

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

18th February 2018

Aims

- Survey: United Kingdom Engagement Survey - Hot Drink Vouchers to be provided.
- Recap from last week
- The researchers positioning
- Case Example
- Graham Gibbs – Narrative Analysis
- Worksheets – Practice
- Structure Guidance for Report

The Researcher's Positioning

- Ontology -
- Epistemology –
- Axiology -

Addresses the often unspoken assumptions that rest beneath the surface of research, the theory we read and conduct.

Abstract Terms

- The terms are abstract because the subject are abstract.
- Most researchers do not write much about their underlying assumptions.
- But the research does leave clues.

So WHY.....

Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology – help us to understand and appreciate research in a more sophisticated way.

Helps us to compare and contrast.

Epistemology

- Branch of philosophy that studies knowledge or knowing.
- “How do we claim to know what we know”

Theorist have different epistemological assumptions.

- Knowledge is out there waiting to be discovered.
- People develop knowledge upon our perception and experiences.
- All knowledge is relative, a mere social construction, and is whatever we say it is.

There are clues within their research that uncovers the researcher epistemological position and this is within the methods that are chosen.

Epistemological way of knowing.

- Objective knowledge - Quantitative statistical analysis - If you ask the right questions you will get reliable results. The results will give you a snap shot as to how things really are.
- Ethnographic - to really understand to really know....experience something for yourself. Understanding culture not from a distance.
- *What about narrative analysis.....*

Ontology

- Branch of philosophy that studies the nature of human beings' existences as individuals, in society, and in the universe.
- "who are we", "what are we here for"
- Do we make freewill choices? or are there external sources controlling our outcome?
- Are humans best understood as individuals? Or are we best understood existing in a group or social system?

Axiology and Axiology Questions

- Branch of philosophy that studies values.
- "What do we value? What values guide our research"
- What values or outcome will be the result from our research?
- Can our research be neutral or do our personal values shape how we do research?
- Should we seek just to understand or seek to change the world for the better?

Case Example

- Patsiopoulos, A. T. and Buchanan, M. J (2011). The Practice of Self-Compassion in Counseling: A Narrative Inquiry, *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*. 42(4), pp.301-307,

Recap – Graham Gibbs – Narrative Analysis

- 4 Types of Narrative/Life History ——— Lieblich et al (1998)

	Content	Form
Holistic	1	2
Categorical	3	4

1. Holistic Content

- Looks at complete life story and examines its content. Familiar in clinical case studies.
- Use familiar qualitative methods to identify key themes.
- Look for transitions between themes.
- Episodes that seem to contradict themes in terms of content, mood and or evaluation by the narrator.
- Pay attention to the issues that are not mentioned.

Typical Themes

- Relational Story – constantly referring to others
- Belonging and separateness
- Closeness, remoteness and experience of moving
- The meaning of occupation (e.g. vocation)
- Relations with opposite sex
- Can focus on early life as detriment to later actions (following Adler)

2. Holistic Form

- Looks at the plot or structure of the complete life stories. (Classical perspective)

Romance	Hero faces a series of challenges en route to his goal and eventual victory.
Comedy	Goal is the restoration of social order and the hero must have the requisite social skills that overcome the hazards that threaten that order..
Tragedy	The hero is defeated by the forces of evil and is ostracised by society.
Satire	A cynical perspective on social

Progression

- Does story ascend or descend? Climax, turning point, epiphany (etc.)
- Advance – story moves to better things.
- Regression – story moves to worse things.
- Stable – plot is steady neither worse nor better, just the same.

3 Categorical Content

- Essentially a content analysis. Extract Categories, and count and cross-tabulate.

4 Categorical Form

- Discrete linguistic or stylistic linguistic characteristics. Metaphors used, passive vs active.
- E.g. use linguistic features to identify inner meanings of events to the narrator.
- Adverbials like **suddenly** may indicate how expected or unexpected events were.
- Mental verbs like **I thought, I understood, and I noticed**, may indicated extent to which an experience is in consciousness and can be remembered.

- Denotations of time and place may indicate attempts to distance and event or bring closer.
- Past, present and future tense in verbs and transitions between them, may indicate a speaker's sense of identification with the events described.
- Transitions between first-person, second-person and third-person may indicated difficulty in re-encountering a difficult experience.
- Passive and active verbs may indicate speaker's perception of agency.

- Breaking chronological or casual flow with digressions, regressions, leaps in time, etc., may indicate attempts to avoid discussion of difficult experience.
- Repetition may indicate that subject of discussion elicits an emotional charge for the narrator.
- Detailed information may be the reluctance to describe difficult emotions.

Method – underline just the words referring to the factual events described. Then examine all the words not underlined.

Formal Narrative Analysis

Reissman – Structure of Narrative

- How the Story is organised
- How the tale is developed
- Where and how the narrative begins and ends.

Use the structure to identify how people tell the stories the way they do

- How they give shape to the events.
- How they make a point
- How they 'package' the narrated event
- Their reactions to the events
- How they articulate the narratives with the audience

Cortazzi

- Based on Labov – has an evaluation model
- 6 structural elements: Abstract, Orientation, Complication, Evaluation, Results and Coda.

Structure	Question
Abstract	What was this about? Optional part. Initiates the narrative, summarising the point or gives general proposition which narrative will amplify. In interviews, interviewer's question may do this.
Orientation	Who, what, when, how? The cast setting the time period, etc. "Its like when..." "That happened to me when..."
Complication	That what happened? Major account of the events that happened in the story. The bones of what happened. Labov – these are recorded in simple past tense. Involves: Turning points, Crisis, Problems. And shows how they were made sense by the narrator

Evaluation	So what? Highlights of the point of the narrative.
Result	What finally happened? Outcome of the events or resolution of the problem. "So that meant..." "That's why..."
Coda	Optional. Marks the end a return of speech to the present tense. Marks the transition.

- Implied story – the version of events that did not happen. What was expected by the narrator.

Working through case examples

Structure of Report 2,000-2,500

- I. Introduction (Approximately 500-600 words) **Including a question you are seeking to answer Background You will need to research the topic discussed in the piece of text that has been provided.**
- II. Method (Approximately 500-600 words) A method of Narrative analysis outlined within the module delivery will be utilised within your work.
- III. Analysis (Approximately 500-600 words) What you have found while deconstructing the text
- IV. Discussion (Approximately 500 words) What you have found and linking this with the theme(s) that were being explored.
- V. Conclusion (Approximately 300-500) Wrapping it up – possible inferences /recommendations
- Reference List
- Appendices