategy

4. How do I define my sampling method?

–   No general rules on how many participants/objects/documents/… must be recruited/collected (Braun and Clarke 2013, 55).

„The sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of inquiry, what´s at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources" (Patton 2002, 244)

4. How do I define my sampling method?

- **Targeted sampling:** People are selected specifically according to certain criteria.
- **Random/Convenience sampling:** All persons who are accessible to the researchers; e.g. all persons who respond to a notice; popular target group: other students.
- **Snowball sampling:** invitation is sent to e.g. friends/acquaintances/colleagues with the request to forward it to their circle of acquaintances; networking
- **Sampling according to a qualitative sampling plan/Stratification:** The sample is structured according to certain characteristics, e.g. age groups and gender → to make sure that the "range and diversity of different groups in a population are included" (Braun and Clare 2013, 57)
- **Theoretical sampling:** In the research process, people are selected continuously so that as much additional information as possible is gathered. The sampling process only ends when theoretical saturation is reached (maximum gain in knowledge) **= Grounded Theory**

(Braun und Clarke 2013, 57; Döring und Bortz 2016, 302-305)

4. How do I define my sampling method?

„When qualitative researchers decide to seek out people because of their age or sex or race, it is because they consider them to be good sources of information that will advance them toward an analytical goal and not because they wish to generalize to other persons of similar age, sex, or race. That is, a demographic variable, such as sex, becomes an analytic variable; persons of one or the other sex are selected for a study because, by virtue of their sex, they can provide certain kinds of information" (Sandelowski 1995, 180).

4. How do I define my sampling method?

- **Example:** interviews about how students perceive distance learning

- **Sampling according to a qualitative sampling plan/Stratification:**

  - 4 students studying at the FHWN
  - At least one student / faculty
  - 2 Masters and 2 Bachelor students
  - Age range between (i.e.) 20 and 25
  - 2 female and 2 male

- **Example:** Observation of the interplay of team members when having to make an investment decision

- **Targeted Sampling:**

  - Company with at least xxx employees
  - Specific industry
  - Meeting with managers & employees
  - …..

4. How do I define my sampling method?

— **Example:** analysis of the various facettes discussed in local Austrian Newspapers about the current Russia/Ukraine war

— **Sampling according to a qualitative sampling plan/Stratification:**

- Choice of the Newspaper
- Size? Reach?
- Min. length of the article?
- ….

4. How do I define my sampling method?

Special type: Expert interviews

Discuss with your neighbour

Image you have to conduct an interview about Digitalization in Sales/Finance/HR-Processes with experts. Who would you choose as participants & why?

Present your results in class!

5 min.

4. How do I define my sampling method?

Special type: Expert interviews

- When you decide to conduct expert interviews: ALWAYS define why an expert really is an expert! i.e. because of his/her
  - *Professional experience*
  - *Previous studies*
  - *Publications*
  - ....

  btw…this is not only relevant for expert interviews but for your sample in general: always decide and properly argue why your participants are suitable for your research!

Data Protection

Important: Declaration of consent

- Through conducting an interview/focus group/observation/…., you collect qualitative DATA.
- These data underly the legal **data protection regulations** and guidelines.
- You **are only allowed** to record, process, report and store the data if you **receive written consent by the interviewee.**
- Each interviewee is supposed to sign a „**declaration of consent**", else you cannot use the data!
- Prepare the „declaration of consent" form. Adapt it to your research project. Print the required number of copies.
- You have to **handle the data** as specified in this declaration (e.g. anonymous data processing, delete the data as stated, etc.)

Declaration of Consent

Available on Edunet

Study program: XX
Specialisation: XX

Researcher(s): XX
University of Applied Sciences Wiener Neustadt
ADDRESS

Declaration of Consent
for Audio Recording and Data Processing in the Course of Qualitative Empirical Studies

Study Title:

I (first and last name in capitals) _____

have been informed that the interview/focus group will be audio-recorded. This audio recording will be transcribed by the researcher(s) and analysed in a confidential manner in the course of the empirical study at hand.

I understand that my name will not be associated with the research findings and that only the researcher(s) will know my identity as participant. The audio files and transcripts of the interview/focus groups will be anonymised and assigned an ID-number. The list which connects my name with the ID-number will only be accessible to the researcher(s) and will be deleted after the project is completed.

The researcher(s) will temporarily store the original audio file. I have been informed that I can request the audio file of my interview/focus group be deleted. After the study is completed, the audio files will be deleted and only the written transcript will be archived.

FACHHOCHSCHULE
WIENER NEUSTADT
Austrian Network for Higher Education

University of Applied Sciences

Declaration of Consent

Available on Edunet

I consent to the described handling of the audio recording.

O   YES   O   NO

I have received a copy of this declaration of consent.

O   YES   O   NO

_____   _____

Place, date & signature of the interviewee   Place, date & signature of the interviewer

I can contact the following person(s) with any questions or concerns:

Interviewer/Researcher(s):

XName and contact detailsX

15 Min Break

5. Practical Insight: How To

- Interviews

- Focus Groups

- Online Methods
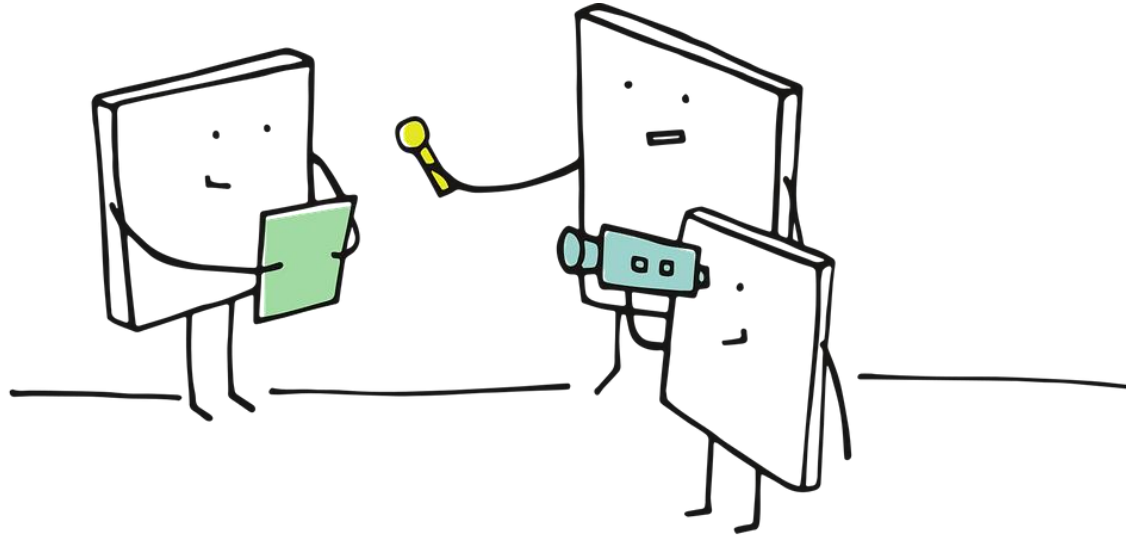
5. Practical Insight: How To Interviews

- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Online Methods

5.1. Interviews

A very classical form of qualitative research

Let's say we want to explore how Bachelor students of the FHWN feel about distance learning and decide to conduct interviews!

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

Research question

Which research questions are adequate to be investigated using interviews?

Interviews are normally used when:

- the purpose of research includes an **exploratory element**
- there is a need **to understand the attitudes, opinions** of participants or their **reasons** for behaving in a certain way

- Example: *How do firs semester Bachelor Students perceive distance learning?* (© Melanie Hense).
-

5.1. Interviews

Research Questions: Adequate for Interviews?

– How have global temperatures developed over the past 50 years?

– Is there a gender difference regarding attitude towards waste reduction?

– What are the motives and strategies of investors who make particularly risky investments?

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

Research question
Planning the interview

How would you proceed?

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

Sampling: Decide who you want to interview

- Target group
  - Basically anybody who is relevant for my research
    - Experts, Customers, Patients, Students, Employees

- Sampling strategy
- Criteria for selecting interview partners

- Example: Students from the FHWN who just started their Bachelor studies → Age? Faculty? Programme? (© Melanie Hense).

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

Finding interviewees: first contact

- Subjects and aim of the interview
- Providing relevant information may foster trust and credibility
- Reasons for selecting interviewee
- Scheduling & location (quiet & convenient for interviewee and interviewer)

Example: Either I already know students or I decide to aks lecturers if they knew possible participants or I decide to send out a mail and ask if someone fitting to my criteria would be willing to participate (© Melanie Hense).

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

Types of Interviews

- **Highly-structured:** detailed interview schedule; questions in predefined order, some predefined answer categories

- **Semi-structured:** uses a pre-determined, consistent set of questions but allows for follow-up questions and variation in question wording and order (*interview guidelines*)

- **Unstructured:** no interview guidelines

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

Research question

Planning the interview

Interview preparation

Conducting interviews

Documenting

Analysis

What to Prepare

Interview guidelines → Pre-test → Consent declaration → Recording

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

| Research question |
| Planning the interview |
| Interview preparation |
| Conducting interviews |
| Documenting |
| Analysis |

Interview guidelines → Pre-test → Consent declaration → Recording
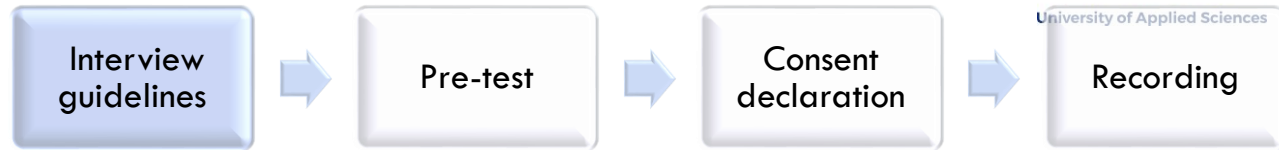
EXERCISE 10 MINUTES

Read the exemplary interview guidelines from the research project NERD (edunet).

Which rules for drafting interview guidelines can you derive?

49

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process
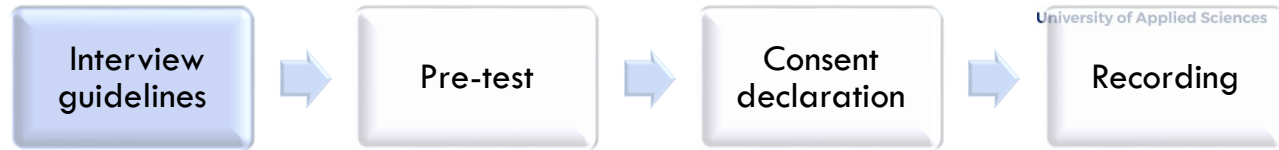
| Research question |
| Planning the interview |
| **Interview preparation** |
| Conducting interviews |
| Documenting |
| Analysis |

| Interview guidelines | → | Pre-test | → | Consent declaration | → | Recording |

Interview Guidelines …

– are a list of questions that are addressed
– **helps the interviewer** remember the points to cover

– includes (i) **opening questions** ("ice-breaker" questions), (ii) **questions around key topics,** (iii) **closing questions**

5.1. Interviews

Interview guidelines → Pre-test → Consent declaration → Recording

Introduction

Main Topics

Questions

Sub-Questions

Ending

+
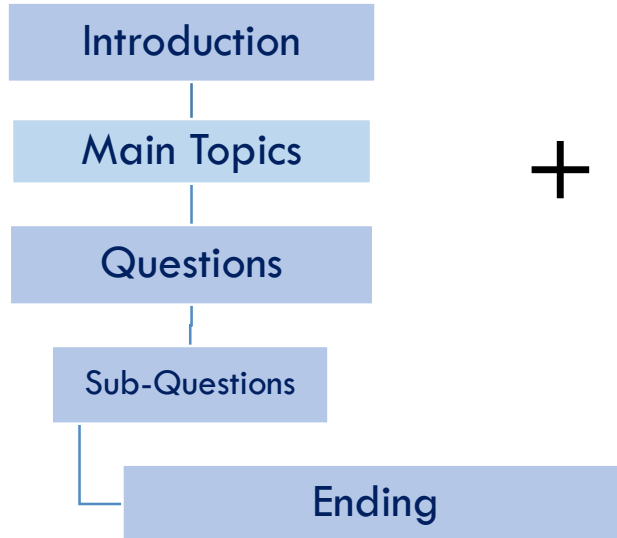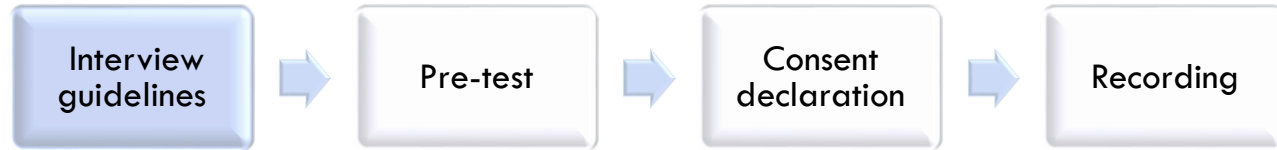
- Personal notes
- Reminder for signing the declaration of consent
- Etc.

5.1. Interviews

Interview guidelines → Pre-test → Consent declaration → Recording

Introduction

Main Topics

Questions

Sub-Questions

Ending
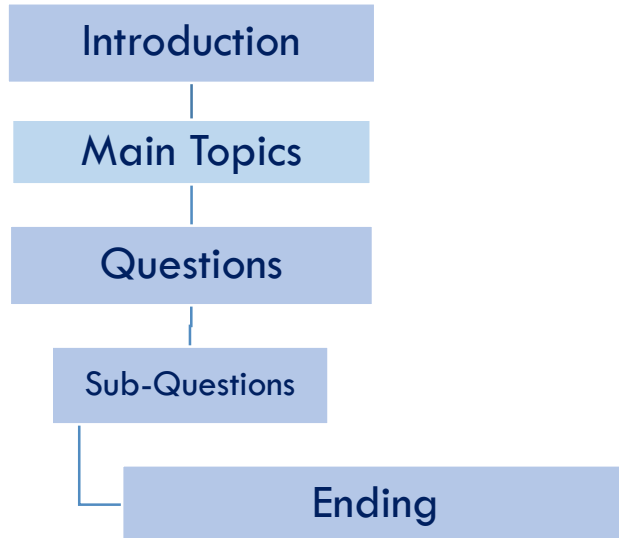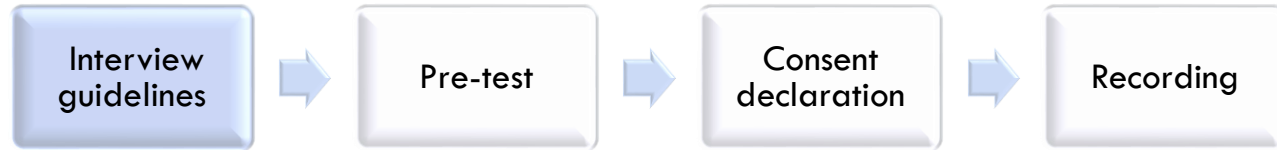
- Example:
  - *You could ask about their perception of*
    - *ZAB*
    - *ZUB*
    - *Support they get*
    - *The organisation of the lectures*
    - *Motivation to study*
    - *etc.*

© Melanie Hense

5.1. Interviews

Interview guidelines	→	Pre-test	→	Consent declaration	→	Recording

– Step 1: **Collect the various topics** that you want to cover during your interview → i.e. those topics needed to answer your research question

– Step 2: **Arrange these** topics in a meaningful manner

– Step 3: **Formulate Questions** + Subquestions

  – *„How do you experience the current Corona-situation with regard to you work-life?*

    – *What has become easer/harder/better/worse? What are the biggest changes?"*

– Step 4: **Write memos** so you do not forget which aspects you want to cover with these questions

– Step 5: Prepare an **open conversation end** / leave room for comments

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5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

| Research question |
| Planning the interview |
| **Interview preparation** |
| Conducting interviews |
| Documenting |
| Analysis |

```
Interview guidelines  →  Pre-test  →  Consent declaration  →  Recording
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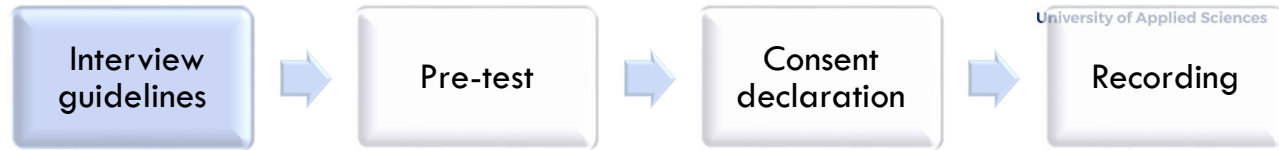
Interview Questions …

- should be **clear and easy** to understand
- promote **open-ended answers**
- **should not be leading** (*"Don´t you admire your teacher for her excellent track record?"*)
- if **abstract concepts** ("innovation", "sustainability") can not be avoided, **ask respondents to clarify their understanding** about concept

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

| Research question |
| Planning the interview |
| **Interview preparation** |
| Conducting interviews |
| Documenting |
| Analysis |

| Interview guidelines | → | Pre-test | → | Consent declaration | → | Recording |

- Get the **respondents involved** in the interview as soon as possible.
- Before asking about controversial matters, **first ask about some facts.**
- Ask **questions about the present before questions about the past or future.**
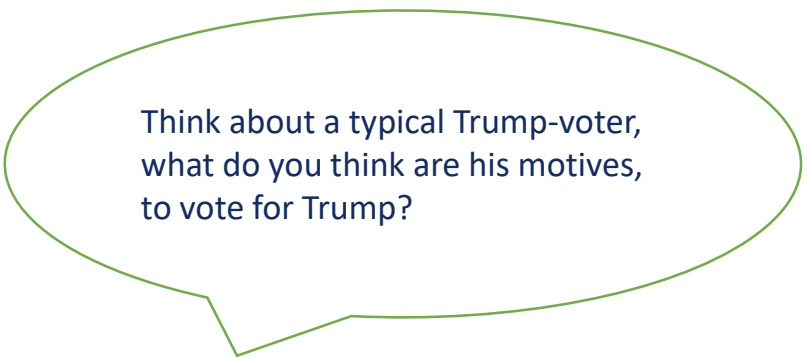
Activity Oriented Questions – Projective Techniques

Definition

= indirect form of **questioning** that encourages respondents **to project their underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes, or feeling regarding the issue of concern**

Objectives
- receiving answers even if the **respondent is unable or unwilling** to answer a question directly
- helping respondents **to describe vague and ambiguous stimulus situations**
- revealing **subconscious thoughts and reducing socially desirable answers**

Think about a typical Trump-voter, what do you think are his motives, to vote for Trump?

Activity Oriented Questions – Projective Techniques

- Word Association / Picture Assocation

- Sentence Completion / Story Completion / Cartoons

- Third-Person Technique

- Picture Association

- Personification

- Party-game / Role-plays

Projective Techniques

Commonly Used Projective Techniques

Word association:

„What comes to your mind when you think of the brand Apple?"

Sentence completion or story completion:

A person who wears a Tommy Hilfiger shirts is _____ .

As compared to Polo, Gant, and Eddie Bauer, Tommy Hilfiger shirts are _____ .

Commonly Used Projective Techniques

Third-person technique: the respondent is asked to relate beliefs and attitudes of a third person to the situation

Thinking about someone who does not separate waste? What do you think are his/her reasons?

Commonly Used Projective Techniques

Personification

- If the brand Gucci was a **human,** what kind of person would it be?
  - <u>Ask further:</u> Man or woman? Which age? Which kind of education? Which interests?

- If the brand Porsche was an **animal,** which one would it be?
  - <u>Ask further:</u> Which breed? How would it look like? Character?

- If the brand Milka and Lindt were **at a party,** what would happen?
  - <u>Ask further:</u> Who is talking to whom? Who drinks what?

Projective Techniques

Commonly used projective techniques

Picture association or using pictures as trigger

Which picture (if any) makes you feel that you want to change something about your environmental behavior?

— In which respect?

— Which feelings come up when you see this picture?

— Which associations in terms of environmental behavior come to your mind, when seeing this picture?

Keep copyright in mind (pixabay)!

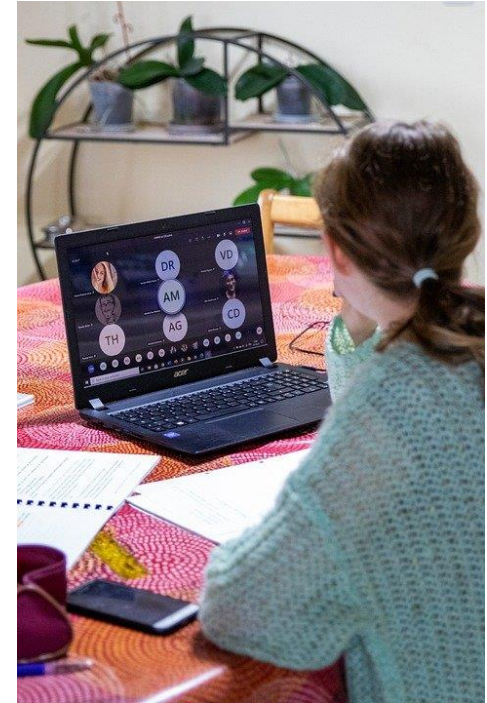## Commonly used projective techniques

Picture association or using pictures as trigger.

Example: How do you feel when you see these pictures? Is this something you can identify with? Which picture do you identify yourself the most with?

© Melanie Hense
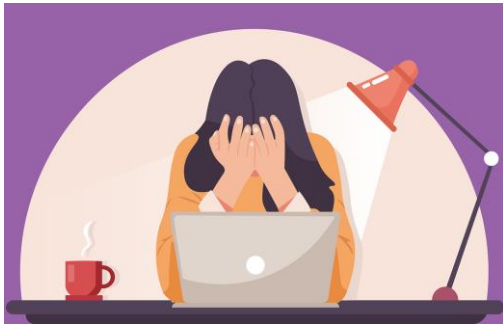
Mapping

- **Which companies/brands do you know when thinking of Sports Retailer?** (Please write on cards)
- **Please group these companies/brands in how many classes you like, with the condition that the grouping is done based on certain criteria that you believe are common to each class.**

After the mapping (Note: take photo of mapping):
- Why did you group them like this, based on what criteria?
- How would you describe each class? Which are the common characteristics for each of these classes?
- Is there a leader of each category? Why?
- What differentiates it from the other "colleagues" of its class?

Image we would visit the new **UBER** head office, reflecting the meaning/look & feel of the company:

- How would it look? (think about: interior design / atmospheric picture / etc.)
- Where can we find it? (i.e. which city /surroundings / etc.)
- What are the employees like? (e.g. age / sex / clothing style / etc.)

Other Projective Techniques

- Free Listings & Ranking

- Pile Sorting

- Magic Tools & Fantasy

- etc.

5.1. Interviews

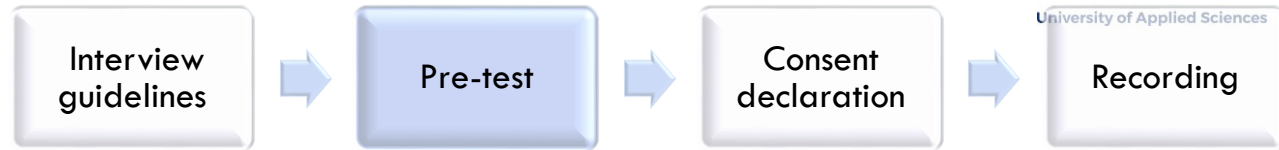Interview guidelines → Pre-test → Consent declaration → Recording

Do's

- **Open questions**: Describe, In what way did you, How did it come about that...?
- Make sure to **motivate the other person to tell the story.**
- Choose **pleasant, conversation-promoting questions as introductory questions** → give the feeling that I am interested in what the interviewee has to say
- Use **sensitive questions skillfully** (& sparingly)→ If, then only later after a basis of trust has been built up.
- Do not forget **explanations/intros** for questions that require explanation → Explanations must be **easy to understand, short & concise**

Dont's

- **No yes/no questions** or **questions that can be answered with a single word** → Distract results, as they stem from the researcher's own imagination & provide little input
- Do not use sensitive questions directly at the beginning / end
- Do **not use suggestive explanations** → try to not push the interviewee in a certain direction
- **Avoid lengthy/complex explanations**: Don't forget that the interviewee doesn't necessarily have the same technical jargon as you do!

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

Interview guidelines → Pre-test → Consent declaration → Recording

Pre-test interviews (e.g. with peers, friends, etc.) in order to see

- whether the questions are understood
- what responses you get
- whether the interviewee is encouraged to tell their story
- whether the structure of your guide is clear
- whether there are any topics that you forgot to include in the guide
- how long it takes to conduct the interview

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The Research Process

| Research question |
| Planning the interview |
| **Interview preparation** |
| Conducting interviews |
| Documenting |
| Analysis |

| Interview guidelines | → | Pre-test | → | Consent declaration | → | Recording |

- Each interviewee is supposed to sign a „**declaration of consent**", else you cannot use the data!
- Prepare the „declaration of consent" form. Adapt it to your research project. Print the required number of copies.
- You have to **handle the data** as specified in this declaration (e.g. anonymous data processing, delete the data as stated, etc.)

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

Research question

Planning the interview

Interview preparation

Conducting interviews

Documenting

Analysis

Interview guidelines → Pre-test → Consent declaration → Recording

- Prepare a device for recording the interview
- Test functionality
- Ensure it is charged/bring batteries
- Test quality of recording
- Get acquainted with handling the device

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

Initiating the Conversation

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- **Conducting interviews**
- Documenting
- Analysis

- — explain your research and its **purpose**
- — indicate how long the interview usually takes
- — allow interviewee to clarify any doubts about the interview
- — ask permission for recording the interview
- — explain handling of recorded data ➡ consent declaration form

Introduction, e.g.: "Thank you very much for taking the time for this interview. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss topic X with you. It is important that there are no right and wrong answers in this conversation. Please tell me honestly how you feel about issue X. Every opinion is relevant to the project." Thematic introduction ("Do you have any questions about the process or for me personally before we start?").

Recording OK, e.g.: "Before we start, I would like to ask you for permission to record this interview. In order for me to be able to include the essential statements on topic X unaltered in the analysis, it is important for me to make a transcript of what was said. Even if I write something about it afterwards, it will not be possible to draw conclusions about you or other specific persons. So all statements will of course be anonymised and the recording will not be passed on to third parties. Is that okay with you?"

If there are objections, then, for example: "I understand your concerns. If you would like I can send you the transcript before my analysis so that you can be sure that all the information is correctly anonymised and no confidential information is included. Is this option okay with you?

© Julia Stranzl

© Karin Dobernig & Bostjan Zrim

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

- occasionally verify the tape recorder is working
- ask one question at a time
- encourage responses
- provide transition between major topics
- don't lose control of the interview

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

Bias Issues

Interviewer Bias
- comments, tone or non-verbal behavior of interviewer creates bias in the way that interviewee responds to questions

Response Bias
- may be caused by perceptions about interviewer (*interviewer bias*)
- may result from nature of individuals who agree to be interviewed

Hint: Not always bad! Sometimes being involved results in rich data.

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

Techniques:

- **Active listening:** Concentrating on what the other person is saying, not commenting, short verbal and non-verbal signs

- **Mirroring:** The message heard is repeated and followed by the question "did you understand correctly?

- **Reframing:** New construction of what is said, for the purpose of changing the perspective in order to emphasise positive aspects.

- **Defusing:** Taking emotions seriously, responding to them - mainly serves to relieve the situation

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

Closing the Interview

- „Before closing the interview, is there anything else you would like to add to this topic that we haven't covered and that seems relevant to you?"
- Give room for questions
- „Thank you for your time, this was a valuable input …"

5.1. Interviews

„A qualitative interviewer is not a robot, precisely programmed to conduct every interview according to a set of inviolate rules. Rather, a qualitative interviewer is a **human being**, with a distinctive **personal style**, who uses their **social skills**, and **flexibly daws on** (and, in some cases, disregards) **guidance on good interview practice** (…)"

(Braun & Clarke 2013, 80)

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis
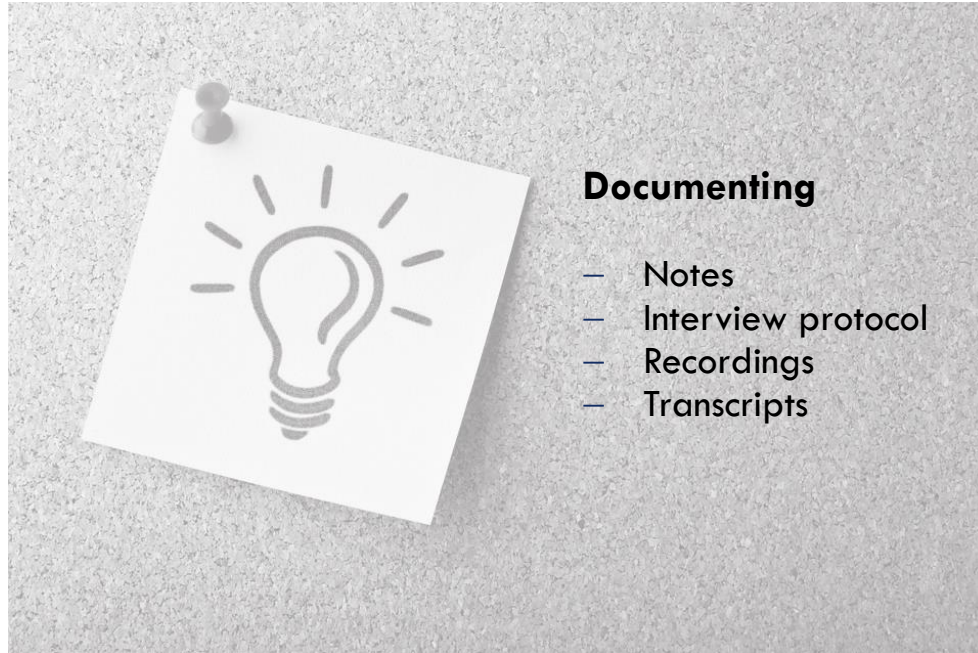
Documenting

− Notes
− Interview protocol
− Recordings
− Transcripts

5.1. Interviews

The Research Process

- Research question
- Planning the interview
- Interview preparation
- Conducting interviews
- Documenting
- Analysis

Content analysis methods are applied to analyse transcripts

- Building categories
- Assigning statements to categories
- Summarizing content

→ See lecture 3

Purpose

- Systematic approach,
- Reduce subjective influence of researcher on results

Reporting Results

- Summary of findings
- Include key quotes from interviews

5. Practical Insight: How To Focus Groups

KARIN DOBERNIG AND TATJANA KWASNY
ADAPTED BY KARIN WEGENSTEIN, USED BY MELANIE HENSE

- Interviews

- Focus Groups

- Online Methods

15 Min Break

5.2. Focus Groups

Characteristics

- **= a group that is being moderated discusses something**

- assumes that an individual's attitudes and beliefs are socially constructed

- people often listen to others' opinions and understandings in forming their own

- questions in a focus-group setting are often deceptively simple – the challenge is to promote the participants' expression of their views through the creation of a supportive environment

BRAND CAMP   by Tom Fishburne

OH ALL-KNOWING FOCUS GROUP, TELL ME YOUR UNMET CONSUMER NEEDS, SO THAT WE CAN CREATE DISRUPTIVE INNOVATIONS FOR YOU.

MORE PROMOTIONS

YEAH, MAKE EVERYTHING CHEAPER

©2010   TOMFISHBURNE.COM

5.2. Focus Groups

Application

– understand perceptions, preferences and behaviour of a homogeneous or heterogeneous group of people

– obtain impressions of new concepts/innovations

– generate new ideas

– develop creative concepts and copy material

– obtain preliminary reaction to specific ideas

– etc.

5.2. Focus Groups

How To: Planning process = rather similar to interviews BUT:

- typically composed of 6 to 10 people who share certain characteristics relevant to the study's questions

    - Heterogeneous vs. Homogeneous sample? People who are familiar vs. unfamiliar with one another?

- conducted in a relaxed, informal atmosphere

- typical duration: 1-3 hours

- tend to be audio- and/or video-recorded

- moderator needs observational, interpersonal and communication skills

- may be conducted several times with different individuals so researchers can identify trends in the perceptions and opinions expressed

- may also be conducted online ("virtual" focus group), not limited by time or location, such that many participants from all over the world can join in

5.2. Focus Groups

The moderator/facilitator/interviewer's role

- creates a supportive environment

- asks focused questions to encourage discussion and the expression of differing opinions and points of view

- ensures that all participate

- takes field notes on interactions and emotions
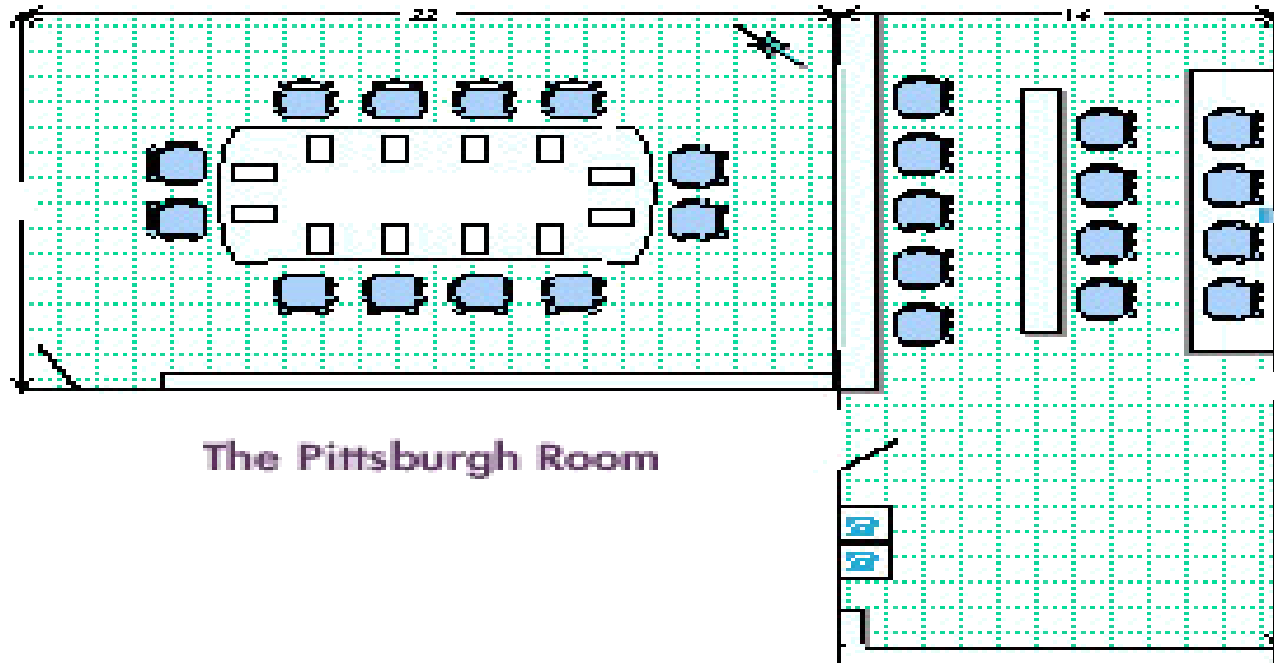
5.2. Focus Groups

Strenghts

- atmosphere **more natural** than artificial experimental circumstances; often more relaxed than a one-to-one interview

- format allows moderator the **flexibility to explore unanticipated issues** as they arise in the discussion → use group dynamics

- results seen as having **high face validity**

- cost of focus-group interviews is relatively low

- focus groups provide quick results

- can **increase the sample size** of qualitative studies by permitting more people to be interviewed at one time

Challenges

- method requires **special room arrangements** and **highly trained facilitators** → logistically difficult

- groups may be hard to assemble

- **issue of power dynamics** in the focus-group setting: moderator has to be aware of power dynamics and be able to facilitate well (crucial skills!)

- moderator often has **less control** over a group interview than over an individual one; time can be lost while irrelevant issues are discussed

- data are **difficult and time-consuming to analyze** because context is essential to understanding the participants' comments (video-recording facilitates analysis; however, might raise ethical issues about the protection of participants' identities)

Typical Setting

The Pittsburgh Room

5.2. Focus Groups

Discussion Guide – Example

Preamble (5 minutes)

- Thanks and welcome
- Nature of a focus group (informal, multiway, all views acceptable, disagree)
- There are no right or wrong answers—all about finding out what people think
- Audio- and video-recording
- Colleagues viewing
- Help self to refreshments
- Going to be talking about smartphones
- Questions or concerns?

Introductions and Warm-Up (5 minutes)

I'd like to go around the room and have you introduce yourselves:

- First name
- Best thing about having a smartphone
- Worst thing about having a smartphone

Smartphone Usage (15 minutes)

I'd like to understand a bit about how you typically use your smartphone:

- How many times a day do you use it?
- What are some of the most common types of things you use it for?

Briefly Explore

- If we were to take away your smartphone from you, what difference would that make to your life?

Briefly Explore

Past Smartphone Purchase (15 minutes)

Thinking now about your current smartphone, I'd like to talk about two different things:

- How did you actually go about the process of choosing the smartphone?
- Did you have any criteria for the smartphone itself?

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5.2. Focus Groups

Past Smartphone Selection Process

- Thinking first only about *how* you went about choosing your smartphone, *not* any features you wanted, how did you go about choosing one?

Explore Process
Past Smartphone Criteria

- Now tell me what you actually looked for in a smartphone.

Explore
Usage of Smartphone Features (20 minutes)

- Thinking now about Smartphone features, I'd like to start by making a list of all the features you can think of—anything the smartphone can do, any settings you can change, etc.
- We'll talk in a minute about which features you actually use, but I want to start with a list of everything your smartphone could do.

Flipchart

- Which features have you ever used, even if only once?

Flipchart

- Are there any settings you only changed once, but are really glad you could change?
- Why?

Explore

- Which features do you use regularly?
- Why?

Explore
Desired Features (10 minutes)

- Are there any features your smartphone doesn't have but that you wish it did?

Explore
Motivations for Buying (20 minutes)
You've all been invited here because you own a smartphone.

- What motivated you to buy your smartphone?

Explore

- What do you think are some of the reasons that people would buy smartphones?

Explore

- What were *all* the factors involved in that decision?
- What was the single biggest reason?

Explore
Closing Exercise (10 minutes)

- Finally, I'd like your creativity for a few minutes in coming up with ideas.
- Don't worry about whether it's a good idea or a bad idea.
- The only word I'm going to ban is "free"!
- Supposing a smartphone manufacturer wanted to encourage you to buy tomorrow. What could they do?
- Just call out anything at all that occurs to you—obvious, profound, serious, silly, whatever.

Explore and Refine

- Thank the respondents and close the session

Don't Forget: Activity Oriented Questions – Projective Techniques are especially relevant for Focus Groups

- Word Association / Picture Assocation

- Sentence Completion / Story Completion / Cartoons

- Third-Person Technique

- Picture Association

- Personification

- Party-game / Role-plays

- Brainstorming Acitivies

- ….

5. Practical Insight: How To Interviews

- Interviews

- Focus Groups

- Online Methods

Collecting data online/designing the research process online

synchronous data collection	asynchronous data collection
↓	↓
e.g. interviews, focus groups, observation carried out online	e.g. chats, electronic forums, emails

5.4. Quick insight into qualiative online research

Examplary Advantages / Benefits

— Anonymity (Ullrich and Schieck 2014; Cachia and Millward 2011)

— Comfortable & Convenient (Dodds and Hess 2021; Halliday et al. 2021; Gruber et al. 2008)

— Easier access to some groups; not only local perspectives (Halliday et al. 2021; Ullrich and Schieck 2014; Gruber et al. 2008)

— Flexibility (Dodds and Hess 2021; Ullrich and Schieck 2014)

— Inclusion of guardians & co-researchers (Miller and van Heumen 2021)

— Increased inclusivity (participants can leave and return freely) (Miller and van Heumen 2021)

— Less costly (Gruber et al. 2008; O'Connor and Madge 2003)

— Longer and deeper discussions possible (e.g. forums) (Ullrich and Schieck 2014)

— Non-instrusive and safe (Dodds and Hess 2021)

— Reduction of drawbacks of traditional interviews such as bias from appearance (when anonymous interview) (Gruber et al. 2008)

5.4. Quick insight into qualiative online research

Examplary Disadvantages / Difficulties

— Anonymity (Kapoulas and Mitic 2012)

— Building relationships can be harder (Pahlevan-Sharif et al. 2019; Guber et al. 2008)

— Difficult to maintain focus (Miller and van Heumen 2021)

— Ethics (Carter et al. 2021; Lobe et al. 2020; Kapoulas and Mitic 2012; Pritchard and Whiting 2012; O'Connor and Madge 2003)

— Interpretation is different (Miller and van Heumen 2021; Kapoulas and Mitic 2012)

— Physical & Social aspect / Non-Verbal Communication is missing (Miller and van Heumen 2021; Dodds and Hess 2021; Cachia and Millward 2011; Guber et al. 2008; O'Connor and Madge 2003; O'Connor and Madge 2003; Gunter et al. 2002;)

— Privacy of participants (Dodds and Hess 2021; Kapoulas and Mitic 2012)

— Using emojis in text-conversations instead of non-verbal communication (Ullrich and Schieck 2014; O'Connor and Madge 2003)

— Dependent on the participants' internet access and literacy (Halliday et al. 2021; Miller and van Heumen 2021; Dodds and Hess 2021; Carter et al. 2021; Lobe et al. 2020; Pahlevan-Sharif et al. 2019; Ulrich and Schiek 2014; O'Connor and Madge 2003; O'Connor and Madge 2003; Gunter et al. 2002;) → Sample Bias

5.4. Quick insight into qualiative online research

Conditions for Good/Bad Online Research

— Comfortable setting / Mitigating external factors (Halliday et al. 2021)

— Informed consent beforehand and via E-Mail (Hewson et al. 2016 in Lobe et al. 2020)

— More researcher roles (moderation, technical support, fieldnotes) (Halliday et al. 2021)

— Multithreading (several discussion forums for forgotten topics) (Ullrich and Schieck 2014)

— Pretesting of focus groups (Halliday et al. 2021)

— Small groups (online focus groups) (Lobe et al. 2020)

— (Big) focus groups on mobile device with small screen (Lobe et al. 2020)

— Stressful or distracting environments (Halliday et al. 2021; Dodds and Hess 2021; Carter et al. 2021)

— Bad Internet connection (Halliday et al. 2021; Miller and van Heumen 2021; Dodds and Hess 2021; Carter et al. 2021; Lobe et al. 2020; Pahlevan-Sharif et al. 2019; Ulrich and Schiek 2014)

6. Deciding on a method

6. Deciding on a method

— Depends on what you want to find out → as long as you justify it, any method is appropriate

— *Bear in mind: All methods have pro – and contra arguments*

   — Interactive data collection: Interviews & Focus Groups
   — Participant generated-textual data: Diary Studies, Qualitative Surveys, Story completion tasks,…
   — Secondary Sources: Printed materials, documents, messages,…
   — Obersvation
   — ….

— **You need to be clear on why you would follow a certain research method and how doing this research will contribute to answering your research question → You always need to have a specific goal in mind and justify why you are designing your research in the way you are designing it. And this is exactly where the research proposal steps in.**

(Braun and Clarke 2013, 48-50)

6. Deciding on a method: ask yourself these questions

— What do I want to know?

— Why do I want it to know?

— What assumptions am I making about research and knowledge?

— What type of data would be best to answer these questions?

— What type of data will I use to tell me what I want to know?

— How much data will I need?

— How will I collect my data?

— If my research involves participants:

  — *Who will I need to collect data from?*

  — *How will I access and recruit those participants?*

— How will I analyse my data in order to answer my questions?

— Whart particular ethical issues do I have to consider?

— Are there any pragmatic oder practical factors I need to take into consideration?

(Braun and Clarke 2013, 43-44)

6. Deciding on a method

„HOMEWORK"

Read the chapters „ When and why to use ...." by Braun and Clarke (2013) and refer to these when justifying your choice of research (in your proposal and presentation).

You will find these in a scanned document on edunet: **„Lecture 2_When to use which qualitative research method_Braun and Clarke"**

Note: *THIS DOCUMENT IS TO BE USED SOLELY IN THE COURSE OF YOUR STUDIES.* ***DO NOT DISTRIBUTE IT TO ANYONE ELSE OR UPLOAD IT ONLINE!***

7. How do I describe a qualitative research design in my research proposal?

Slides adopted from Karin Wegenstein (2020)

7. Qualitative Research Design

Aspects of a qualitative research design: Data collection

You describe

- How the qualitative data (e.g. the text or image material) will be collected/ gathered
    - What qualitative data will you use?
        - Newspaper articles
        - Blog posts
        - User comments in social media
        - Interviews
        - Diaries
        - Images from advertisements, real estate ads, etc.
        - Etc.
- State reasons why the specific research question is better investigated i.e. based on interviews compared to focus group (see chapters by Braun and Clarke listed on the previous slide).

7. Qualitative Research Design

Aspects of a qualitative research design: Data collection

You describe

- How the qualitative data (e.g. the text or image material) is collected/ gathered.
  - How is this data collected/collected?

> e.g. *"All newspaper articles that have appeared in the online "Presse" and online "Standard" about Commerzialbank Mattersburg since their balance sheet falsifications became known are extracted from the websites of these two newspapers (online versions)."*

> e.g. *"All photos and images (including cartoons) posted on Twitter by Donald Trump's campaign team during the current election campaign to depict his rival Joe Biden, as well as those showing Joe Biden's campaign team of Donald Trump."*

> e.g. *"Observation transcripts written during participant observation at personnel decision-making sessions following job interviews. A total of 10 transcripts will be collated and analysed."*

> e.g. *"4 interviews with tax advisors will be conducted"*

> .e.g. *"3 expert interviews will be conducted with the leading Austrian scientists in the field of the Circular Economy.*

7. Qualitative Research Design

Aspects of a qualitative research design: Time frame & Setting

You describe

- how the qualitative data (e.g. the text or image material) will be collected/ gathered
  - When/how/where will the data collection take place?
    - e.g. *"All interviews will be conducted online using MS Teams and recorded with the consent of the interview participants. The interviews will take place between December 2020 and January 2021."*

7. Qualitative Research Design

Aspects of a qualitative research design: Type of data collection instrument

You describe

- the survey instrument
  - e.g. *"An interview guideline is prepared which contains open questions and ensures a structured procedure when conducting the interviews. When conducting the interview, however, it is occasionally possible to deviate from the interview guideline if, for example, a specific follow-up question seems appropriate. The interview guide ensures that all central aspects of the research question are addressed. The number of questions is chosen so that the duration of each interview should be between 30 and 45 minutes."e.g. "3 female respondents (shoppers) are asked to write down the thoughts they had during a purchase at C&M immediately after the purchase. The three resulting thought protocols will be used for evaluation."*

7. Qualitative Research Design

Aspects of a qualitative research design: Sampling procedure

You describe

- the sampling procedure
  - Selection criteria
    - Which newspaper articles, advertisements, pictures ... are analysed?
    - What are the selection criteria for these?
    - Which persons are interviewed?
    - What characteristics must they have?
      - e.g. self-employed estate agents
      - e.g. press spokespersons of large companies, have been working in this position for at least 3 years
      - e.g. have management responsibility for at least 10 people etc.
      - For interviews with experts: Definition of the term expert.
        - What criteria must the person fulfil to be considered an expert?
- the sample size
  - How many newspaper articles, advertisements, pictures ... will be analysed?
  - How many people will be interviewed?

7. Qualitative Research Design

Aspects of a qualitative research design: Sampling procedure

You describe

- the sampling procedure

- Field access

  - Where do you find these people/pictures/texts/etc.? Do you have access at all?

    e.g. *"press spokespersons of large companies" ... Are they at all willing to be interviewed by you? Where do you get their contact details? What if they are not available for interviews (which is very likely)?*

    e.g. *"One person from each hierarchical level (low-level employee, team leader, department head, division head, managing director) of company XY." (Clarify beforehand whether you are allowed to interview these persons and whether they are available for an interview).*

7. Qualitative Research Design

Aspects of a qualitative research design: Data analysis

You describe

- the procedure for qualitative data evaluation

You do not have to proceed as described here, but it is important that you are transparent about the way you proceed!

e.g. "First, the interviews conducted are transcribed in a smoothed form. The text material is then structured by assigning each text passage to pre-formed categories. If it becomes clear during the evaluation that content categories are missing, additional content categories are created during the evaluation process. The contents of each content category are then summarised, described and compared with each other. In this way, it is possible to summarise the results of all interviews on each aspect of content in a structured way and to compare different views. The presentation of the results in the bachelor thesis is done on the one hand by summarising, contrasting and discussing the interview contents and on the other hand by presenting key quotations from the interviews."

8. What happens next?

8. What happens next?

Group Session

- You'll have a short group session with your „group leader".

- There you'll
    - discuss an example of a qualitative research proposal.
    - form groups.
    - get more information about your group research topic.
    - get your assignment.
    - have the possibility to ask any open questions.

Required Student Performance & Grading

Group Assignments (worth 45% of the total course grade):

(1) Survey instrument/guideline for qualitative research (interview or focus group) incl. peer review of another group's survey instrument 15%

(2) Quantitative questionnaire 10 %

(3) Empirical data collection and results presentation - attendance of each group member is required, Session Nr. 12, 04.05.2022 20%

Individual Assignments (worth 55% of the total course grade):

(4) Research topic first draft of the research context & objective 10%

(5) 1st draft of finished research proposal (binary)

(6) Peer review of a colleague's research proposal 10%

(7) 2nd draft of research proposal (optional - in case personal feedback is required/demanded)

(8) Final research proposal (at bachelor thesis level, incl. scientific sources = peer-reviewed journals) 35%

Attendance is generally recommended.

Each assignment, apart from assignments (5 & 7), is graded 1-5 on the Austrian grading scale according to the criteria stated in this presentation. A final negative grade (graded 5 – Nicht Genügend) on a single assignment or non-submission results in a negative course grade. If all assignments have been submitted and positively graded by the end of the course, the final grade is determined by calculating the weighted average of all assignments according to the weights stated above.

In case of a negative course assessment, the student shall be granted a reasonable extension period for the completion of the required coursework

(1st repetition). Requirements for the 1st repetition will be specified by the lecturer analogous to the assignments listed above. After a second negative assessment, the examination shall be held before a committee (2nd repetition).

Submission **Deadlines**

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS (= Individual Topic)	
4. First part of the research proposal (10%)	Monday, 10.03.2022 Submission in PDF on Edunet
5. 1st draft of the research proposal (binary)	Wednesday, 10.05.2022 Submission in PDF on Edunet + E-Mail to Peer (with lecturer in cc)
6. Peer Review: research roposal (10%)	Wednesday, 18.05.2022 Submission in PDF on Edunet + E-Mail to Peer (with lecturer in cc)
7. 2nd draft of the research proposal (voluntary)	Wednesday, 25.05.2022 Voluntary Submission in PDF on Edunet
8. Final research proposal (35%)	Wednesday, 15.06.2022 Submission in PDF on Edunet

In order to positively complete the course, each assignment must be submitted by the due date and be passed.

Non-submission results in a negative course grade

Bibliography

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Good Luck & Have Fun!

Questions?

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Good Luck