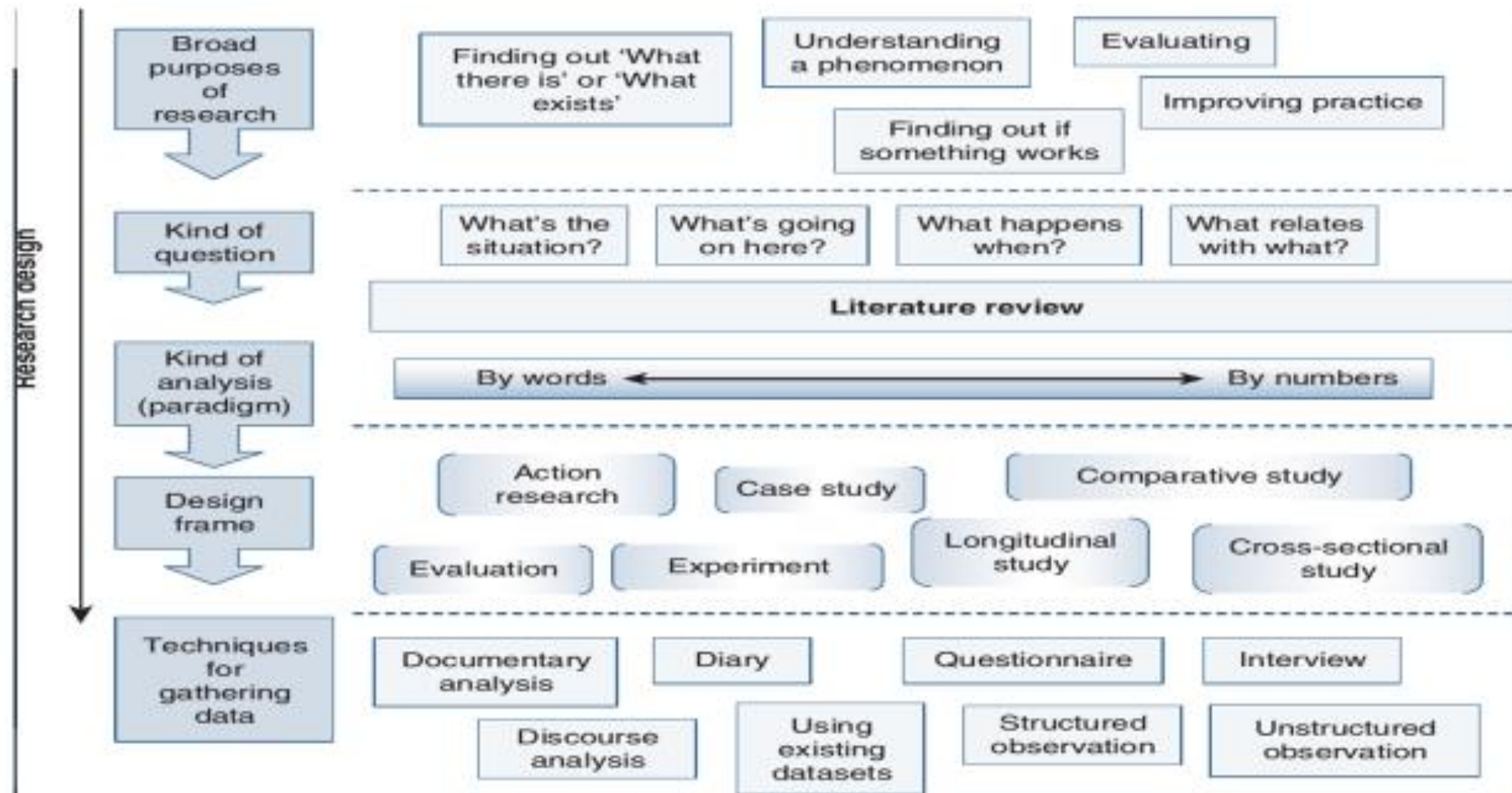




Session 2: Introduction to Case Study as a research approach

The process of research design:



Definitions of case study:

Task:

Read the definitions of case study in the document provided.

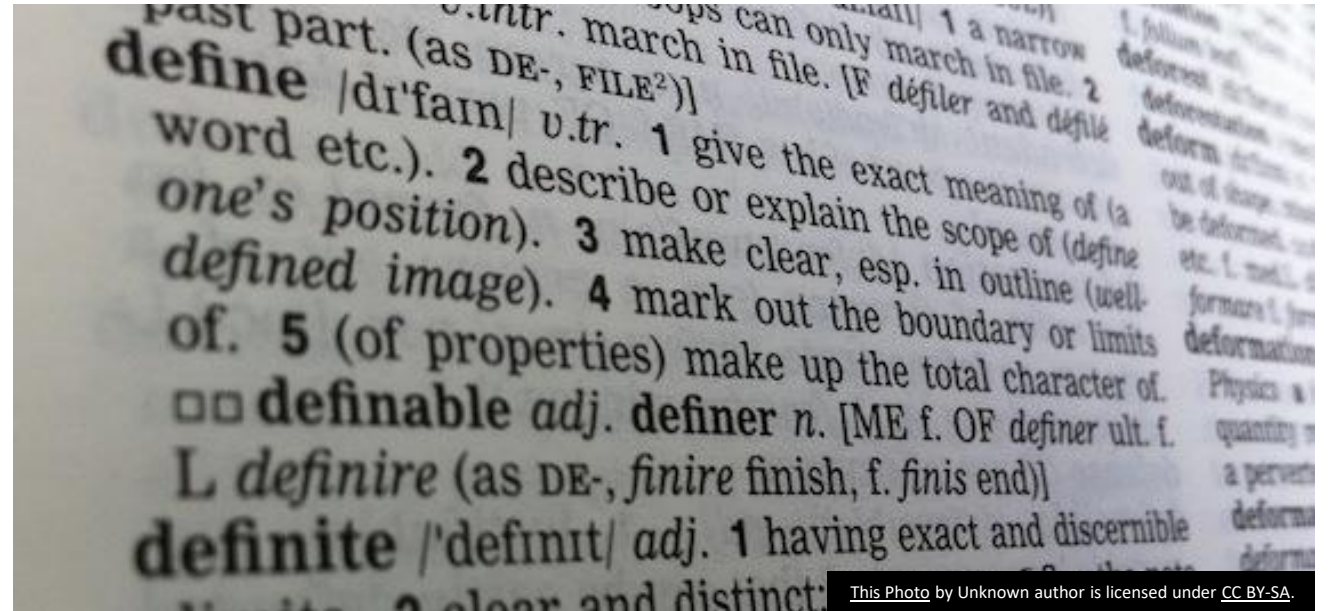
Identify the key words and concepts.

What are the similarities and differences?



Definitions of Case Study

Case study has many definitions and has been termed a 'contested terrain' (Yazan, 2015)



This Photo by Unknown author is licensed under CC BY-SA.

'Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied...By whatever methods we choose to study the *case*. We could study it analytically or holistically, entirely by repeated measures or hermeneutically, organically or culturally, and by mixed methods but we concentrate for the time being, on the case.' (Stake 2005, p.443)

A rich picture with boundaries:

A case study offers you a detailed picture with information coming from many angles or sources.

It also provides the edges – the direction in which you want your research to go and how far.





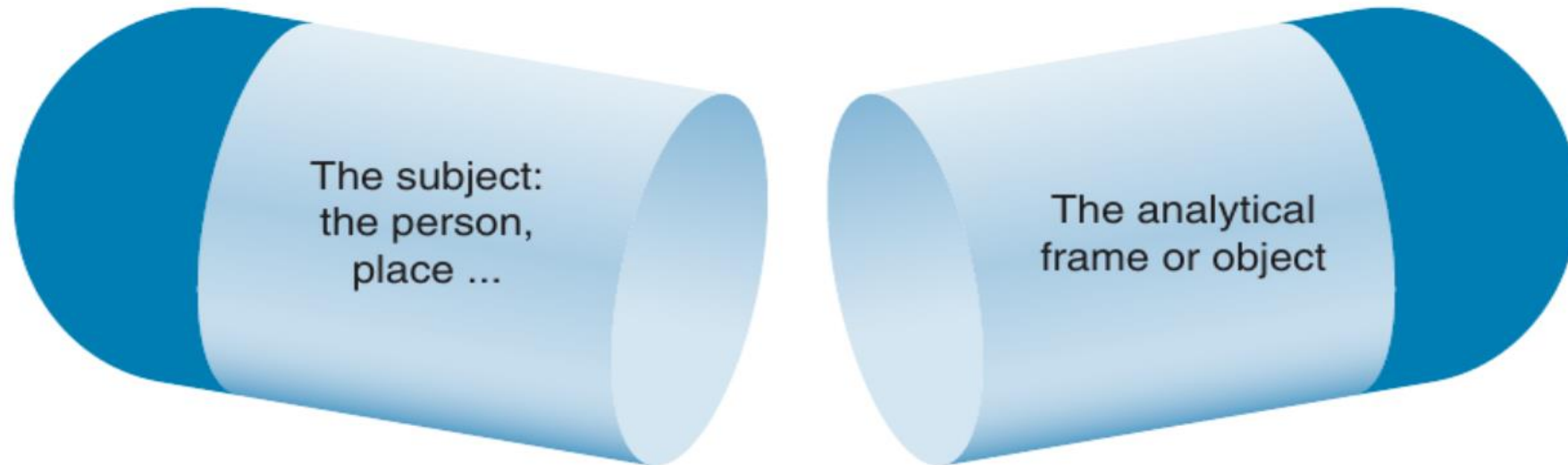
This Photo by Unknown author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#).

The word is taken from two similar sounding Latin roots that have arrived, after corruption, at the same word 'case' in English:

- capsā meaning 'box', 'container' and thus 'case';
- casus meaning 'event', 'fall', 'accident' and thus 'case'.

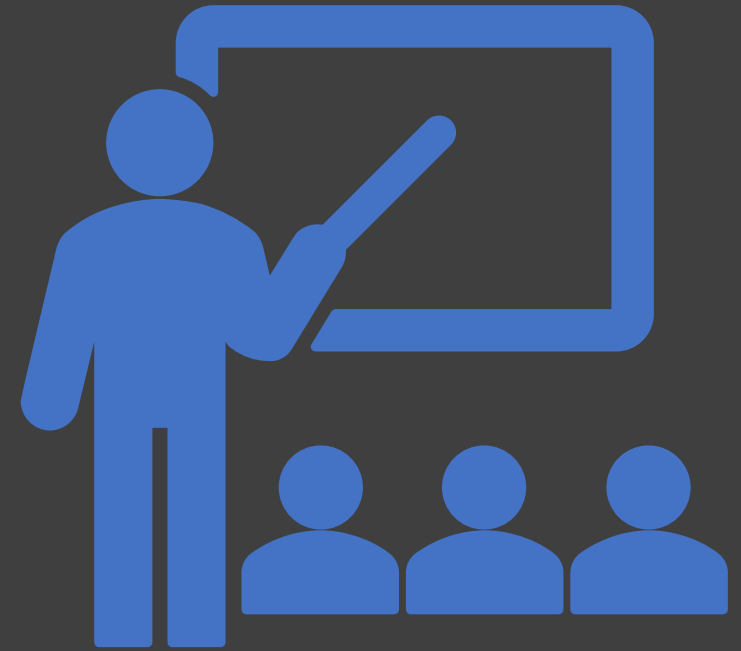
What do we mean by case?

Two parts of a case study, each part needing the other:



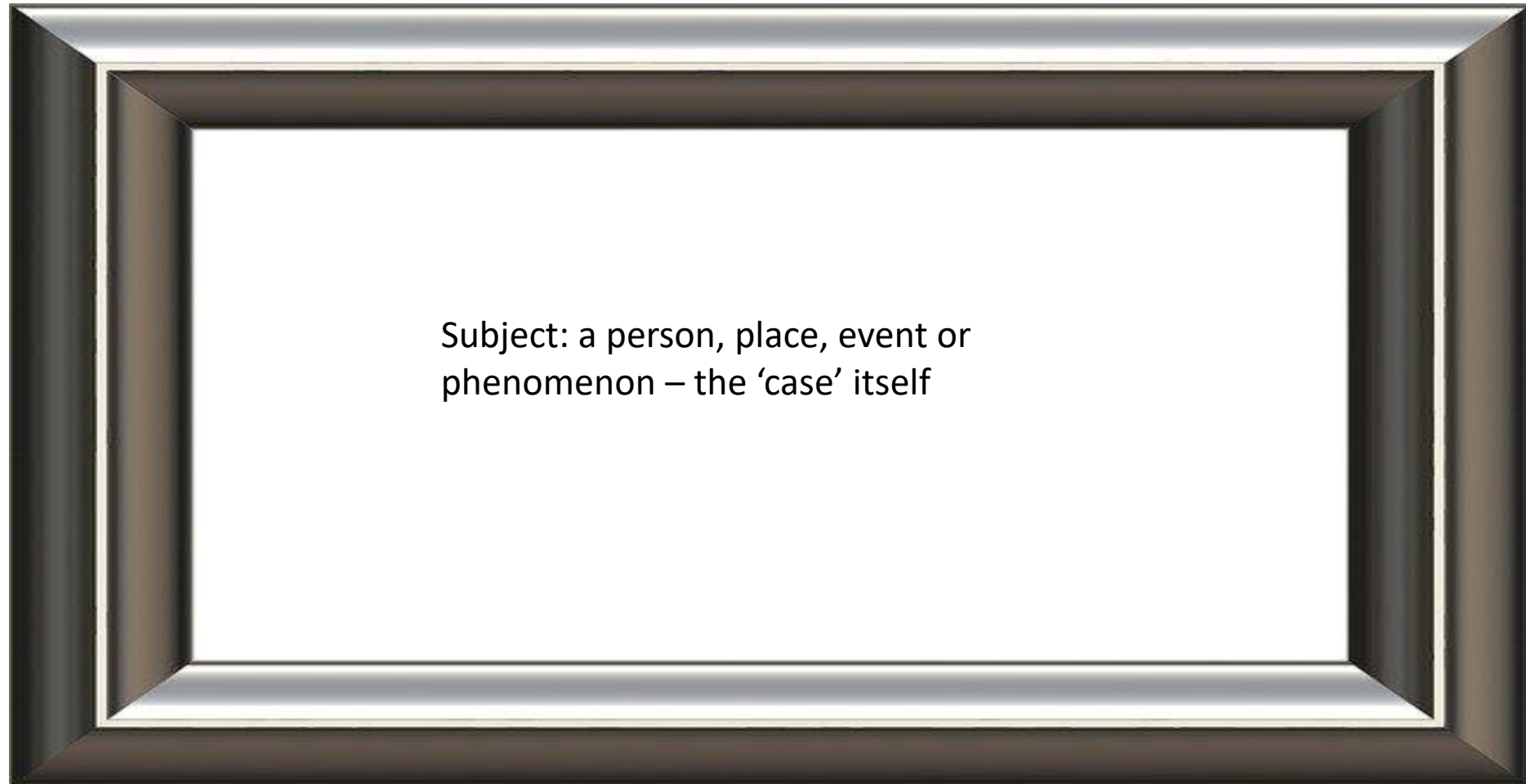
Subject and object of a case study

- Teacher – could be subject of a case study
- Teaching – could not be the subject of a case study
- To be a case – an interesting one – we would have to be able to say that the teacher was a case *of* something (you should have an idea of what he or she is the case of at the outset)



Analytical frame:

Object: the analytical frame in which it is studied; the analytical focus



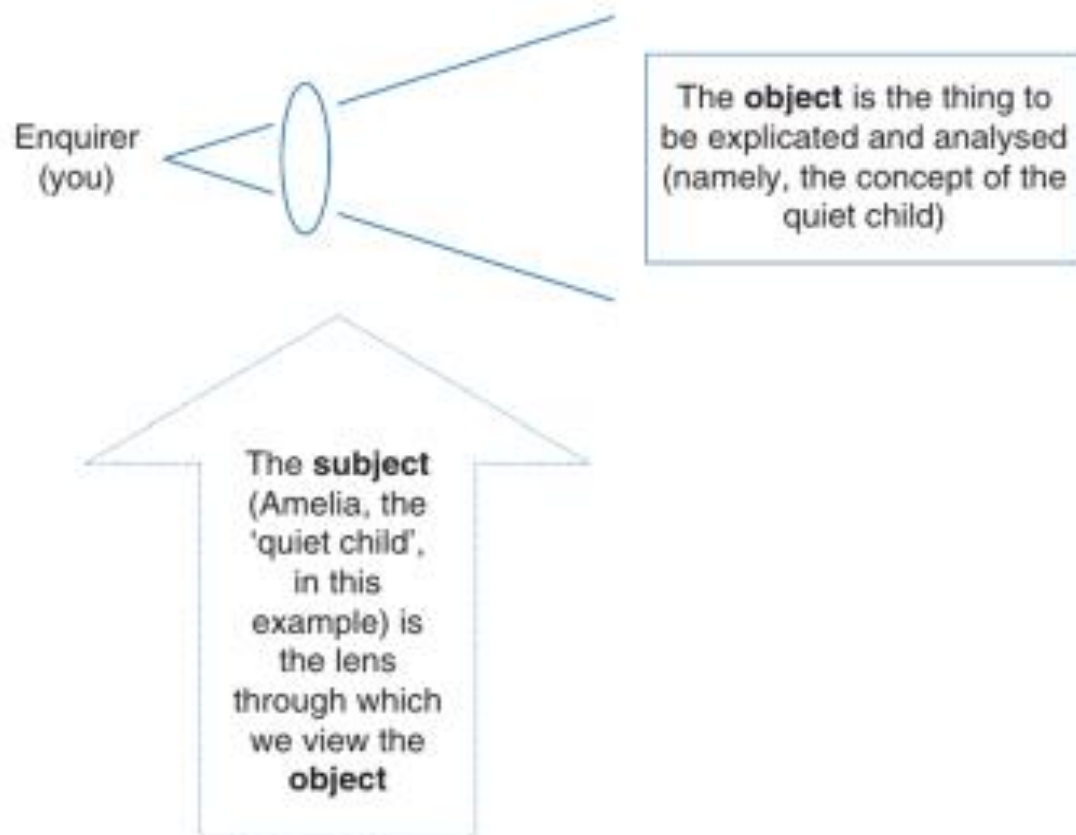
Scenario(taken
from Thomas
2021) –
bringing the
subject and
object
together

You are interested in the phenomenon of children who are withdrawn, sometimes call 'quiet' or 'silent' children

If 'quiet children' were your topic of interest, they would be your object

Given this object – or topic of interest – it would be useful to choose a case study subject a kind of child who demonstrated these behaviours

Lens analogy:



Intrinsic vs Instrumental

- intrinsic case study attempts to capture the case in its entirety and the purpose of the research is to understand more fully the person, department or institution that makes up the case. In many ways, a full school inspection or accreditation visit could be thought of as an attempt to capture the case (the school) through the use of analysis of policies and resources, observations, interviews and questionnaires.
- Instrumental, on the other hand, focuses on an aspect, concern or issue of the case.



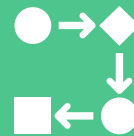
Instrumental Case Study

This form of case study is likely to be the form that most practitioner researchers choose as the focus for research since the purpose of such work usually concerns an aspect of the case rather than the desire to capture the case in its entirety. It is usually built around aspects of teaching and learning, implementation of policy, curriculum development or issues of personal and professional relevance.

Types of case study:



Evaluative – the aim is to find out how well something is working or whether it has worked as expected



Exploratory – where little is known and the principle purpose is to establish the 'shape' of the problem or issue



Explanatory – where the phenomenon in which you are interested needs to be unpacked; the connections between different parts of the issue need unravelling and the case study offers a route to explanation



Exploratory Case Study:

The exploratory case study is used when there is no pre-determined outcome. According to Yin (2014), case studies are appropriate when asking “how,” “why,” “what,” and “who” questions. In the exploratory case study, the questions answered are “how” and “what.” Exploratory case studies are also appropriate when you wish to gain an extensive and in-depth description of a social phenomenon. The exploratory case study is used to explore presumed causal links that are too complex for a survey or experiment (Yin, 2014).

Assignment reminder:

- **An exploratory case study arising from practice (noticing) and investigated further through identified research tools. The assignment concludes with the identification of an intervention which can be piloted throughout Professional Teaching Experience and evidenced through reflection in the Professional Learning Standards (professional learning standards).**



Professional learning

Wider reading and research findings

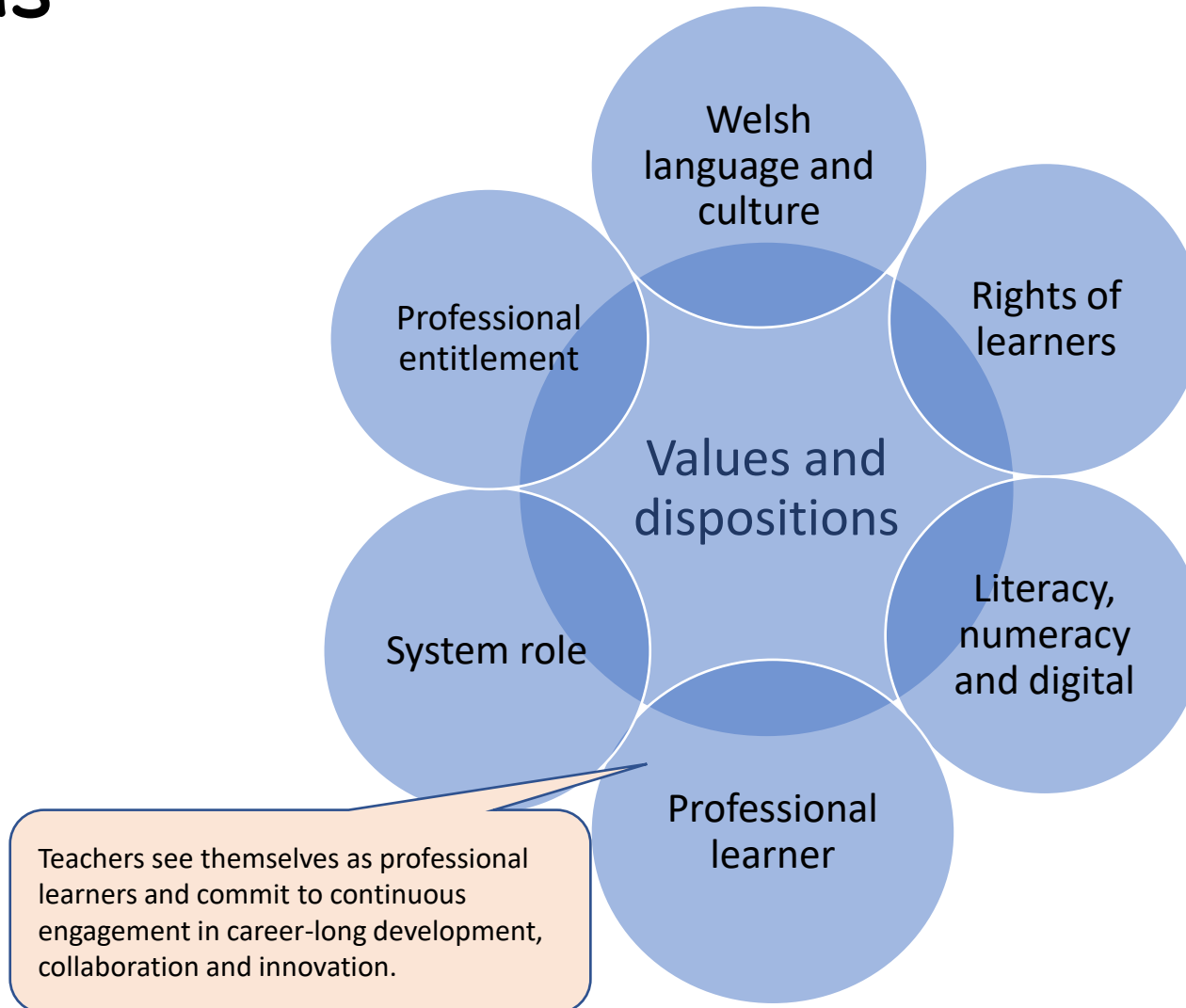
There is structured engagement in an action research community and evidence of practice informed by wider reading and research findings on a national and international scale.

The teacher makes reasoned decisions in terms of their pedagogy based upon relevant reading and research findings.

QTS

Teaching

Why should *teachers* research? - Professional Standards



Key elements of case study:

Case study as Research Genre

Bounded unit – a person, a group, an institution or organization

Located within personal, professional, local and national communities

Involves interactions, communications, relationships and practices between the case and the wider world and vice versa

Focus on collecting rich data – capturing the complexity of case

Data may be collected over extended periods with repeated collections or may be collected during an intensive but short period of time

Requires spending time within the world of those being researched

Uses a variety of data collection tools (interviews, observations, reflective journals and others) and different perspectives (child, teacher, parent, researcher) to provide depth

Employs two or more forms of data collection tool and/or two or more perspectives. This helps to triangulate the data and reinforces the legitimacy of the conclusions drawn.





Six steps in the
construction of
a case study:



This Photo by Unknown author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#).

1. The subject of the study:

What is the case you are actually looking at? Is it a classroom, a child, an institution, an event?

- It may be one that you know a lot about from your own actual experience – local information case
- It may be a particularly good example of something – key case
- It may be an outlier – reveals something interesting because it is different from the norm

This is the lens through which you are studying the topic of interest that you are interested in (the object of your study)



2. Object

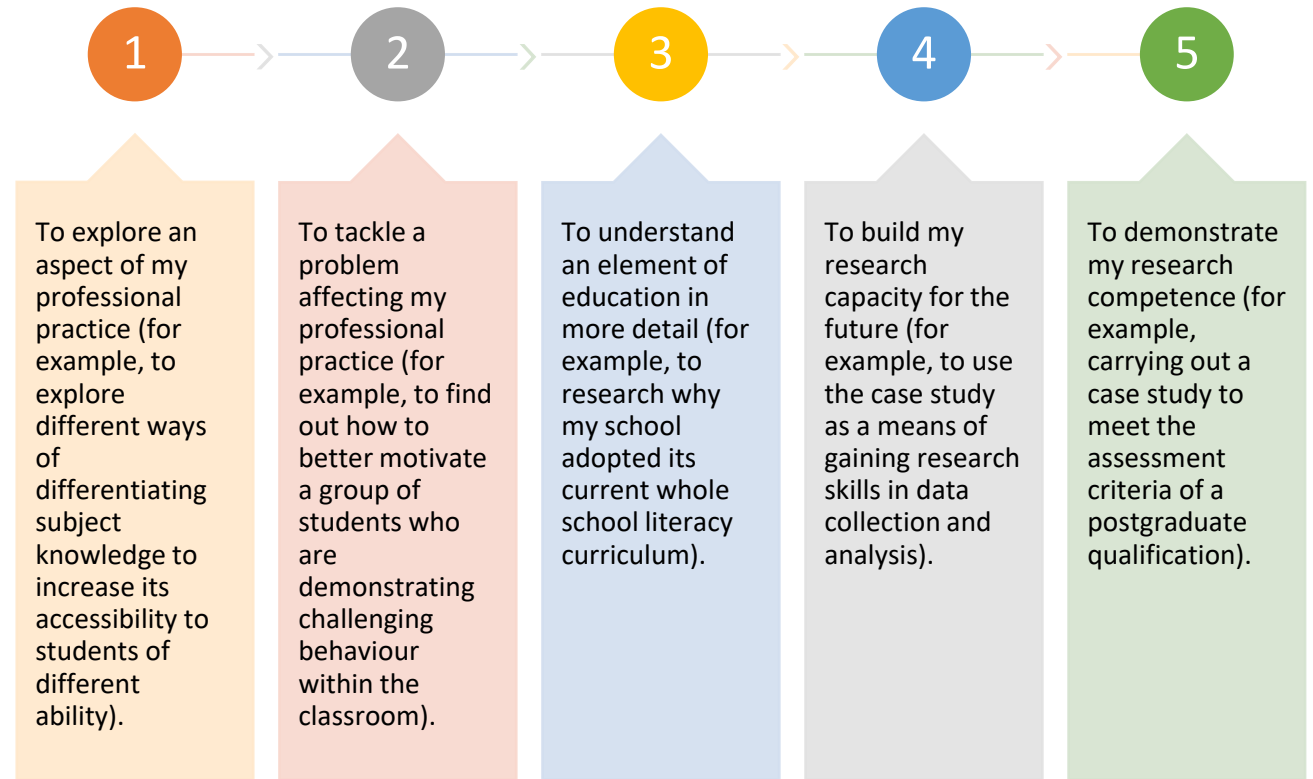
What is the theoretical topic at the heart of your question that the subject of your study is allowing you to explore in detail?



3. Purpose of study:

Exploratory research is defined as a research used to investigate a problem which is not clearly defined. It is conducted to have a better understanding of the existing problem but will not provide conclusive results. For such a research, a researcher starts with a general idea and uses this research as a medium to identify issues, that can be the focus for future research.

Which of the following purposes appeal to you most and why? Could more than one purpose be combined? Would this create any conflict or problems in establishing a focus, strategy, analysis and writing about your research?



4: Approach: Theory building or theory testing?

- Is it to test a theory that you or someone else has developed about a topic? If you start off with a firm ideas or set of premises, you could be said to be *testing* a theory

Or

- You may simply be aiming to illustrate something

Or

- Is it to develop a theory from new about a topic? If you are seeking to see what ideas emerge as you immerse yourself in the situation you are studying, you could be said to be *building* a theory



5. Methods

What data collection tools might you use and, how might you analyse the data that you gather?

Types of Qualitative Research Methods



In-Depth Interviews



Focus Groups



Surveys



Observations



Secondary Research

6.Process

- Single or multiple study?
- Snapshot at one particular moment in time or over a longer period?

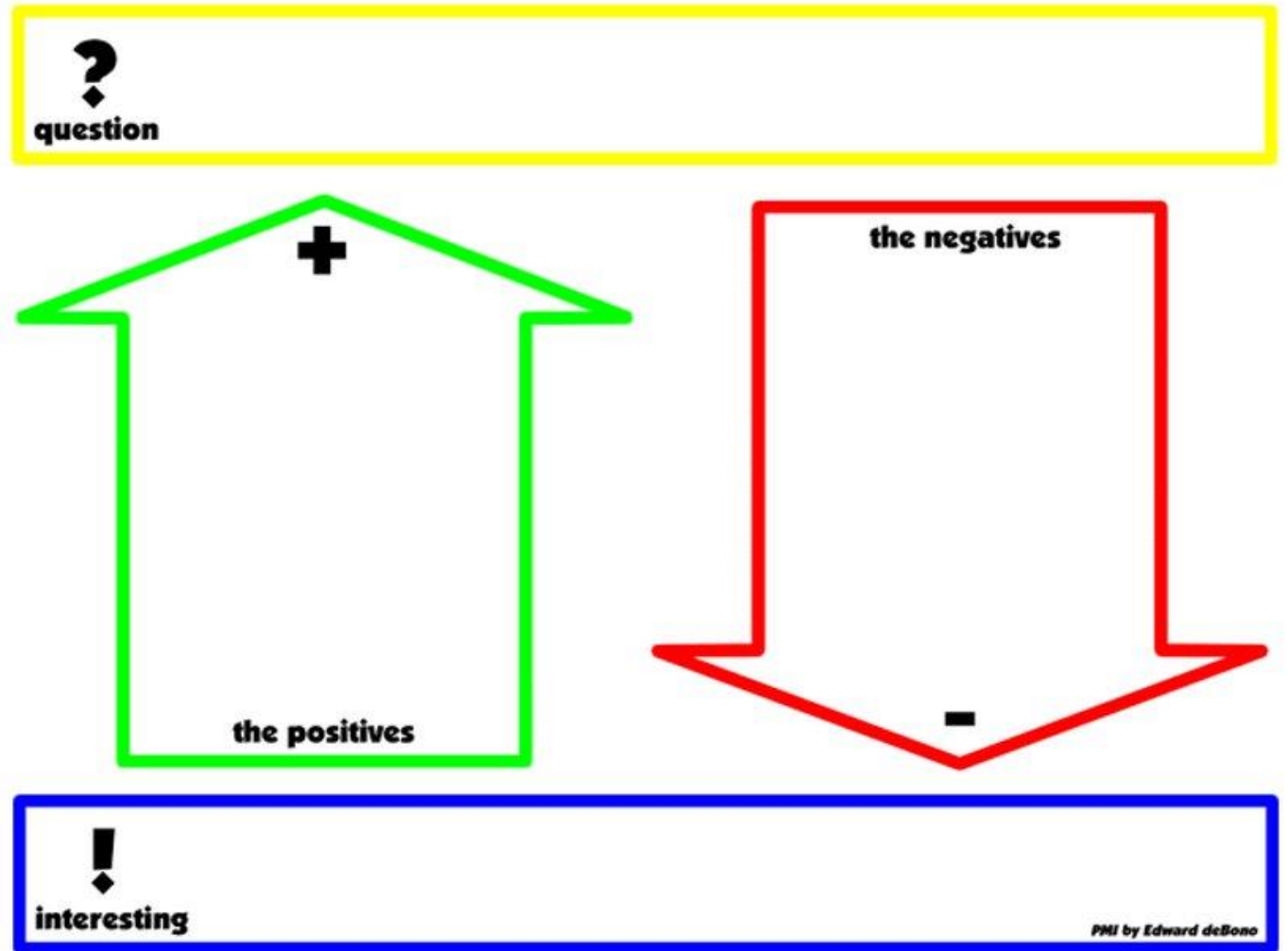


Looking at
exemplars of
case studies:



- Can you identify the six steps?

Evaluating case study as a research approach:



Advantages

- These are in-depth studies and provide rich data related to the case – they are based in reality and give us a real picture of the case
- These are based in reality and give us a real picture of the case.
- In terms of methods of data collection and analytic techniques, case studies accommodate diversity. In a single case study, one may include several methods such as interviews, observation, surveys, etc.
- It can be very helpful in narrowing down a challenging or nebulous problem that has not been previously studied.
- Exploratory research is effective in laying the groundwork that will lead to future studies. They open doors for further research.



This Photo by Unknown author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#).

Advantages (continued):

- They provide particularity and are holistic, minimizing the distraction caused by too many variables.
- It is very flexible, cost-effective, and open-ended. You are free to proceed however you think is best. Lower costs of conducting the study
- They are longitudinal and thus can help establish temporal effects in a case.
- Insights can be generated and connections made using various types of thinking (e.g. critical, reflective, creative) as main methodological tool
- Primary and secondary data can be collected relatively easily from a wide range of sources
- Patterns in relationships and processes can be identified and interpreted



Disadvantages

- Can be very prone to researcher bias, given their subjective nature. The researcher's values and beliefs may interfere with the objectivity of the analysis. This may lead to distortion and overlooking or ignoring important findings
- The results do not provide sufficient evidence for the study to be generalized for the benefit of a wider population.
- They are not easy to replicate and thus have less reliability.
- Small samples used – they may not be representative of the general population
- Anecdotal evidence from participants can be considered unscientific
- Causes and correlations between patterns, relationships and processes cannot be identified



This Photo by Unknown author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#).

Directed
Task:

OPEN ACCESS

Manuscript ID:
EDU-2020-08043232

Volume: 8

Issue: 4

Month: September

Year: 2020

P-ISSN: 2320-2653

E-ISSN: 2582-1334



Researcher Positionality - A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research - A New Researcher Guide

Andrew Gary Darwin Holmes

School of Education, University of Hull, Hull, England

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5147-0761>

Abstract

Masters and PhD student researchers in the social sciences are often required to explore and explain their positionality, as, in the social world, it is recognized that their ontological and epistemological beliefs influence their research. Yet novice researchers often struggle with identifying their positionality. This paper explores researcher positionality and its influence on and place in the research process. Its purpose is to help new postgraduate researchers better understand positionality so that they may incorporate a reflexive approach to their research and start to clarify their positionality.

Keywords: Researcher Positionality, Reflexivity, Epistemology, Ontology, Insider and Outsider research

Any
questions?



This Photo by Unknown author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#).

References:

- Yazan, B. (2015). Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake, *The Qualitative Report*, Vol 20, pp.134-152.
- Stake, R. E. (2005) Qualitative Case Studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 443–466). Sage.
- Thomas, G. (2021) How to do your case study. Sage.
- Simons, H. (2009) *Case Study Research in Practice*, London: Sage.