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…

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Content

Introduction of participants and course program

Qualitative Research Design – what does it mean?

Interview: What is it?
In what ways is it understood? What kind of needs do we have? Interview techniques

 1 field work/exposure days according to the plans of the participants

Findings of the field work at the end of the workshop

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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

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Research strategies, continues

- **Survey research**: data gathering in a standardized way from a group of people

  -sample from a broader population using sructured questionnaires

  or interviews

  =describe, coparise ja explain phenomena

For example:

What is the learning motivation of high school students?

Tha 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 or 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

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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**

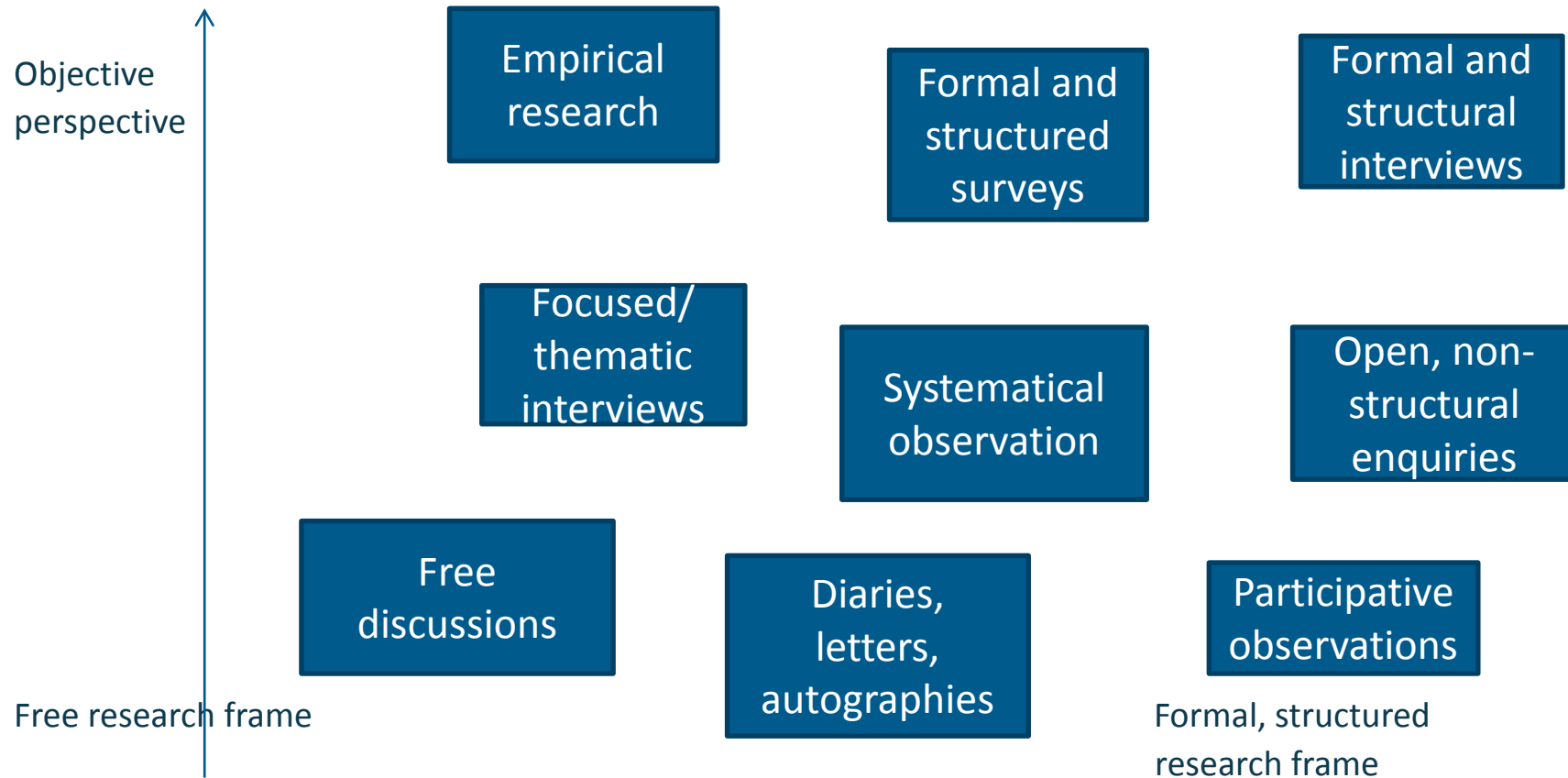Choose **research target group/groups** and the **number** of them

Plan how to gather **data**

Estimate the **resources** needed

Set **timetable**

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Different research strategies

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?	• 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?	• 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?	• Have you been rewarded with money for getting good grades? • Do you see any connection between money and grades?

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

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Questions of a survey enquiry

1. Open questions, e.g.:

Do you have wishes on the social services?

_____

_____

2. Multiple choise 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

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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.

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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 expeced 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

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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

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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

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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 researcer (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)

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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 exhaused, 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 quesions**: Rephrase an answer ("You mean that…?"), ask for a clarification ("Did I understand it correct that you ….?").

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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.

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Classification

X1

X2

X3   Group A

X4

X5

X6   Group B

X7

X8

X9

X10   Group C

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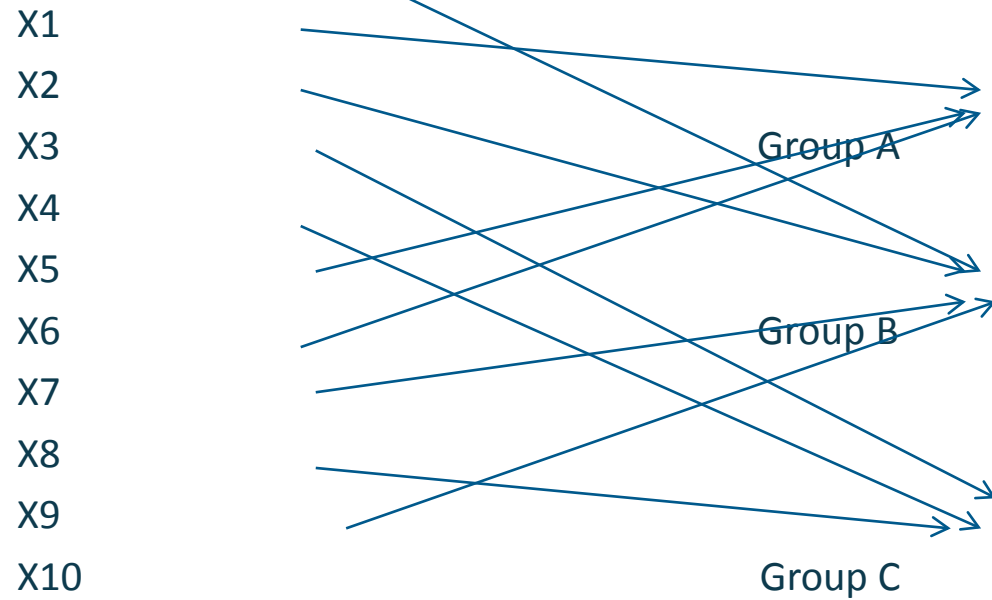
Thematic grouping

- Different themes are derived from the transcribed text

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Theme 1

Theme 2

Theme 3

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Typological grouping

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

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Structuring an Interview Report

- Introduction – Thematizing clearly
- Method – Desingning, Interviewing, transcribing and Analyzing: described in sufficient detail
- Results – Analysis and verification – the results are reported in a form wich 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.

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Ethical issues at seven research stages (Kvale 2008)

- **Thematizing**: in addition to the scientific value of the knowledge the study should 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 (wheter 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.

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