



Research Methods I - Qualitative

Course: MA In International Studies On Media, Power And Difference

Year: 2015-2016

Term: 1

ECTS credits: 5

Instructor: Carles Roca

1. Course description

This course is an advanced qualitative methods of media and communication. It addresses both the practical dimensions of qualitative methods and the epistemological principles of these methods. It provides students with an advanced understanding of qualitative inquiry in the social sciences, the prospect to learn how to design research that uses qualitative methodology and an opportunity to conduct fieldwork using tools for data collection such as participant observation, interviewing, focus group interviews, qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis. It introduces students to techniques for analysing qualitative data documented in field notes, interview transcripts or media content. Finally, this course aims to familiarise students with the art of writing and presenting qualitative research.

2. Student learning outcomes

Generic competences

1. Obtain general basic knowledge with regard to the field of qualitative research.
2. Acquire the capacity of analysing and summarising information.
3. Gain familiarity with the available communication resources.
4. Develop a critical lens in reviewing your own and others research.

Subject-specific competences

1. Understand the basic assumptions underlying qualitative research.
2. Know the rationales for selecting qualitative methods, the types of questions that can and cannot be answered using these methods and the strengths and limitations of these methods.
3. Be able to design qualitative research.
4. Gain general knowledge of qualitative research methods, including: ethnography, interviews, focus groups, content analysis and discourse analysis.
5. Be able to utilise course materials to propose, develop and conduct research projects.

6. Understand analysis techniques associated with qualitative research and data processing software.
7. Be able to prepare qualitative research proposals.
8. Understand and practice the writing and presenting of qualitative research.

3. Content

1. Introduction to qualitative research

Scientific knowledge; social research; the scientific method; theory and the qualitative method; ethical concerns in qualitative research

2. Designing and planning qualitative research: stages and concepts

Conceptualising an idea; formulating a research problem; developing a theoretical framework; defining key concepts; research design; sampling

3. Qualitative research techniques I: researching people

Interviews; Focus group research; ethnography and virtual ethnography

4. Qualitative research techniques II: researching media content

Qualitative content analysis; discourse analysis

5. Qualitative data analysis

Grounded theory; open, axial and selective coding; limitations; software for qualitative data analysis

6. Writing and presenting qualitative research

Writing a report: literature review, methodology, writing up data, conclusions.
Presenting a report: writing qualitative evidence, formatting qualitative work, visual representation.

4. Assessment

Methods of assessment	Percentage
Class participation	10%

Research proposal	90%
TOTAL	100

- **Individual assignment:** research proposal (**90%**).
- **Class participation:** **10%** of the final grade.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. TITLE
2. RESEARCH TOPIC AND SUBTOPICS
3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS
5. METHODOLOGY
 - a. method
 - b. research technique
 - c. universe
 - d. sampling
6. DATA ANALYSIS
7. REFERENCE LIST

5. Textbooks, readings and learning resources

5.1. Essential textbooks

Berger, Arthur Asa (2000). *Media and Communication Research Methods: An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. London: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (2007). *The Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

Flick, U., von Kardoff, E. & Steinke, I. (Eds.). (2004). *A companion to qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Flick, U. (2008). *Designing qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Harding, J. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis from start to finish*. London: Sage.

Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2011). *Qualitative communication research methods* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Silverman, D. (2010). *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.

Silverman, D. (2011). *Qualitative Research: Issues of Theory, Method and Practice*. London: Sage.

Tracy, S. J. (2012). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact*. Oxford: John Wiley & Sons.

5.2. Recommended textbooks

Altheide, D. L., & Schneider, C. J. (2012). *Qualitative media analysis*. London: Sage.

Brennen, B. S. (2012). *Qualitative research methods for media studies*. New York: Routledge.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London: Sage.

Gibbs, G. R. (2008). *Analysing qualitative data*. London: Sage.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (3rd ed.). Taylor and Francis e-Library.

Hennink, M. M. (2014). *Understanding focus groups*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hine, C. (2015). *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, embodied and everyday*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

King, N., & Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Saldaña, J. (2011). *Fundamentals of qualitative research*. Oxford: Oxford university press.

Schreier, M. (2012). *Qualitative content analysis in practice*. London: Sage.

Stewart, D. W., & Shamdasani, P. N. (2014). *Focus groups: Theory and practice*. London: Sage.

5.3. Web resources

- **COMMUNICATION WEBSITES**

The media and communication studies site

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/>

- **RESOURCES FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

Qual page

<http://www.qualitative-research.net/QualPage/QualPage/welcome.html>

- **QUALITATIVE AND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH JOURNALS**

Communication Research

<http://crx.sagepub.com/>
Communication Theory
<http://www.wiley.com/bw/journal.asp?ref=1050-3293>
Critical Studies in Media and Communication
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rcsm>
Discourse and Communication
<http://dcm.sagepub.com/>
European Journal of Communication
<http://ejc.sagepub.com/>
Field Methods
<http://fmx.sagepub.com/>
Forum: Qualitative Social Research
<http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/issue/current>
International Journal of Qualitative Methods
<http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM/index>
Journal of Applied Communication Research
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rjac>
Journal of Communication
<http://www.wiley.com/bw/journal.asp?ref=0021-9916>
Media Culture & Society
<http://mcs.sagepub.com/>

- **RESEARCH CENTRES AND ASSOCIATIONS**

The International Association for Media and Communication Research

<http://iamcr.org>

International Communication Association

<http://www.icahdq.org>

Asociación Española de Investigación de la Comunicación

<http://www.ae-ic.org/esp/home.asp>

European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)

<http://www.ecrea.eu>

- **JOURNAL DATABASES, DIRECTORIES AND RANKING**

JCR. Journal Citation Reports

<http://www.accesowok.fecyt.es/jcr>

ERIH. European Reference Index for the Humanities

<http://www.esf.org/research-areas/humanities/>

LATINDEX

<http://www.latindex.unam.mx/index.html?opcion=2>

WOS. Web of Science (SCI, SSCI, A&HCI)

<http://science.thomsonreuters.com/mjl/>

IBSS. International Bibliography of Social Sciences

<http://www.proquest.co.uk/en-UK/catalogs/databases/detail/ibss-set-c.shtml>

SA. Sociological Abstracts

<http://www.csa.com/factsheets/socioabs-set-c.php>

SCOPUS

<http://www.scopus.com/home.url>

Google Académico/Scholar

<http://scholar.google.es/>

EBSCOhost

6. Teaching and learning methods

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Self-learning
- Tutorials
- Individual assignments

7. Schedule

Week	Lecturer	Activity	Activity outside class
1	Carles Roca	T1	
2	Carles Roca	T2	
3	Carles Roca	T3: interviews	
4	Carles Roca	T3: Focus Groups	
5	Carles Roca	T3: Ethnography	
6	Carles Roca	T4: Q content analysis	
7	Carles Roca	T4: discourse analysis	
8	Carles Roca	T5: data analysis	
9	Carles Roca	T5: data analysis software	
10	Carles Roca	T6	