

would typically be to expand coverage of material that was poorly understood and to enrich the understanding of emergent conclusions from the previous groups. As this example illustrates, it is quite possible to propose a research design that specifies the activities of the research team in some detail while still allowing for a broad process of emergence in selecting both the topics to be investigated and the most appropriate ways to collect data on those topics.

As a final note, it is also important to recognize that the degree of emergence will vary from one qualitative study to another. In particular, for cases where the goals are relatively predetermined, it may well make sense to use a relatively fixed set of procedures to collect the data and then emphasize emergence during data analysis. Because qualitative researchers have a range of options with regard to emergent design, it is important to provide explicit justifications for how any given design meets the needs of a specific project. Ultimately, questions about both the extent of and the nature of emergence in qualitative research designs need to be addressed in terms of the purposes that the research is pursuing.

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See also Codes and Coding; Content Analysis; Emergent Themes; Ethnography; Exploratory Research; Grounded Theory; Hypothesis; Induction; Open Coding; Quantitative Research; Sampling; Theoretical Sampling; Theory

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EMERGENT THEMES

Emergent themes are a basic building block of inductive approaches to qualitative social science research and are derived from the lifeworlds of research participants through the process of coding. Inductive approaches exist within positivist, postpositivist, and

social constructionist paradigms. Some qualitative researchers believe that emergent themes are part of the process that leads to generalizable theories of human society, whereas others use emergent themes to provide rich and detailed insight into the micro and meso levels of intersubjective experience. Themes emerge from the close analysis of any data source, including fieldnotes, ethnographic and reflective memos, interview transcripts, and various print, visual, and digital media.

To prepare to develop themes from research data, researchers often start by engaging with the data through interactive reading, which facilitates the analysts' connection with the data. An accompanying practice is memo writing, which may range from personal notes, to methodological observations, to analytic formulations, with their main purpose being to enrich subsequent analysis. Another practice involves a process of abstraction—creating categories from the complexity of the data. Researchers should avoid the temptation of forcing preestablished distinctions onto the data. Emergent themes must be grounded both empirically (in the data) and conceptually (linked to the wider analytic context).

The actual process of theming entails a bit-by-bit or line-by-line coding. As analysts group bits of data, they need to be "attentive" enough to allow redefinition, reduction, subdivision, or expansion of themes as the analysis proceeds. Emergent theming formalizes analytic connections among pieces of data but does not constitute the end of analysis. Having identified themes, analysts then must assemble them to establish substantive connections. Looking for patterns in the data, identifying regularities or irregularities, constitutes an important activity in making substantial connections.

Grounded theory, in both its positivist formulations (e.g., work by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss) and its constructivist reframing (e.g., work by Kathy Charmaz), is strongly committed to inductive analysis and emergent themes. Grounded theory encompasses a core set of analytic strategies beginning with open coding and followed by an iterative process between theoretical sampling and constant comparison of data among and within emergent categories. The goal is to reach saturation, a point at which no further insight can be gained through additional data analysis. Researchers engage in writing memos to explore emerging theoretical ideas that will facilitate the development of themes (also called conceptual models). There is disagreement as to the role of theoretical influence prior to the research process. In the strictest sense, themes may

emerge from data regardless of researchers' theoretical biases so long as a grounded theory methodology is adhered to rigidly. This position has been critiqued by constructivist scholars who argue that theoretical bias is inevitable and, therefore, must be considered as themes are developed.

J. Patrick Williams

See also Analytic Induction; Grounded Theory; Induction; In Vivo Coding; Thematic Coding and Analysis

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informant's or community member's views, not on the external social scientist's views. Emic perceptions are shared views of cultural knowledge from the insider's "normative" perspective.

An etic perspective is the external social scientific perspective on reality. The validity of etic descriptions or analyses is based on logical scientific analysis. Etic descriptions or analyses conform with rules of science, including falsifiability, logical consistency, and replicability (when possible and appropriate). Most qualitative researchers start collecting data from the emic or insider's perspective and then try to make sense of what they have collected in terms of both the native's view and their own scientific analysis. An external view without an emic or external foundation is unusual and is uncharacteristic of qualitative work. The etic perspective is typically adopted after multiple, and often conflicting, emic or insider views are collected. The etic view involves stepping back from the insider's views in an attempt to explain how groups are communicating or miscommunicating. Etic knowledge is the foundation of most cross-cultural work, often referred to as ethnology.

David M. Fetterman

See also Reality and Multiple Realities

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EMIC/ETIC DISTINCTION

An emic perspective is the insider's view of reality. It is one of the principal concepts guiding qualitative research. An emic perspective is fundamental to understanding how people perceive the world around them. Qualitative researchers often begin by asking people open-ended questions about how things work from their perspective. This allows an individual to frame the concept, idea, or situation and then elaborate on it. This provides a more accurate depiction of the individual's "mental map" or cultural understanding. This can be followed up with more fine-grained questions for additional depth and questionnaires to help determine how representative the viewpoint is in the culture. An emic perspective is grounded in a phenomenological view of the universe in comparison with an a priori set of assumptions about what people think and why they act the way they do. Adopting an emic perspective allows for "multiple" realities depending on the role and/or perspective of the individual in the community. An individual's view of the world might not conform with "objective" reality. However, there are real-world consequences for people's perceptions of reality, shaping how they behave in social situations ranging from their families to communities-at-large. Moreover, the validity of an emic construct is based on the native

EMOTIONS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Contemporary researchers have transformed the place of emotions in qualitative research. Emotions no longer receive short shrift as subjects of research, and many qualitative researchers now recognize that emotions