



Basics of
QUALITATIVE
RESEARCH
3e

GUYÊN
LIÊU

Juliet Corbin
Anselm Strauss



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1821

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ĐẠI HỌC THAI NGUYÊN
TRUNG TÂM HỌC LIỆU

*To Anselm
December 1916 - September 1996*

*Scholar and Humanist
Who touched the minds and lives of all who came into contact
with him*

Basics of
**QUALITATIVE
RESEARCH**

Techniques and Procedures for
Developing Grounded Theory

3e

Juliet Corbin
Anselm Strauss



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Preface

Also, at my intellectual core perhaps is the sense that—however naïve you think this—the world of social phenomena is bafflingly complex. Complexity has fascinated and puzzled me much of my life. How to unravel some of that complexity, to order it, not to be dismayed or defeated by it? How not to avoid the complexity or distort interpretation of it by oversimplifying it out of existence? This is of course, an old problem: Abstraction (theory) inevitably simplifies, yet to comprehend deeply, to order, some degree of abstraction is necessary. How to keep a balance between distortion and conceptualization? (Strauss, 1993, p. 12)

Whenever an author is asked to write a revision of a text there are always those persons, including this author, who say, “Is another revision necessary? Wasn’t everything said in past editions?” I thought so, yet when I looked at the 2nd edition of this book I realized how much both the field of qualitative research and I had changed since its publication.

I grew up intellectually in the Age of the Dinosaurs, or so it seems when I read the literature pertaining to qualitative research today. I carried within me the values, beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge of my profession and the times. I believed what I was told and wrote about it. But one day I looked around and found that I had been labeled a “post-positivist” (Denzin, 1994). “Oh dear,” I thought, “I’ve been classified and labeled just like we do in qualitative research!” It seems that while I was going about business as usual, a Qualitative Revolution was taking place. As part of that revolution the word “interpretation,” the *byword* of qualitative research in the old days, became passé. The new qualitative jargon centered on letting our respondents talk for themselves. Also, it was now considered okay to “go native,” a dreaded accusation in the “old days.” It gets worse. I knew my research world, like that

of Humpty Dumpty, had tumbled down when the notion of “objectivity” was dismissed as impossible to achieve. Instead of being the “objective researcher,” the postmodern movement put the researcher right into the center of the study. But the final assault on my research identity came when the notion of being able to capture “reality” in data was deemed a fantasy. All is relative. There are “multiple perspectives.” The postmodern era had arrived. Everything was being “deconstructed” and re-“constructed”

It’s safe to assume that I was just a little exasperated and concerned as I heard about these new ideas. I feared that researchers would become so concerned with “examining their own navels” and “telling nice stories” that they would lose sight of the purpose of doing research (at least from my perspective) and that is to *generate a professional body of empirical knowledge*. Most of all, I feared that qualitative methods would lose whatever credibility they had accrued within the “scientific world.” However, the more I thought about it, the more I realized that there were some valid points being made by the “postmodern,” “deconstructionist,” and “constructionist” schools of thought. With my original research “bubble” burst, I wondered what was left. I have to add to this “confession” that during these past years I was doing a lot of teaching in various countries on how to do analysis, and the interactions with students also helped shaped my new understanding of qualitative research.

It wasn’t until I was asked to write the 3rd edition of *Basics* that I started to think about putting my thoughts together. As I drafted an outline for the book, I was confronted with a series of questions. Questions such as: What are methods? Are they merely sets of procedures? Or are they philosophical approaches with few, if any, procedures? What role do procedures play in research? Are they guides, or just a broad set of ideas? What and how much structure is necessary to give students? And what is the role of the researcher? How can the researcher be acknowledged while still telling the story of participants? How much or how little interpretation should be involved?

Part of the challenge I faced in writing this new edition was determining who I was as a researcher. I was trained as a grounded theorist. At the time of my training, supposedly there was one “grounded theory” approach, though this point is open to debate. Throughout the years, what was initially grounded theory has evolved into many different approaches to building theory grounded in data. Each evolution has been an attempt to modernize or to extend the original method, bringing it more in line with contemporary thought. Yet, I also wanted to hold on to the methodological vision of Anselm Strauss, now deceased, who continued to believe until the end of his life in the value of theory and its importance to the development of any professional body of knowledge. Complicating this last point was the fact I no