



METHODS OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH



QUANTITATIVE METHODS

- Probability sampling

Sampling

	Administrated		teleph	Post	Electro	street	Exert
	Group	Individual	one		nic		
N of resp,	++	+	++	+	+	+	-
N of rejection	--	--	+	++	-	+	-
Possibility to explain	++	++	+	-	-	-+	+
Anonymity	-+	--	-+	++	++	-	-
Working forth	-+	++	-	--	--	-+	-
\$	+	++	+	-	-	-+	-
N of quest.	++	++	-	+	+	-	+
Q of sampling	+	++	-+	-+	-	-	-
Звуження вибірки	+	--	+	+	++	++	++
Influence on resp.	+	++	-+	-	-	+	+
Inf. depth	++	++	-	+	-+	-	++
Limited to verbal inf.	--	--	++	--	--	+	--
Timeconsumimin	-	++	-	++	-	-	-
Trained Interv.	+	++	+	--	--	+	-
Reliability	+	++	+	-+	-	-	-+

- **Knowledge**
- **Attitudes**
- **Possible activity**

What to measure?

- Defining aim and objectives
- Defining theoretical approach
- List of future variables
- List of possible analytical procedures
- Work with existing questionnaires
- Defining questions
- Pilot survey
- Final changes

Steps to create questionnaire

- **Open**

- Last book you have read?

- **Semistuctured**

- What is your nationality?
 - Ukrainian
 - Russian
 - Other _____

- **Structured**

Mark your attitude towards political party X on the scale
Where 1 is very positive – 7 is very negative

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Questions

- Whether everyone would be able to **understand question and answer?**
- Whether everyone would be able to understand question **same way?**
- Whether everyone **would be willing to answer** the question?

How to formulate questions?

- Price
- Time
- Number of non-response
- Quality of answers

Length of the questionnaire

- We can not change questions during the fieldwork
- Big number of non-responses
- Possible unpleasant experience

Field work

Qualitative research

- Qualitative research is an interpretative approach concerned with understanding the meanings which people attach to phenomena (actions, decisions, beliefs, values etc.) within their social worlds.
(J.Ritchie & J.Lewis: 2003)
- Qualitative research is usually interested in three things: social routines, their conditions, and the subjective experiences of those, who take part in them.
(Carspecken & Cordeiro, 1995)

Definition

- Aims are directed at providing in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants
- Importance of participants' frames of reference
- Volume and richness of qualitative data; data are very detailed, information rich and extensive
- Output tends to focus on the interpretation of social meaning through mapping and "re-presenting" the social world of research participants.

Important features

In-depth interview

- Form of conversation with a purpose (~1,5-2 hours).
- Provides an opportunity for detailed investigation of people's personal perspectives, for in-depth understanding of the personal context within which the research phenomena are located, and for VERY DETAILED SUBJECT COVERAGE.

In-depth interview: definition

- **Structured** – scenario of an interview is based on a detailed list of content mapping questions

(-) researcher is imposing his/her understanding of social phenomena on interviewee

(+) easy to compare

(+) relatively easy to conduct

In-depth interview: types

- **Semistructured** – scenario of an interview is based on broadly defined thematic lines, no specific questions are defined
("childhood", "education", "work", "family")

(-) more difficult to compare big number of interviews
(-) more difficult for unskilled interviewers
(+) allows a lot of flexibility, gives more "voice" to narrator

In-depth interview: types

● **Unstructured** – 3 stages.

- I stage – no questions with an exception of an opening one (Tell me the story of our life...)
- II stage – only narrative questions are allowed (You told that ...,)
- III stage – other questions. Limited number of prepared questions of any character are allowed.

In-depth interview: types

- (-) difficult to compare big number of interviews
- (-) even more difficult to conduct for unskilled interviewers
- (+) allows a lot of flexibility, gives more "voice" to narrator
- (+) this type of interview gives us much deeper understanding of what is really important, what really matters to our respondents

In-depth interview: types

Focus group discussion

- FGD – involves several (6-10) participants brought together to discuss the research topic as a group. Provides an opportunity for direct and explicit discussion of differences as it emerges in the group.
- We study more opinions, but in comparison to an in-depth interview less questions can be asked

Focus group discussion: definition

Observation

- Participant observation – researcher joins the constituent study population or its organizational or community setting to record actions, interactions and events that occur.
- (+) we can study and experience social phenomena in their natural setting
- (-) time-consuming, rises many ethical issues

Participant observation

- Observation – offers opportunity to record and analyze behavior and interactions as they occur, although not as a member of the study population.
- Autoethnography - “ ‘figural anthropology’ of the self” (Lionnet, 1991), “generative autobiography” (Alexander, 2000).

Observation

Textual analysis

- **Conversational analysis** involves a detailed examination of “talk interactions” to determine how conversation is constructed and enacted. The aim is to investigate social intercourse, as it occurs in natural settings, is “an attempt to describe peoples methods for producing orderly social interaction” (Silverman, 2001)

Textual analysis: types

- **Discourse analysis** is “concerned with texts as social practices”.

It alerts us to the intimate connections between meaning, power and knowledge (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

Textual analysis: types

- **Content analysis** “claims to offer an “objective”, “systematic” and “quantitative” analysis of documentary content” (Ball, 1992). It allows to examine the major elements or categories present in, and communicated by certain texts as well as to compare frequencies of those categories.

Textual analysis: types

- However, content analysis does not allow the possibility for a researcher to uncover variability in the construction of different texts, to compare it and to assess the functions this variation is framing.
- Nor does it take into account motives for the reproduction of a specific theme or/and context in which these themes were reproduced. It also fragments and decontextualizes data.

Content-analysis

Sampling

- Qualitative research uses **non-probability sampling**, where units are deliberately selected to reflect particular features of or groups within the sampled population.

Sampling



A map of Ukraine showing its administrative regions. A blue line representing a river or waterway flows from the north towards the south, passing through several regions. The text "? Regions" is overlaid in red.

? Regions

Thank you for your attention!



Questions, comments?