

Qualitative Inquiry



THE ART & SCIENCE OF INTERVIEWS

Agenda



- Why interview?
- What are interviews? What types exist?
- How do we decide whom to interview?
- How do we analyze interview data? How do we ensure rigor in analysis?
- What are strengths and limitations of interview data and analyses?
- Questions/Discussion

Why interview?



- Perceptions of truth, meaning, knowledge and power
- Critiques and limitations of quantitative methods
- Practical/instrumental/complementary purposes

Interviews may be particularly useful in...



- -Research on complex, lengthy or sensitive topics that are not amenable to standardized responses
- -Research that elicits tacit knowledge and subjective understandings and interpretations
- -Research on little-known phenomena or innovative systems
- Research that wants to probe or elaborate upon quantitative data or survey responses
- -Research where there is no setting to observe
- Research where you want immediate elaboration and clarification and exploration of themes
- -Research on informal and unstructured linkages and processes in organizations or groups
- -Research on 'operating' as opposed to stated, organizational goals
- -Research for which relevant variables have yet to be identified

Qualitative Interviews:



“A Conversation with a Purpose” (Kahn and Cannell, 1957)

‘Co-authored conversation,’ (in which both the interviewed and the interviewee are capable of and engage in self-reflexivity and conscious and ongoing social (re) positioning within the interview (see England 2002).

3 Types of Interviews



- **Informal, Conversational (Ethnographic)**
- **General Interview Guide Approach**
- **The Standardized Protocol Approach**

Choosing who to interview



- **Probabilistic**
- **Non-probabilistic**
- **Combination of methods?**

Short Typology of Sampling



Type of Sampling	Purpose
Maximum variation	Documents diverse variations and identifies important common patterns
Criterion	Includes all that meet some criterion
Intensity	Involves information-rich cases that manifest phenomenon intensely
Snowball	Identifies initial subjects and then seeks additional subjects through
Representative	Attempts to represent the units or phenomenon being studied

The Interview: 'Good Times'



- **Responsive participant**
- **Good rapport**
- **Thoughtful insights and attentiveness**
- **Mutual learning on part of interview and interviewee**
- **Interview data informs or challenges your theories in important ways**

The Interview: 'Bad Times'



- Contact, commitments and cancellations
- Elusive or effusive interviewee
- Malfunctioning equipment
- Rapport, relationships, power

- BP Blunders, a short list.
 - getting lost, being late
 - failure to establish rapport
 - not coming in with enough questions
 - not checking my equipment
 - failing to ask clarifying or follow-up questions (implicit knowledge)
 - failing to follow a 'hint'
 - talking too much/ 'mirroring' and not soliciting quotes
 - distractions

Analyzing Interview Data



“Qualitative Data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships and underlying themes (Strauss and Corbin 1997).”

Analytic Procedures



- Organizing & Transcribing Interviews
- Immersion in the data
- Generating categories and themes
- Coding of the data
- Offering interpretations & summaries
- Searching for alternative understandings
- Writing report, article etc.

(Marshall and Rossman 2006)

Discovering Patterns in Qualitative Data



- **Frequencies**
- **Magnitudes**
- **Structures**
- **Processes**
- **Causes**
- **Consequences**

(Babbie 2007)

A continuum of Analysis Strategies



Prefigured technical

Emergent Intuitive



Quasi-
statistical
analytical style

Template analysis

Editing analysis style

Immersion/crystal-
lization style

(Crabtree and Miller 1992)

Example: WISELI



- WISELI is a research institute at UW-Madison, funded in part by the NSF Advance program.
- The long-term goal of WISELI is to have the gender of the faculty, chairs, and deans reflect the gender of the student body at UW-Madison. To accomplish these goals, WISELI is a visible, campus-wide entity, endorsed by top-level administrators, which uses UW-Madison as a "living laboratory" to study gender equity for women in science and engineering, implement solutions, and provide methods and analyses to measure indicators of success. WISELI also disseminates "best practices" in gender equity programming and measurement. Our workshops and materials are in demand by colleges and universities nationally (and even internationally).

WISELI Research Questions



What are the climate-related factors, barriers, attitudes and experiences of women in science on this campus?

To what extent are our interventions and WISELI successfully addressing these factors? What changes, if any, are occurring at the levels of the individual faculty, the division, and the institution?...What is the value-added of WISELI?

WISELI Interview Study Goals



- 1) Assess women's perceptions of their department and in the University, and associated changes
- 2) To understand women's current experience as female faculty members and associated changes from the baseline interview;
- 3) To learn how female faculty had interacted with and benefited from WISELI activities and/or the presence of WISELI on campus; and
- 4.) To gain feedback about the continuation of WISELI and potential priorities.

Research Design

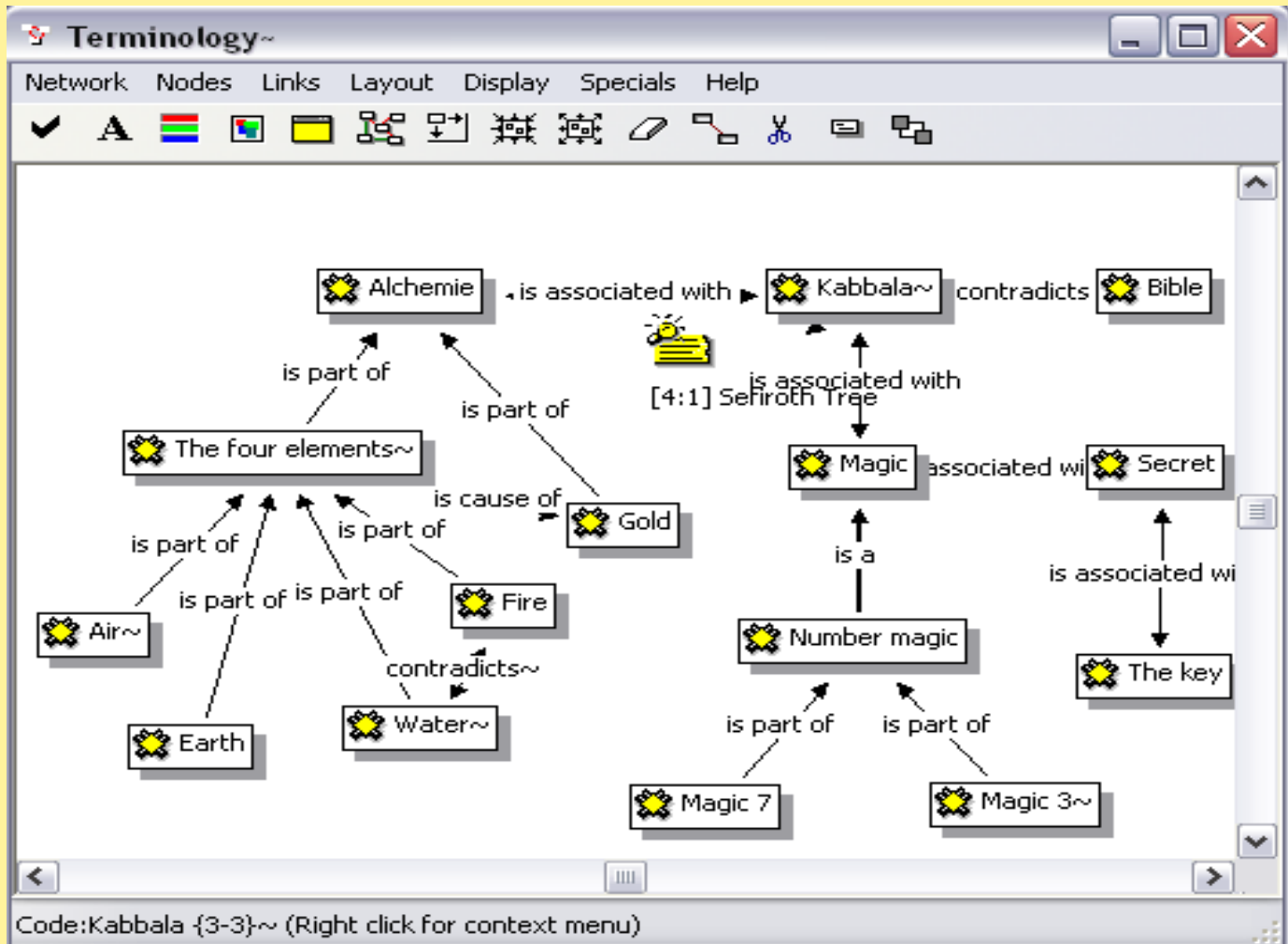


- **Sample**
- **Study Format/Design**
- **Ethical/IRB Issues**
- **Analysis**

Coding with Atlas



- **Open Coding** – use Open Coding when you want to create a new node and associate it with an existing quotation or text segment.
- **Code-by-List** – use this option if you want to assign existing codes to a quotation or selection
- **In-Vivo Coding** – use this option when the selected text itself is a good name for the code
- **Quick Coding** – use this option if you want to apply the currently selected code to the marked



Coding with ATLAS



General Code List

- Career Changes
- Considered Leaving UW Madison
- Culture of Medicine
- Culture of Science
- **Department Climate**
- Gender Communication
- Gender Concerns for Women in Science
- Gender Fear of Feminism/'Woman' Card
- Gender Female Mentors
- Gender Where to get support
- Gender: Affects Work Experience
- Leadership Roles
- Maternity leave
- New Awards and Grants
- Other Women's Stories/Secondary Stories
- Personal life Crises/Mental Health
- Provost Leadership Intervention
- Satisfaction
- Self Promotion
- Support and Recognition
- Tenure Clock Extension.....

Exploded Codes

- Departmental climate: Chair
- Departmental Climate: Collegial Interactions
- Departmental Climate: Diversity
- Departmental Climate: Flexibility
- Departmental Climate: Gender Hiring Issues
- Departmental Climate: Getting Better
- **Departmental Climate: More Women/Women in Leadership**
- Departmental Climate: More work for women
- Departmental Climate: Resource Distribution
- Departmental Climate: Staying the Same
- Departmental Climate: Support for Family
- Departmental Climate: Support for Women
- Departmental Climate: Teaching
- Departmental Climate: Unclear or Unfair Expectations
- Departmental Climate: Uneven gender resource distribution
- Departmental Climate: Work not valued or understood

Departmental Climate: More Women in Leadership



- **P 7: Fac Fup24 - 7:10 [I just have kind of one fina..] (305:331) (Super)** Codes: [Departmental Climate: More Women/Women in Leadership, Gender Communication)
 - I: Does it make a difference having a woman in that position, do you think?
 - R: Definitely. So personally it took me a while to get used to her style, and I don't know if it's a Dean [Parrish] style if it's just a woman in a leadership role style. She's much more prone to seek the opinion of her faculty and to provide explanation for why she's made certain decisions whereas previously he was more - I don't want to say confident, but it was more firm in how he did things I guess. He didn't do as much surveying.
 - R: So for me it was very strange to have a woman dean. But I do talk to her about issues that I would never talk to with a male dean. And I don't know if she wants to hear about some of this stuff. (laughs)
 - I: Can you give an example? It doesn't have to a confidential issue.
 - R: Um, I'm not really sure, can I give an example? I never really talk to her about personal life. I don't know I guess when I didn't get my grant. I talked to her within like the first week and I don't know if I would have done that so soon if she had been a man.
- **P 2: Fac Fup 2.doc - 2:39 [Okay, you also mentioned that ..] (232:238) (Super)** Codes:[Departmental Climate: More Women/Women in Leadership]
 - Okay, you also mentioned that at least having another woman or two in the department, At least this one woman has been a support person for you, so do you think it makes a difference having female colleagues ?
 - R: You're darn right. Absolutely
 - I: In what way?
 - R: Support, just someone to talk to, there's, I don't talk to anybody in the department, except the ladies in the office are wonderful and you know I have colleagues outside the university who are wonderful....

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Rigor in Qualitative Research



- **Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, Confirmability**

(Marshall and Rossman 2006; Guba and Lincoln 2004)

- **Reflexive Science and Extended Case Method
(Burawoy 2008)**

Strengths



- Yield large amount of data
- Flexible
- Researcher has control over questioning
- Facilitate exploration of open-ended contexts
- Allow immediate elaboration and clarification
- Convey meaning that events, activities, issues hold for interviewees
- Provide context and factual information (from the perception of the interviewee)

Limitations/Issues



- Affected by dynamics between the researcher and the researched
- Can be difficult or uncomfortable for the researcher
- Affected by other contexts ethnicity, time, location, motivation and “reformulated” memory, to name a few, (e.g. Sanjek 2000; Elwood and Martin; Valentine 2002)
- Not all interviewees are equally articulate or perceptive
- Difficulty in eliciting ‘truth’
- Interviewing elites can pose particular issues