



## "Service at Register Four..."

O'Reilly, Paper and Marx (2012, p. 252)

Edd workshop on Grounded Theory  
15<sup>th</sup> November 2014

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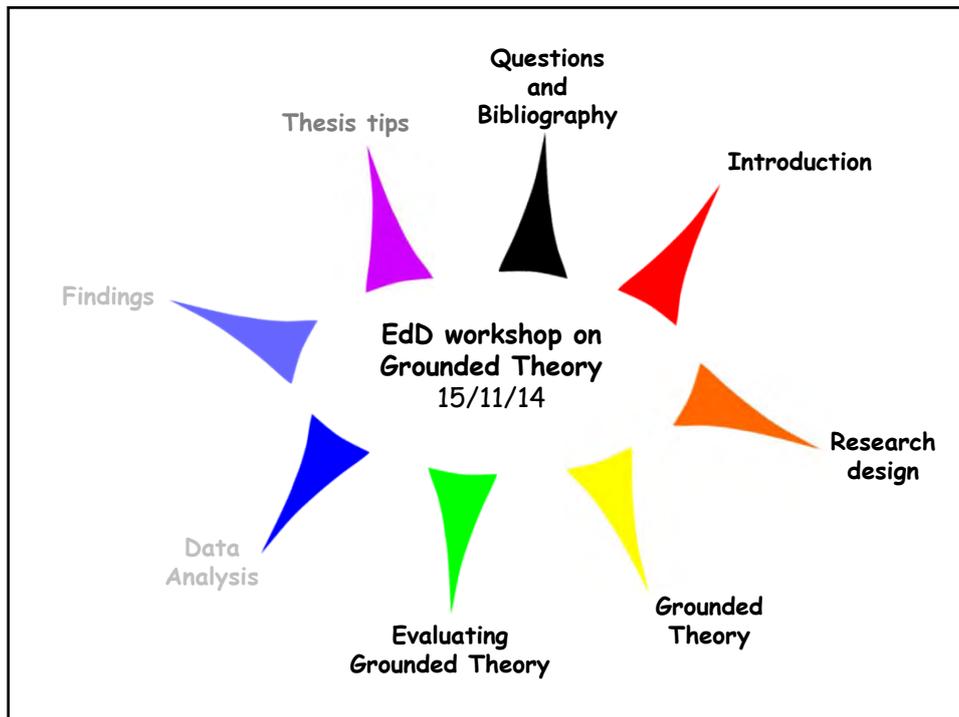
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Grounded Theory & business studies

1. "I'm a cashier... I'm not considered to be one of the employees on the 'floor'... they do some training for people who work on the floor, but not for cashiers." (Retail Cashier)
2. "So once a customer complains, we have no idea what or if anything takes place to resolve the issue." (Customer Service Manager)
3. "I think in some ways we have our hands tied behind our backs a little bit because we don't set pricing, we just deal with the issues." (Customer Service Phone Rep)
4. "We have the clerks order because we want them to know what's in stock and how well it sells." (Retail Executive)
5. "Online booking is an impersonal process and frustrating for customers." (Franchisee)
6. "I've been in stores when a customer comes up to a check stand and says, "I bought this item but I really meant to get this other model." And the cashier gets on the loudspeaker and says, "Service at Register Four..." That seems to me like they are just creating problems! (Retail Manager)

O'Reilly, Paper and Marx (2012, p. 252)



**Important ideas:**

- To understand how research designs may be classified.
- To reflect on the role of theory in research (with grounded theory as an exemplar).
- To have a systematic introduction to the assumptions underlying grounded theory.
- To understand why (rather than how) grounded theorists develop a theory in situ.
- To reflect on some of the critiques of Grounded Theory.



- A research design (according to Crotty, 1998) consists of epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology and research methods.
- "[The methodology called 'Grounded Theory' is a] systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.24)



introductions

Please tell me your **name and**, in a sentence, **one thing you find interesting**.




Prior knowledge

1. What, if anything, do you know about **research design** already?
2. What, if anything, do you know about **grounded theory**?
3. What experience of **research** do you have? How do you like to investigate things?
4. What do you think about the social sciences and/or the natural sciences?





Grounded Theory & business studies

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INTRODUCTION

## From a distance and generalizable to up close and grounded: Reclaiming a place for qualitative methods in international business research

Julian Birkinshaw,  
Mary Yoko Branmen  
and Rosalie L. Tung  
Special Issue Guest Editors



Birkinshaw

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It is exhilarating to write the introduction to this Special Issue as it presents an important opportunity for qualitative research to reclaim its position as an integral part of international business (IB) research. The field of IB was founded on a rich qualitative research legacy (e.g., Bartlett, 1979; Crozier, 1966; Eyreweather, 1969; Johanson & Vahlne, 1977; Kindleberger, 1956; Prahalad, 1975; Wilkins, 1970, 1974). Over time, however, such methods have been progressively marginalized in our field as quantitative methods have become the norm. This shift in emphasis has mirrored the broader trend toward more positivistic empirical methods in the social sciences. The field of IB is “multidisciplinary in scope, and interdisciplinary in content and methodology” (statement of *JIBS* editorial policy). However, as our respective home disciplines came under growing pressure to solidify their legitimacy as scientific endeavors that merit scholarly attention, it is not surprising that we began to take on the norms propagated within our own academic communities that typically equated quantitative data with “hard science”.

While there are clear merits associated with quantitative methods, the multi-cultural, multi-dimensional and dynamic nature of the field of IB lends itself to a broad range of research methodologies, qualitative methods being one of them. In order to understand the complexities of emergent and evolving phenomena scattered over distance, and the differentiated contexts typical to many topics under investigation in IB, it is often inappropriate to engage in large-scale, cross-sectional studies or reductionist methods in the absence of well-developed theory. Rather, thick description, exploratory research and comparative case analysis that focus on inductive theory building and hypotheses generation may be more suitable.

There is a growing recognition of the value of qualitative research in IB, with some important attempts to bring it closer to the fore (e.g., Marschan-Piekkari and Welch's 2004 *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*). However, despite the efforts of some scholars and journal editors, the number of articles in leading journals in IB that use qualitative methods remains relatively low (see the Welch et al. paper in this Special Issue). This is a particular loss in our field, where qualitative methods can



Grounded theory and RE

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**Giving voice to 'the silent minority': the experience of religious students in secondary school religious education lessons**

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(Received 8 February 2010; final version received 18 May 2010)

This paper explores the experiences of secondary school students from religious backgrounds in Religious Education (RE). A total of 16 loosely structured, group, pair and individual interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 34 school-age members of four religious communities: one Jewish and three Christian. The findings make a useful contribution to ongoing debates concerning pedagogy and practice in secondary RE. Members of the religious communities consulted often found their tradition stereotyped and simplified in RE lessons. Respondents also found that at times they were expected to be, or felt the need to be, spokespeople or representatives of their religion. However, experiences of religious intolerance and prejudice, or the fear of it, were common. This led to some students being reluctant to reveal or discuss their religious identity in lessons.

**Keywords:** religious education; student experience; Christianity; Judaism

**Introduction**

Religious educationists in the UK have long sought to find a pedagogical solution to the apparent discrepancy between the secular demands of modern society, the educational discourse of the secondary school and religion. In *Pedagogy of Religious Education*, Grimmit notes that contemporary models of RE attempt to bring education and religion 'into a relationship within the context of a secular educational system' (2000, 17). Rudge (1998) highlights this common project by coining the term 'silent majority' to indicate the mass of non-religious students that RE should seek to accommodate.

The various pedagogical approaches advocated to resolve this tension often rest upon different epistemological conceptions. For example, Wright argues that religions are social facts, available for scrutiny with the philosophical apparatus of critical realism. Ericker and Ericker, on the other hand, dispute the possibility of an objective understanding of religious traditions and opt for an anti-realist pedagogy that allows the child to construct

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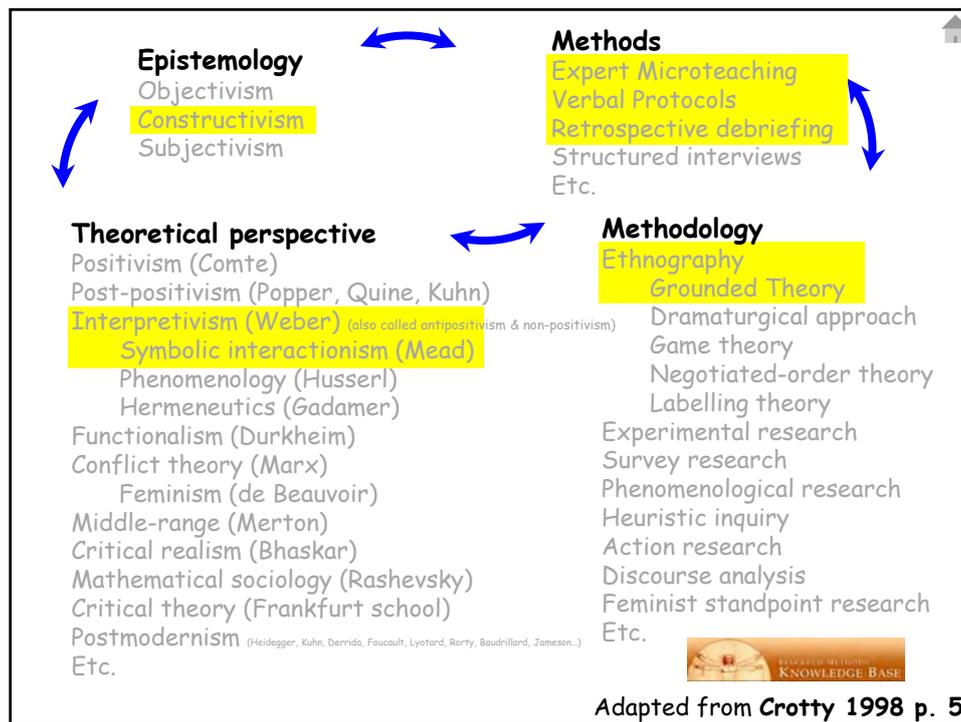
Moulin



lecture



What is a research design?



## Epistemology

**What is epistemology?**

- As a theoretical perspective is a way of looking at, and making sense of, the world, it inevitably involves knowledge.
- Some argue that the epistemology underpinning the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism is social constructionism (Gergen, 2009).
- Epistemology encompasses:  
" [The] nature of knowledge, its possibility, scope, and general basis."  
(Hamlyn, 1995, p.242)

**Theoretical perspective** 

**What is a theoretical perspective?**  
"[The] philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context for the process and grounding its logic and criteria." Crotty (1998 p. 3)

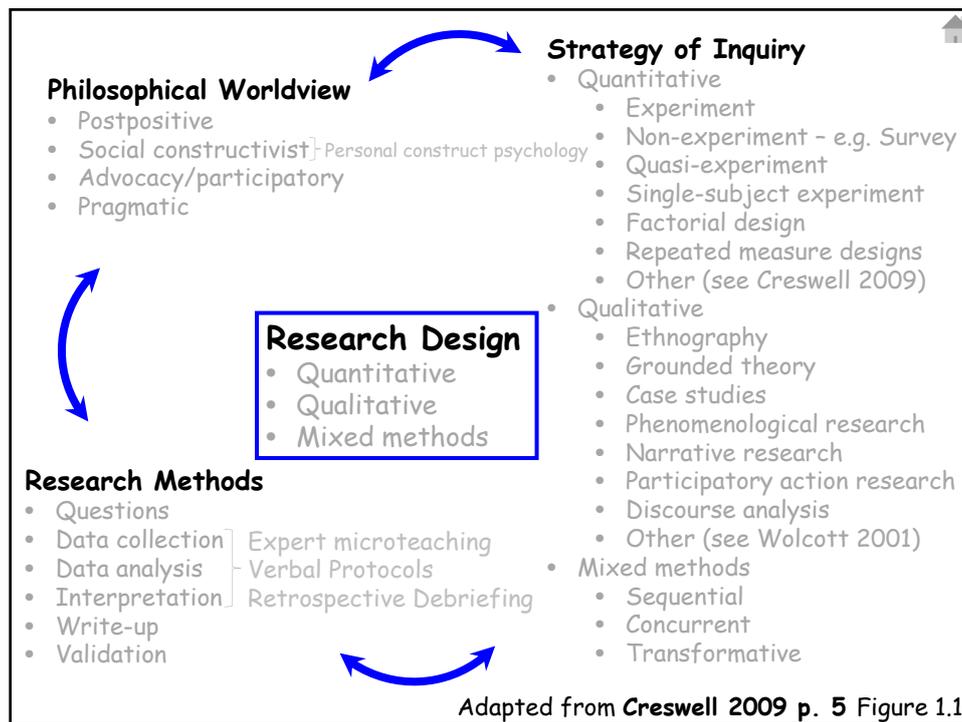
    

De Beauvoir      Marx      Weber      Simmel      Comte

large group discussion

What, if anything, is the role (or roles) of theory in research?



## THE GREAT DIVIDE

In the model we are following here, you will notice that the distinction between qualitative research and quantitative research occurs at the level of methods. It does not occur at the level of epistemology or theoretical perspective. What does occur back there at those exalted levels is a distinction between objectivist/positivist research, on the one hand, and constructionist or subjectivist research, on the other. Yet, in most research textbooks, it is qualitative research and quantitative research that are set against each other as polar opposites. Just as the student of Latin is taught very early on via the opening lines of *Caesar's Gallic Wars* that 'All Gaul is divided into three parts', so every beginning researcher learns at once that all research is divided into two parts—and these are 'qualitative' and 'quantitative', respectively.

[Crotty 1998 p. 14](#)

Our model suggests that this divide—objectivist research associated with quantitative methods over against constructionist or subjectivist research associated with qualitative methods—is far from justified. Most methodologies known today as forms of ‘qualitative research’ have in the past been carried out in an utterly empiricist, positivist manner. This is true, as we have already noted, of the early history of ethnography. On the other hand, quantification is by no means ruled out within non-positivist research. We may consider ourselves utterly devoted to qualitative research methods. Yet, when we think about investigations carried out in the normal course of our daily lives, how often measuring and counting turn out to be essential to our purposes. The ability to measure and count is a precious human achievement and it behoves us not to be dismissive of it. We should accept that, whatever research we engage in, it is possible for either qualitative methods or quantitative methods, or both, to serve our purposes. Our research can be qualitative or quantitative, or both qualitative and quantitative, without this being in any way problematic.

[Crotty 1998 p. 14](#)

What would seem to be problematic is any attempt to be at once objectivist and constructionist (or subjectivist). On the face of it, to say that there is objective meaning and, in the same breath, to say that there is no objective meaning certainly does appear contradictory. To be sure, the postmodernist world that has grown up around us calls all our cherished antinomies into question, and we are invited today to embrace ‘fuzzy logic’ rather than the logic we have known in the past with its principle of contradiction. Nevertheless, even at the threshold of the 21st century, not too many of us are comfortable with such ostensibly blatant contradiction in what we claim.

[Crotty 1998 p. 14](#)



small group discussion

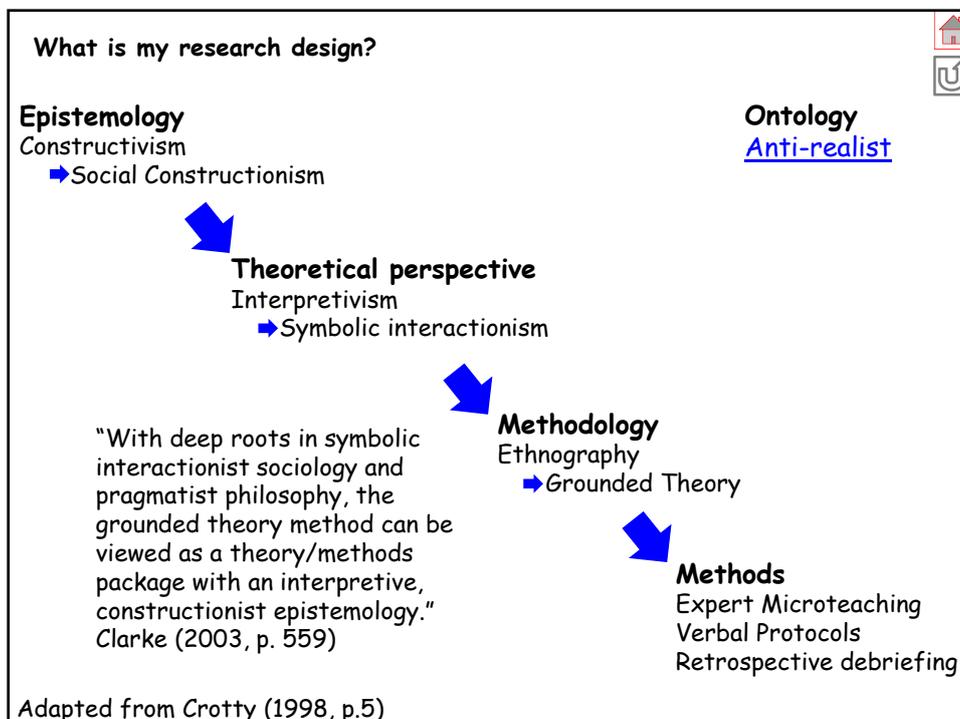
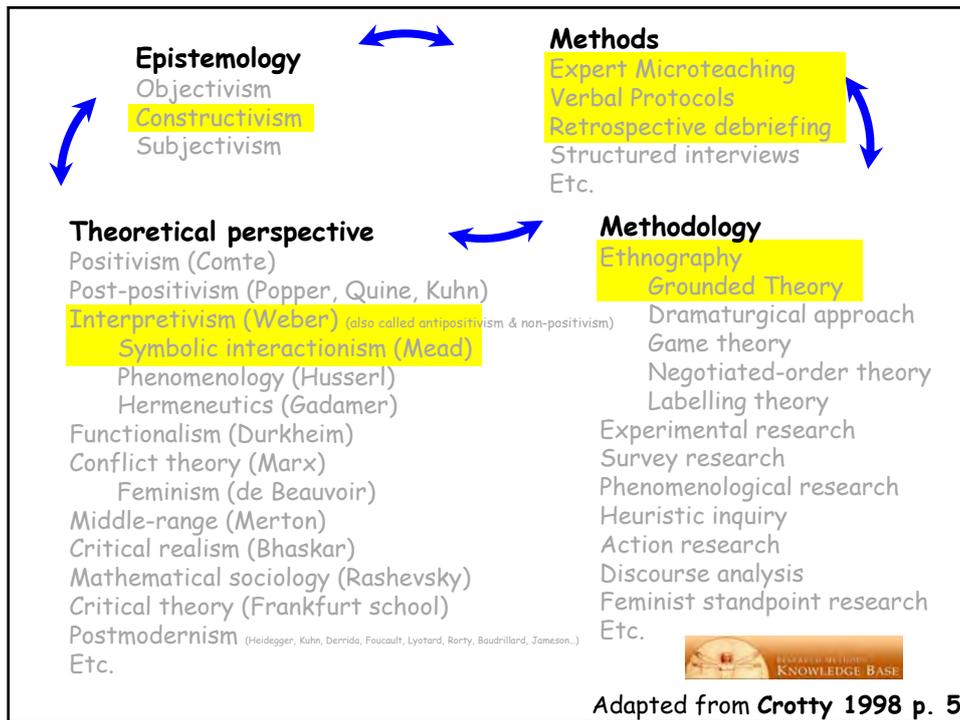
What is your research design?

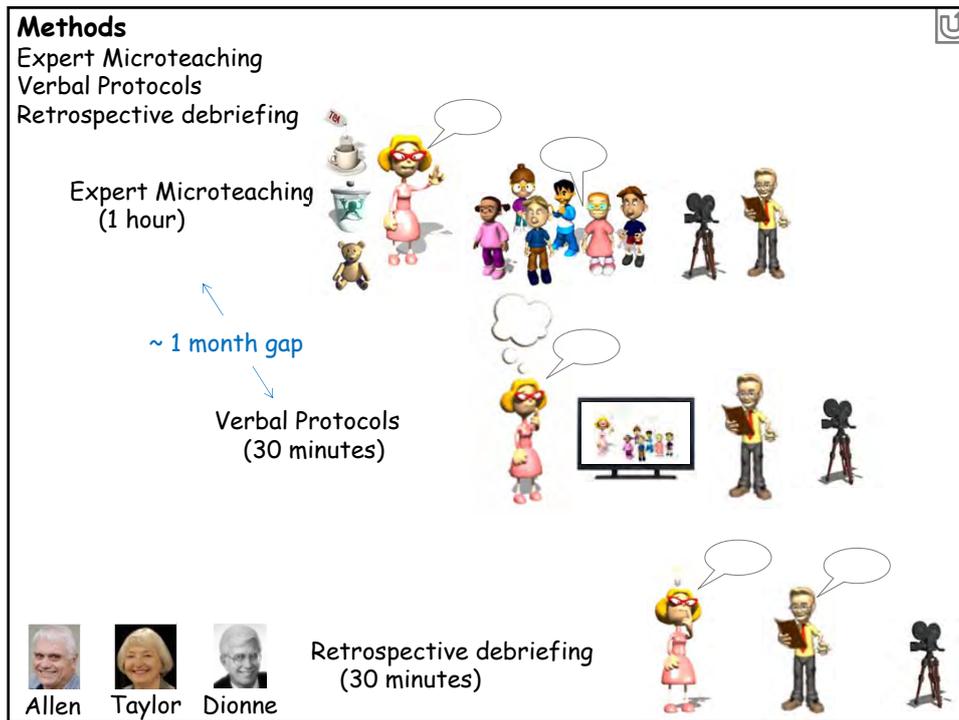
Or

Where does a researcher start with research design?



break





**Methodology**  
 Ethnography  
 → Grounded Theory

**What is ethnography?**

"...**ethnography** is a form of research in which the social settings to be studied, however familiar to the researcher, must be treated as anthropologically strange; and the task is to document the culture - the perspectives and practices - of the people in these settings. The aim is to 'get inside' the way each group of people sees the world." Hammersley (1985, p. 152)

**Is grounded theory a type of ethnography?**

"Symbolic interactionism has also spawned the research methodology known as *grounded theory*. **Grounded theory** can be viewed as a specific form of ethnographic inquiry that, through a series of carefully planned steps, develops theoretical ideas. Throughout the process, it seeks to ensure that the theory emerging arises from the data and not from some other source. It is a process of inductive theory building based squarely on observation of the data themselves." p. 78

Adapted from Crotty 1998 p. 5

## Methodology

Ethnography

→ Grounded Theory

### What is Grounded Theory (GT)?

"[A] systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.24)

### What are the Grounded Theory Methods (GTM) or Procedures?

1. Initial coding and categorization of data
2. Concurrent data generation or collection and analysis
3. Writing memos
4. Theoretical sampling
5. Constant comparative analysis using inductive and abductive logic;
6. Theoretical sensitivity
7. Intermediate coding
8. Selecting a core category
9. Theoretical saturation
10. Theoretical integration

Adapted from Birks and Mills (2011, p. 9).

## Theoretical perspective

Interpretivism

→ Symbolic interactionism



Weber



Mead

### What is interpretivism?

"[Interpretivism] looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world." Crotty (1998 p. 66)

### What is symbolic interactionism?

"...human beings interpret or 'define' each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their 'response' is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions." Blumer (1969, p. 19)

### What assumptions underlie symbolic interactionism?

- That human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that these things have for them
- That the meaning of such things is derived from, and arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows
- That these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters." Blumer (1969, p. 2,72) Adapted from Crotty 1998 p. 5

## Theoretical perspective

Interpretivism

➔ Symbolic interactionism

### How does a researcher decide which theoretical perspective to use?

- Does knowledge of science classroom culture help or hinder this task of understanding and explaining complicated classroom dynamics?
- The interpretivist theoretical perspectives of symbolic interactionism and of phenomenology respond in opposing ways to this question.
- Symbolic interactionism explores the inherited meaning-system which is culture.
- Phenomenology reacts cautiously to culture and calls researchers to lay aside, as best they can, prevalent understandings so that new meanings may be revealed (Lewis and Staehler, 2010, p. 14).

## Epistemology

Constructivism

➔ Social Constructionism

### What is constructivism?

- Constructivism refers to a family of theories that share the assertion that human knowledge and experience entail the (pro)active participation of the individual. (Mahoney, 1988, p.2)
- The word constructivism is used in such a wide variety of ways. 'Constructivism', according to Ernest (1996), can refer to an epistemology, an ontology, a methodology or a pedagogy. I refer to constructivism as an epistemology in this talk.
- The main types of constructivism (according to Raskin, 2002) are personal construct psychology (also known as constructive alternativism) (Kelly, 1955), radical constructivism (von Glasersfeld, 1995) and social constructionism (Gergen, 1985).



Berger



Luckmann

## Epistemology

### Social Constructionism



#### What is constructionism?

- Constructivism explores the cognitive basis of language, whereas constructionism examines language and social interchange.
- "**Constructivism** [involves] epistemological considerations focusing exclusively on 'the meaning-making activity of the individual mind' [in contrast to]... **constructionism** where the focus includes 'the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning.'" (Crotty, 1998, p. 58)

"...knowledge is not something people possess somewhere in their heads, but rather something people do together." Gergen 1985 p. 270

"The question 'why' is answered not with a psychological state or process but with consideration of persons in relationship." *ibid.* p. 271

"The demarcation (if any) between science and nonscience must be carefully examined." *ibid.* p. 273



Berger



Luckmann

## Epistemology

### Social Constructionism



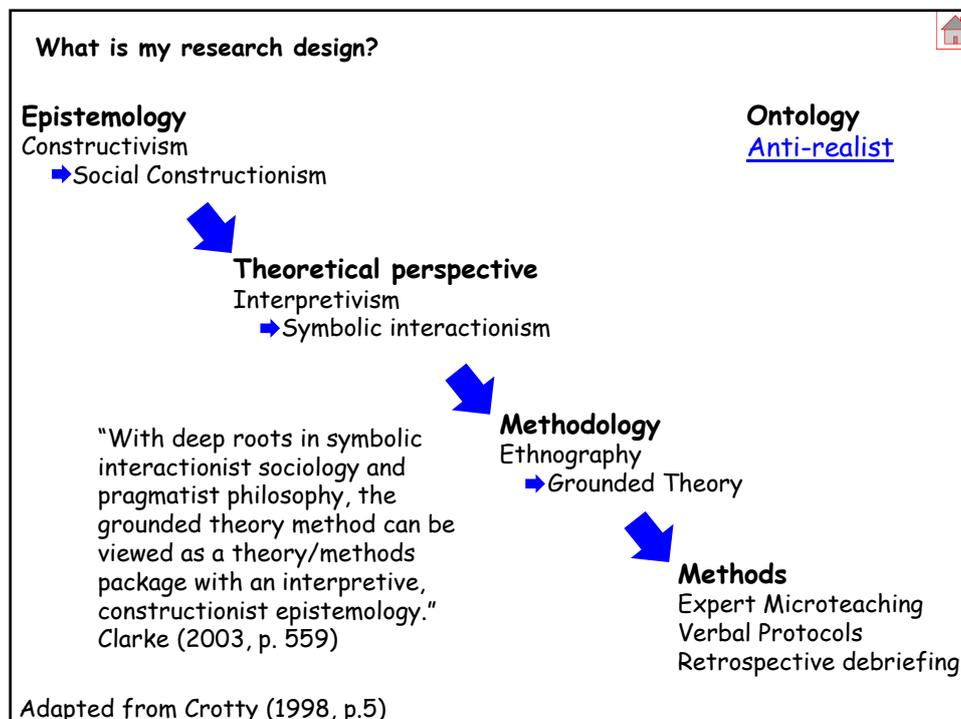
#### What is social constructionism?

"**Constructivism** ... points up the unique experience of each of us. It suggests that each one's way of making sense of the world is as valid and worthy of respect as any other, thereby tending to scotch any hint of a critical spirit. On the other hand, **social constructionism** emphasises the hold our culture has on us: it shapes the way in which we see things ... and gives us a quite definite view of the world. This shaping of our minds by culture is to be welcomed as what makes us human and endows us with the freedom we enjoy. For all that, there are social constructionists aplenty who recognise that it is limiting as well as liberating and warn that, while welcome, it must also be called into question. On these terms, it can be said that constructivism tends to resist the critical spirit, while constructionism tends to foster it." (Crotty, 1998, p. 58 see also p. 79)



### Pair discussion:

- Please talk critically about the idea of 'research design' in pairs.
- Discuss my research design critically.
- What, if any, research design or designs appeal to you? Talk together about why this is.
- Does any research design have advantages and disadvantages, or are some research designs better than others?



For	Against
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Highlights human participation in the construction of knowledge (ibid. p. 3)</li> <li>2. Attempts to bridge idealist and realist approaches to knowledge (Chiari and Nuzzo '96)</li> <li>3. Rejects individualistic "isolated knower" from constructivism (Gergen '95).</li> <li>4. Highlights multiple identities in different settings (Gergen '91).</li> <li>5. Role of language is critical (Gergen '91). Emphasises the primacy of relationships ('joint action', Shotter, '93)</li> <li>6. Knowledge is local and fleeting (ibid. p. 17). Knowledge is more or less viable (p. 4) rather than true or false.</li> <li>7. Some ways of constructing reality through language become dominant over others (they 'warrant voice'). Interest in power relations (p. 18).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Excessively antihumanistic (p. 17, Burr '95, Gergen '95)?</li> <li>2. Relativist (p17). No construction is better than any other (contrasts with Kelly '55 and von Glaserfeld '95). Gergen suggests this is an argument for social constructionism.</li> <li>3. Does not believe in the existence of an observer-independent reality (so is a Hermeneutic constructivism rather than Epistemological constructivism, p. 5). Reality is socially negotiated (p. 19)</li> </ol> <p>But "...the commonalities among [the approaches to constructivist psychology of Personal Construct Psychology, Radical Constructivism and Social Constructionism] outweigh the points of divergence." Raskin (2002, p. 2)</p>
Adapted from Raskin 2002 p. 1-25	
<b>Epistemology - Social constructionism</b>	

For	Against
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participants are pragmatic actors adjusting their behaviour to the actions of others. This contrasts with the view of humans as passive conforming objects within a society (functionalism).</li> <li>2. Adjustment is possible because participants can interpret the actions of others. Our own actions and those of others are symbolised.</li> <li>3. Imaginative rehearsal aids adjustment.</li> <li>4. Interest in the roles people play (Goffman '58)</li> <li>5. Rejects a behaviourist interpretation of human actions by allowing for interpretation between stimulus and response (Blumer '62)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Narrow focus on small group interactions. Unable to deal with other social structures.</li> <li>2. Research methods are overly impressionistic.</li> <li>3. Politically ambiguous. The theorists seem to be against existing hierarchies, but offer nothing in response (Gouldner '71)</li> <li>4. Theory is vague and unsystematic, so is difficult to use.</li> </ol>
Adapted from McClelland 2000	
<b>Theoretical Perspective - Symbolic interactionism</b>	

For	Against
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meets the need to justify qualitative processes - <i>justification of process</i></li> <li>2. Justifies qualitative research in terms familiar to quantitative researchers (data, validity, systematic, empirical, etc.) - <i>justification of ontology</i></li> <li>3. Keeps the 'gate-keepers' placated - <i>justification by publication and acceptance</i></li> <li>4. Provides a rationale for researchers as they begin a study - <i>justification of methodological flexibility and indeterminacy</i></li> <li>5. Challenges acceptance of extant theories - <i>justification of open-mindedness</i></li> <li>6. Requires a comparative approach</li> <li>7. Keeps the analyst engaged through adopting emerging guidelines.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Epistemological naivety (Emerson '83, Katz '83)</li> <li>2. Slipshod data collection (Lofland and Lofland '84)</li> <li>3. Questionable justification of small samples (Charmaz '06)</li> <li>4. Production of trite categories (Silverman '01)</li> <li>5. Incompatibility with macro questions (Burawoy '91, Layder '98)</li> <li>6. Un-scientific (Spalter-Roth '05)</li> <li>7. Naive inductionism (Layder '98)</li> <li>8. Positivist - adopts an uncritical stance towards data (ibid. p. 50)</li> <li>9. Refuge for the methodologically indecisive (ibid. p. 49)</li> <li>10. Umbrella term hiding 'Qualitative Data Analysis' (Haig '95)</li> <li>11. Advice regarding use of existing literature anomalous and ambivalent (ibid. p. 51) etc. etc.</li> </ol>

Adapted from Bryant and Charmaz 2010 p. 31-52

**Methodology - Grounded Theory**

For	Against
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pupils have many <b>opportunities to express and develop</b> their ideas across biology, chemistry and physics topics.</li> <li>2. Context allows the teacher the possibility to intervene at their discretion. <b>Sharp focus on conceptual change.</b></li> <li>3. Influence of the <b>researcher</b> controlled in expert microteaching and verbal protocols.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Artificial <b>context</b> is unrepresentative of classroom dynamics. Any emerging grounded theory can only be applied in this setting.</li> <li>2. Pathetically small <b>sample size.</b></li> <li>3. Selection of the <b>video clips</b> used as prompts could be <b>leading.</b></li> </ol>

Adapted from Bryant and Charmaz 2010 p. 31-52

**Research methods - evaluation**



### large group discussion

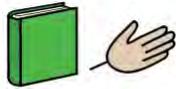
Please **feedback** your thoughts about:

- research methods
- methodology
- theoretical perspective
- epistemology



### lecture

If we have time (which we probably won't) I will tell you a little about the findings of my study.



### Thesis tips

1. Write and get feedback (Thesis - version 1)
2. [Typical](#) (and atypical) chapter headings
3. Formatting styles (Heading, Normal and Quote)
4. Navigation view
5. Contents, figures and tables
6. Refworks
7. Briefcase in Windows Explorer
8. Formal and informal supervision. Proof readers.
9. Ctrl + F, C, V, X      Alt + tab
10. Skin thickening - Present (Thesis PowerPoint - version 1)



**Any questions?**

**A short bibliography:**

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For a full bibliography please email me

**Thank you.**

- Please take a card with my contact details on it if you like (or a sticker). My email is [john-paul.riordan@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:john-paul.riordan@canterbury.ac.uk)
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