



Aalto University
School of Arts, Design
and Architecture

ARTS-L0111

Methods of

Qualitative Research

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2021

Outline of the session

9.15 - 10.00 Some emerging trends in qualitative research (Eeva)

Break 15 min

10.15 - 11.00 Discussion on final essays (45 min)

Lunch break 60 min

12.00 - 12.45. Discussion on final essays (45 min)

Break 15 min

13.00 - 13.45 'Publishing in scientific journals' (45 min) (Jenni)

Break 15 min

14:00 – 15.00 Joint discussion on essays and "Where are we in our research?" (Eeva and Jenni)

Epistemology – research paradigm - methodology - method

Epistemology: Doctrine of what is knowledge, and how knowledge can be achieved

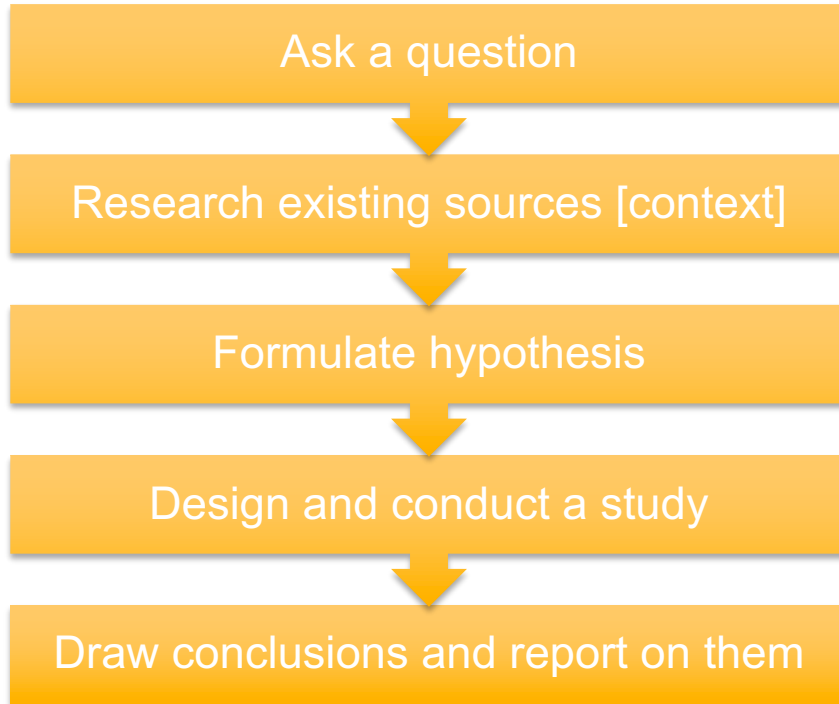
Research paradigm: epistemological assumptions on how you can investigate reality, what kind of knowledge can be reached or produced through research, what kind of role researcher should take

> guides the choice of theory and theoretical concepts, research problem and methodology

Methodology: defines how good research problem is formulated and what are the good ways to tackle the problem (research questions, data, methods)

Method = systematic procedure for collecting or analyzing data

The ideal scientific method and the probable research process



Analyse material
Assess & compare with
other results
Publish
Interpret results
Answer empirical Qs
Analyse data
Question data
Question questions
Research idea
Literature review/desk
Formulate RQ
Empirical Qs / objectives
Collect data
material
Review

Ethnographic data is *contextual & relational*

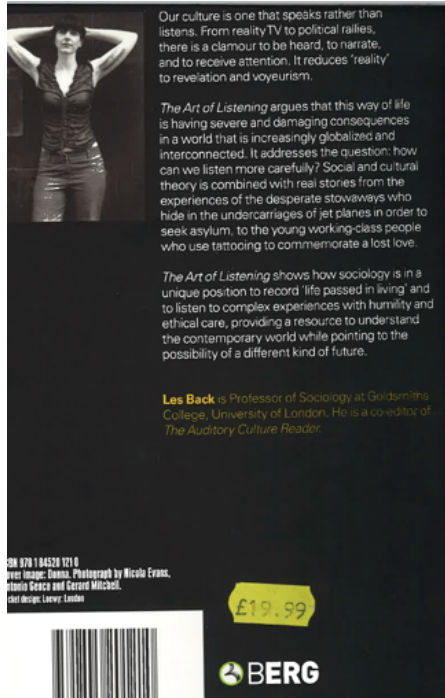
Bronislaw Malinowski (1922) "Imagine yourself, set down ... alone on a tropical beach..."

- Leading to "the ethnographer's magic"

Clifford Geertz (1973) "What the ethnographer is in fact faced with – except when [...] he is pursuing the more automatized routines of data collection – is a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render.

- Leading to ethnographic angst?

Ethnographic virtues – listening, feeling, attending



Estalella, A. and A. Corsín Jiménez (2016) 'Matters of sense: Preoccupation in Madrid's popular assemblies movement', in A. Blok and I. Farías (eds) *Urban cosmopolitics: Agencements, assemblies, atmospheres*, Routledge.



Some ethnographic virtues



- **Understanding another point of view**
- **Practicing alternate worlds**
 - Is cosmo-political
- **Accommodates the presence of intangible truths, troubling impasse between scientific and vernacular judgement**
- **Vacillates**

Lived experience *in situ*

Also Sarah Pink's 'sensory ethnography

Edward S. Casey, philosopher of place. Making use of the *reciprocity of body and place*, reflecting ethnographer's and native's [sic] grasp of a concrete universality, a generality immanent in place thanks to the lateral homologies and sidewise resemblances between things and people in all places...

- getting at local knowledge that is somehow singular and impure, yet shared
- To argue against Modernity's Fallacy of Misplaced Abstractness (quoting A.N. Whitehead)

Sensory turn in qualitative methods

Calia Lury & Nina Wakeford (2012) *Inventive Methods: The happening of the social*

Social and cultural research has changed dramatically in the last few years in response to changing conceptions of the empirical, an intensification of interest in interdisciplinary work, and the growing need to communicate with diverse users and audiences. **Methods texts, however, have not kept pace with these changes**

Also: Routledge Handbook of Interdisciplinary Research Methods, (2018) Celia Lury et al. eds.

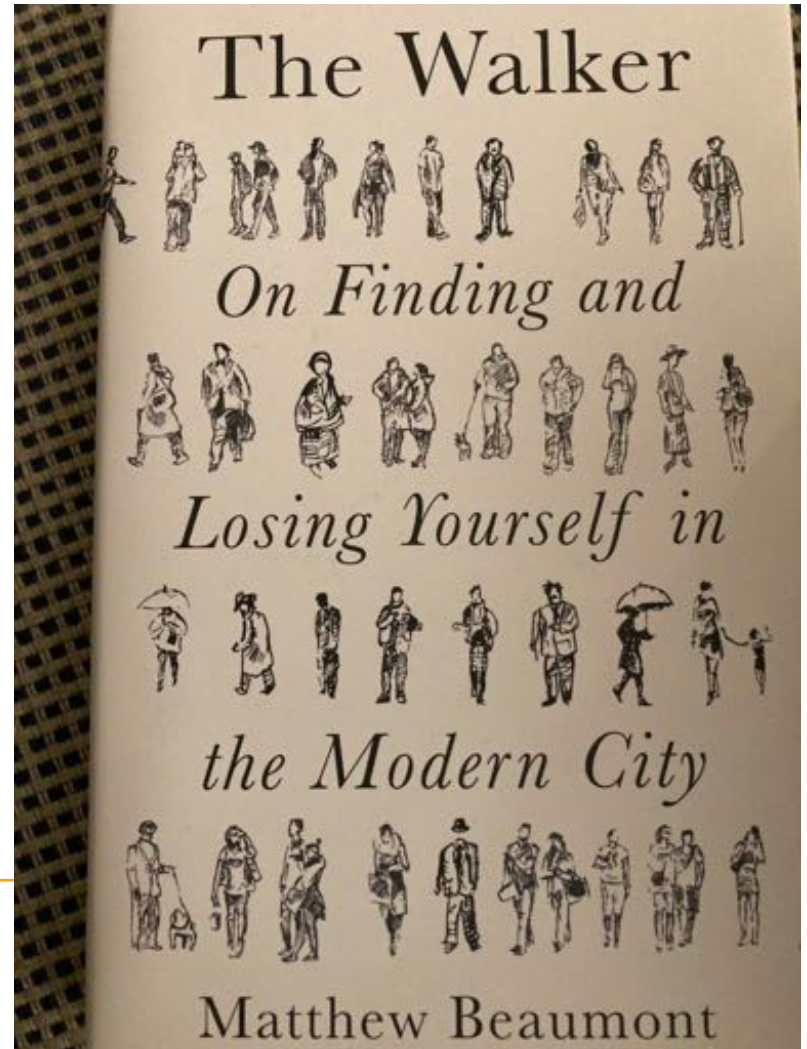
Marres N, M Guggenheim, A Wilkie (eds) 2018 *Inventing the Social*, London: Mattering Press.

Sensory turn in qualitative methods

Is not new!

Highlighting the pedestrian (in all senses of the word).

The modern city and the senses and specific, often new, bodily experiences – the body as sensorium



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Sensory turn in qualitative methods

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But the senses are not given, they are made.

The senses of the researcher and their relationship to the senses of participants. Body – affect – meaning – concept. Where “emotions connect”

Bodies are not given but made – and (mis)recognized.

Sensory turn in qualitative methods

Lury & Wakeford note the “new empiricism of sensation” and ways of framing it that they “believe deserve imitation”

Research is about brining things together – sometimes it acts on the world

Sometimes the world acts on us as researchers without having the faintest clue about it

E.g. because our lifeworlds are full of invisible powers that move things at a distance: the digital devices everywhere from our pockets to our streets



In Search of Lost Futures

Anthropological Explorations in
Multimodality, Deep
Interdisciplinarity, and
Autoethnography

Edited by
Magdalena Kazubowski-Houston ·
Mark Auslander

palgrave
macmillan

‘Knowing and Imagining with
Sustainable Makers’

by Eeva Berglund & Cindy Kohtala

**Creating different everyday
experiences from
buy/consume/throwaway**

**Developing methods for
attending to Anthropocene
conditions and possibilities**

Speculating

'Alternative milieu'



Because, 'overwhelmingly, hegemonic institutions and individuals within them still indulge hopes that the future will be much like today only with different gadgets'.

The 'maker movement' – like other prefigurative movements – is opening up somewhat different spaces for futures, using science and other resources

'Alternative milieu', 'collective imaginings', 'paying attention'

All photos
Cindy Kohtala



Writing the essays

Some small tips on writing

Forgive me!

Pay special attention to these words

Phenomenon – phenomena

Empirical – empiricist

Global – planetary

Habit – inhabit

Positive – negative (right? – wrong?)

There are no limits to the researcher's creativity!

Except the readership, perhaps...

? Designerly approaches – handling uncertainty, being playful, admitting vacillation, crossing boundaries but also accepting necessary p.o.v. & probably user/actor/stakeholder desire

Decolonising design / knowledge – pluriversal thinking

Artistic research

Where are **we** in our
research?

<https://colleex.wordpress.com/>

#Colleex /kpli:gz/ – An EASA network that aims to open a space for debate and intervention around experimental forms of ethnographic fieldwork.

#Colleex seeks to explore novel forms of knowledge production for anthropology.



Colleex workshop, Lisbon 2017, photo Vitor Barros

easaonline.org/newsletter (an anthropology forum) January 2020

- **Fieldnotes in particular should always remain under the guardianship of their authors and the sharing of field notes within a project should not be assumed.**

Universities gaining automatic co-ownership rights to research data is an ethical problem - Finnish Anthropologists' position statement 21.5.2021

'Research participants must be able to trust that the information they have shared with researchers in confidence does not end up in the hands of others. If the research institution cannot guarantee this, it may reduce the willingness of the people of study to engage in dialogue with researchers. Moreover, outside parties not acquainted with the research context often have no means of understanding ethnographic data and therefore often no way of using it in a way that would produce valid research results. It is therefore vital that those researchers who collect the data and are experts on its context have the sole right to distribute the data.'