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Qualitative Research Methods

AL 8961 CRN 15753

Spring 2007

Time: W 1:00-3:30 pm

Location: Aderhold 403

Instructor: Diane Belcher

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Objectives

After completing this course, you should be

Aware of the historical and philosophical origins of qualitative research

Knowledgeable about the theoretical concepts that inform qualitative research

Familiar with the range and complexity of qualitative research methods

Able to critically assess the appropriateness of qualitative methods for particular research goals

Able to utilize an appropriate set of qualitative research methods for a self-designed study

PhD Program learning outcomes relevant to this course:

Be familiar with the current state of knowledge in applied linguistics, including the numerous questions that remain to be answered. Evidence: WebCT discussion of recent research; midterm essay literature review of research on specific topics; in-class presentation evaluating recently completed dissertation research

Be able to design studies on a range of topics in applied linguistics. Evidence: Final paper proposing a major qualitative research project, including pilot study results

Required Texts

Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting Qualitative Research*, 3rd Edition. London: Sage.

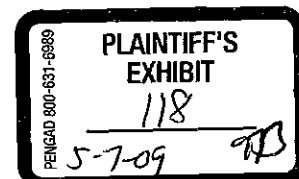
Creswell, J. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Supplemental readings: ERes BA8961WXD

Requirements

1. **20% Participation in in-class discussion (5%) and WebCT discussion board (15%).** WebCT postings should reveal your thoughts on (not simple summarization of) the readings for the coming class. Be sure to critically comment on the sample research articles/dissertation chapters in light of the other readings for the same week (though there may or may not be any obvious connections.) Your postings should also attempt to show awareness of (and respect for) your classmates' responses to the readings, i.e., unless you begin a

EXHIBIT 90 - 1



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new thread, should be approximately 200 words long (or more), and should be completed by 7 pm Tuesday of each week.

2. **25% Two class presentations:** 1) (10%) A collaborative presentation (approximately 20 min.) introducing us to the salient characteristics of one of the following major theoretical movements: Social Constructivism, Postmodernism, Cultural Studies, Critical Theory & Pedagogy, Sociocultural Theory, Systemic Functional Linguistics. 2) (15%) An evaluation (approx. 20-30 min.) of the rationale, implementation, and documentation (writing up) of qualitative research in a PhD dissertation. Each presentation should include PowerPoint and handouts.
3. **20% Midterm essay:** A rationale for a qualitative study investigating a topic of interest to you (appropriate for a dissertation and/or a journal article). This rationale should include an introduction to your topic, creation of a research space for your particular approach to the topic, and an exhaustive-enough literature review to clarify the need for and likely efficacy of your planned study. (5-7 pages) **Due dates:** First draft due as Word attachment emailed to peer and instructor 2/25 (Sun.) midnight; peer response due to author and instructor 3/2 (Fri.) midnight; final draft due 3/16 (Fri.) midnight.
4. **35% Final essay:** A proposal for a major study, incorporating the earlier rationale but also including a methods section, pilot study results, and conclusion (discussing expected outcomes, significance, implications). At least two qualitative methods must be chosen for the project and implemented in the pilot study (on a small-scale basis). Appendices relevant to the methods/data should be included, e.g., interview protocols, transcripts, sample field notes, sample student texts, other documents, or concordance data. (approx. 15 pages, not counting appendices) **Due dates:** First draft due as Word attachment emailed to peer and instructor 4/22 (Sun.) midnight; peer response due to author and instructor 4/27 (Fri.) midnight; final draft due 5/4 (Fri.) midnight.

Statement on Academic Honesty

(Quoted from the GSU Policy on Academic Honesty)

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The University assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for fairness require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. These ideals also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable and unethical conduct related to their academic work.

Academic dishonesty occurs in the following forms: (1) plagiarism, (2) cheating on examinations, (3) unauthorized collaboration, (4) falsification, and (5) multiple submissions.

Plagiarism is presenting another person's work as one's own. Plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without

acknowledgement, including the submitting of another student's work as one's own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of the paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else. The submission of research or completed papers or projects by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the faculty member. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Finally, there may be forms of plagiarism that are unique to an individual discipline or course, examples of which should be provided in advanced by the faculty member. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility.

Syllabus

Wk 1

1/10 **Introductions**

Wk 2

1/17 **Overview:** Silverman ch. 1-2: Beginning research, What is qualitative...?
Lincoln & Guba (1985) ch. 1: Postpositivism...
Kaplan (1966) Cultural thought patterns...
Bell (1995) The relationship between L1 and L2 literacy

Wk 3

1/24 **Ethnography:** Silverman ch. 3: Ethnography and observation
Tedlock (2000) ch. 17: Ethnography and ... representation
Mackey & Gass (2005) ch. 2: Issues related to data gathering
Warschauer (1999) Computer-assisted language revitalization
Canagarajah (1993) Critical ethnography of a Sri Lankan classroom

Wk 4

1/31 **Case Studies:** Stake (2000) ch. 16: Case studies
Mackey & Gass (2005) ch. 7: Classroom research
Harklau (1994) Tracking and linguistic minority students (online)
Currie (1998) Staying out of trouble (online)

Wk 5

2/7 **Interviewing:** Silverman ch. 4: Interviews
Fontana & Frey (2000) ch. 24: The interview
Casanave (1998) Transitions: The balancing act of bilingual academics (online)
Agunga & Belcher (2001) How can I help make a difference?

Wk 6

2/14 **Texts:** Silverman ch. 5: Texts
L. Flowerdew (2005) An integration of corpus-based and genre-based approaches (online)
Hyland (2001) Humble servants of the discipline? (online)
J. Flowerdew (2004) Identity politics and Hong Kong's return (online)

Wk 7

2/21 **Natural Talk:** Silverman ch. 6: Naturally occurring talk

- Mackey & Gass (2005) ch. 8: Coding
 Zhu (2001) Interaction and feedback... (online)
 Lindemann & Mauranen (2001) "It's just real messy" (online)
- Wk 8
 2/28 **Images:** Silverman ch. 7: Visual images
 Scollon (2003) Geosemiotics
 Kress (2005) Gains and losses (online)
 Ware & Warschauer (2006) Hybrid literacy texts (online)
 Smith & Gorsuch (2005) Synchronous computer mediated communication
 (online)
- Wk 9
 3/7 **Spring Break**
- Wk 10
 3/14 **Writing and Ethics:** Silverman ch. 9-10: Research ethics; Writing
 Creswell ch. 1-3 Preliminary considerations
 Belcher & Hirvela (2005) Writing the qualitative dissertation (online)
 Sample dissertation literature review
- Wk 11
 3/21 **Research design and credibility:** Silverman ch. 8: Credible qualitative research
 Creswell ch. 4-6, 8: Intro; Purpose statement; Research Questions; Definitions...
 Sample dissertation introduction
 (TESOL Week—Virtual class only)
- Wk 12
 3/28 **Role of theory:** Creswell ch. 7 The use of theory
 Charmaz (2000) Grounded theory
 Belcher & Hirvela (forthcoming) "Do I need a theoretical framework?"
 Sample dissertation theory chapter
- Wk 13
 4/4 **Role of methods:** Creswell ch. 9 (skim), 10, 11: Quan, Qual, & Mixed
 Silverman (Doing): ch. 22
 Sample dissertation methods chapter
- Wk. 14
 4/11 **Data analysis:** Silverman (Doing): ch. 11-13, 23
 Ryan & Bernard (2000) Data management and analysis
 Sample dissertation results chapter
- Wk 15
 4/18 **Data significance:** Silverman (Doing): ch. 24
 Silverman ch. 11: The relevance of qualitative research
 Sample dissertation conclusion chapter
- Wk 16
 4/25 **Final remarks:** Silverman ch. 12: The potential of qualitative research

E-articles

- Belcher, D., & Hirvela, A. (2005). Writing the qualitative dissertation.... *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 4, 187-205.
- Casanave, C. P. (1998) Transitions: The balancing act of bilingual academics. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 7.2, 175-203.
- Currie, P. (1998) Staying out of trouble.... *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 7.1, 1-18.
- Flowerdew, J. (2004) Identity politics and Hong Kong's return.... *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36.9, 1551-1578.
- Flowerdew, L. (2005) An integration of corpus-based and genre-based approaches.... *English for Specific Purpose*, 24.3, 321-332.
- Harklau, L. (1994) Tracking and linguistic minority students... *Linguistics and Education*, 6, 217-244.
- Hyland, K. (2001) Humble servants of the discipline?.... *English for Specific Purposes*, 20.3, 207-226.
- Kress, G. (2005) Gains and losses.... *Computers and Composition*, 22.1, 5-22.
- Lindemann, S., & Mauranen, A. (2001). "It's just real messy".... *English for Specific Purposes*, 20, 459-475.
- Smith, B., & Gorsuch, G. (2005) Synchronous computer mediated communication.... *System*, 32.4, 553-575.
- Ware, P., & Warschauer, M. (2006) Hybrid literacy texts.... *International Journal of Educational Research*, 43.7-8, 432-445.
- Zhu, W. (2001) Interaction and feedback... *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10.4, 251-276.