



Social Science Data Library

**3rd Annual
Planning for Qualitative Research: Design, Analysis and
Software Integration
January 11-13, 2012
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA**

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS & INSTRUCTOR BIOS

Presentation Approaches Defined:

- **Work Session** = At-computer teaching
- **Interactive Seminar** = Facilitated discussion led by a ResearchTalk consultant

Note About Data:

A teaching dataset will be used in all courses. We encourage you to raise questions and discussions about your own data and qualitative research during sessions.

Course Descriptions Arranged By Date:

January 11, 2012

Core Principles in Qualitative Research

9:30am-12:00pm

Interactive Seminar

A qualitative approach can be used to study contextual factors that influence everyday behavior, social justice issues, to assess quality and to arrive at a deeper understanding of the meaning behind race, class, and gender issues and more. However, the approach taken by individual qualitative researchers varies greatly. New and experienced qualitative researchers alike often ask: "Is my approach to qualitative research consistent with core principles of the method?"

To answer this larger question, consider component issues raised in the following questions:

1. *What unique statement(s) will you make because you took a qualitative approach?*
 - Ask yourself if you want to diagnose a trend, pattern or assess the predominance of attitudes and behaviors? Would you prefer finding a

window into what your participants lives look like, how they negotiate their day, or navigate a situation? If the former, a quantitative approach is better suited. The latter represents issues important to qualitative researchers.

2. *How will the qualitative analysis approach you have chosen help you arrive at your goals?*
 - Did you choose your approach to data analysis because it's what you are familiar with or because your colleagues use this approach? If so, you may want to re-think your choices. Your approach should align with the goals for the study. If you want to talk about how key issues, determined during the design phase of your study, influence your topic of study a code and retrieve approach may be the best option. If you are leaning toward an understanding of issues raised above (what happens in the everyday life of your participants? Can you unearth a process that is a driving force behind your topic of study?) you probably need a multidimensional approach that considers the holistic, the particular and the relationship between the two.
3. *What does it mean to "stay close to the text?" How do you do it? Why does it matter?*
 - If your approach is inductive and you want to learn from the serendipitous, it is important to be conscious of what is really in the text and what is interpretation beyond the text. Practice doing a careful inventory of what is in the text. Look at a list that evolves from this process and consider what the items on your inventory list mean. Consider an evolving memo process. Don't fear interpretation, but review your memos and ask yourself if the content of your memos is moving too far too fast. What work can you do to ground these ideas back in the data?

Learn to integrate issues raised via these questions in your research and analysis plans. Our "Core Principles" course takes a broad perspective on these issues as they apply over the entire life of a project. This session begins with an exercise to establish a deeper understanding of why to do qualitative research. We then use data examples, supplied by the instructor, to provide practical and theoretical answers to questions raised here. Participants will become more confident in the decision-making processes they will confront in each stage of developing and executing a qualitative research project.

Early Stage Qualitative Projects: Data Organization: Inventory, Categorization & Memoing

9:30am-12:00pm

Work Session

Standard introduction to ATLAS.ti, with special attention to skills required to start a qualitative analysis project:

1. Project Management
2. Creating and Naming Quotations
3. Codes and Coding
4. Memos and Comments

Conducting Qualitative Interviews and Focus Groups

1:30pm-4:00pm

Interactive Seminar

This course focuses on the practical aspects of the interview and focus group process. How do you get interviews and focus groups done? We will focus on strategies to maintain paramount attention to four critical aspects of the interview process:

1. Topic – What is the overall point of the interview or focus group? How does the interview or focus group flow assist the researcher in achieving project goals? How can you ensure that interview or focus group topics do not direct attention away from project goals?
2. Audience – Who are your interview or focus group participants? How does knowledge of the participant inform question format and questioning approach?
3. Questioning – What do you ask participants? How is a discussion managed? Our focus will be on the tension between attention to the interview or focus group guide vs. attention to the developing discussion and flow of the interview or focus group.
4. Adjusting – When and why can and/or do you make adjustments to the interview or focus group? How do you track and understand the meaning these changes have on the project?

The main goal of this course is to leave participants with a sense of where to direct attention for successful interview or focus group projects.

Later Stage Qualitative Analysis: Qualitative Questioning: Bridging, Diagramming & Memoing

1:30pm-4:00pm

Work Session

Once you inventory, code, and write memos about your data, then what? This course covers the output and question and answer tools of ATLAS.ti. What is the best way to use the network analysis tools? Co-occurrence tools? Links to quantitative programs? How do you use memos, comments and networks to bridge to reports, chapters and articles you write?

January 12, 2012

Teaching Qualitative Methods

9:30am-12:00pm

Interactive Seminar

Teaching qualitative methods should combine learning from readings, classroom and practical experience. This course provides tips for each of these areas and includes examples of how to convey some of the more nuanced principles of qualitative methods.

The course concludes with a module on when, whether and how to incorporate discussions of qualitative software into methods courses. This discussion includes the following topics: What are the core facts that must be conveyed to new users of qualitative software? How do you balance presentation of core skills and invite unique approaches to the program? How do you encourage users to integrate their unique analysis plans with software use rather than follow prescriptive pathways that may not fit their needs? When and how frequently should students actually be in front of a computer?

Introduction to Mixed Methods Research

9:30am-12:00pm

Interactive Seminar

This session will introduce mixed methods research in the social and behavioral sciences and discuss its inherent advantages and challenges. It will focus on research design, including both sequential and concurrent strategies, as well as issues of priority and timing of the qualitative and quantitative strands. Approaches for analyzing data from multiple methods and presenting findings will also be addressed. Participants are encouraged to come with particular research questions or ideas for projects they would like to undertake.

Sort & Sift, Think & Shift - A Multidimensional Approach to Qualitative Analysis & Software Use

1:30pm-4:00pm

Interactive Seminar

Sort and Sift, Think and Shift is a multidimensional qualitative analysis method that utilizes aspects of several major qualitative analysis traditions in conjunction with the functionality of qualitative data analysis software in order to generate a thorough treatment of data. The Sort and Sift approach is non-linear and is not step-by-step. Fluid movement between the "diving in" and "stepping back" phases of the method drives next steps and decision making in regard to data inventory, categorization, memoing, diagramming and Q & A.

Learning from Mistakes: Evolving Qualitative Research Projects & Qualitative Skill

1:30pm-4:00pm

Interactive Seminar

This course focuses on how to 'take stock' of your qualitative analysis project and adjust accordingly. We will follow a scorecard that outlines key areas for concern when assessing a qualitative project:

1. It is a database; honor that fact
2. Inventory and Assessment – giving careful consideration to how you start your project.
3. Overcoding and undercoding
4. Documentation is blue collar work - making use of qualitative memoing
5. Your decisions are not written in stone – how flexible and prepared for new learning are you?
6. *Special Focus* - What are the best practices for analyzing video, audio, images and .pdf files? What is the A-docs feature of ATLAS.ti and how can it be used to complement document transcription?

January 13, 2012

Sort & Sift, Think & Shift - A Multidimensional Approach to Qualitative Analysis & Software Use

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Sort and Sift, Think and Shift is a multidimensional qualitative analysis method that utilizes aspects of several major qualitative analysis traditions in conjunction with the functionality of qualitative data analysis software in order to generate a thorough treatment of data. The Sort and Sift approach is non-linear and is not step-by-step. Fluid movement between the "diving in" and "stepping back" phases of the method drives next steps and decision making in regard to data inventory, categorization, memoing, diagramming and Q & A.

Early Stage Qualitative Projects: Data Organization: Inventory, Categorization & Memoing

9:30am-12:00pm

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Data Management, Teamwork and Legitimacy in Qualitative Research

1:30pm-4:00pm

Interactive Seminar

Data Management & Teamwork in Qualitative Analysis

How do you best manage projects that have many coders, and where personnel come and go? How do you best introduce new people to the project? How do you best merge codes and codings? How do you decide if standardization of work is appropriate and if so, how do you introduce standardization practices? When do you introduce qualitative software into this process?

Is My Qualitative Work Legitimate?

Is there a standard for documenting qualitative data analysis? What is it and how do we employ it? What is the best way of transferring information about a project from one analyst to the next? Also, what is the best way of documenting the work so that it can be understood and, possibly, replicated?

Later Stage Qualitative Analysis: Qualitative Questioning: Bridging, Diagramming & Memoing

1:30pm-4:00pm

Work Session

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Instructor Bios:

Ray Maietta

Dr. Raymond C. Maietta is president of ResearchTalk Inc., a qualitative research consulting company based in Bohemia, New York and Cary, North Carolina. A Ph.D. sociologist from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Ray's interests in the art of qualitative research methods motivated him to start ResearchTalk in 1996. ResearchTalk Inc. provides advice on all phases of qualitative analysis to university, government, not-for-profit and corporate researchers.

More than 15 years of consultation with qualitative researchers informs the recent publications and a current methods book Dr. Maietta is writing:

- "Systematic Procedures of Inquiry and Computer Data Analysis Software for Qualitative Research" (co-authored with John Creswell, *Handbook of Research Design and Social Measurement*, Sage 2002)
- "State of the Art: Integrating Software with Qualitative Analysis" (in Leslie Curry, Renee Shield and Terrie Wetle, (Eds.) *Applying Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Aging and Public Health Research*. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association and the Gerontological Society of America 2006).
- "The Use of Photography as a Qualitative Research Method" (in Judith Tanur (Ed.) *Visualizing Social Science*. Social Science Research Council, New York, NY 2008)
- "Qualitative Software" (in Lisa Given (ed.) *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA 2008)
- "Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis with MAXQDA" (in *Journal of Mixed Methods*, April 2008. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA 2008)
- *Sort and Sift, Think and Shift* is in progress.

Ray's work invites interactions with researchers from a range of disciplinary backgrounds. He is an active participant at conferences around the country including invited presentations at *American Evaluation Association*, *American Anthropological Association*, and *American Sociological Association*.

Paul Mihás

Paul Mihás supports qualitative research and text-analysis software at the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is the former managing editor of *Social Forces*, a journal of sociology published at the University of North Carolina Press. He has been with ResearchTalk since 2001 as a qualitative analysis consultant. Mihás received an M.A. (1989) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has given presentations on qualitative methods at several universities, including the University of Puerto Rico and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. His interests include memo writing as a stand-

alone method; his qualitative research focuses on cancer survivors and metaphors for illness and the body.