



**UNIMORE**  
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI  
MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA



Cycle of seminars organised as part of the PhD Course in Labour, Development and Innovation, Unimore - Marco Biagi Foundation

Visiting professor call

Marco Biagi Department of Economics

## **Cycle of seminars: Epistemological and Methodological Considerations in Qualitative Research**

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Welcome to our series of seminars looking at the epistemological and methodological considerations within qualitative research. Qualitative research gives a researcher the opportunity to focus on the complexity of business-related phenomena in their context. Qualitative research can also be used to provide a critical and reflexive view about the social world and its core processes; this means that as a researcher you are required to be reflexive on what you are doing, and how the decisions that you make during the research process shape what you see and find. As qualitative research draws from more than one philosophical root, it relies on several methods of data collection and analysis.

Throughout this series, we will embark on a journey to explore the philosophical foundations that underpin our understanding of knowledge creation and the methodologies that guide our research practices. From deciding on a research topic and defining it into research questions, to choosing the appropriate methodology, this series will present some of the common qualitative approaches and methods used in management research.

This seminar will be taught either in English or in Italian.

## **SEMINAR 1**

April 09, 2024 (Tuesday) 9.30-12:30 – Room 32, Marco Biagi Foundation

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### **Designing a qualitative research design study**

This seminar provides an overview of the strategic understanding and applied skills in planning, conducting, and reporting the process of qualitative research studies. The seminar combines theory and applied exercises to appreciate the influence that epistemology and research design has on choosing a qualitative method. Qualitative methods (such as: Interviews, Observations, Focus Groups, etc.) will be critically reviewed. The seminar also reviews the role of reflexivity in shaping the data collection and analysis processes.

### Suggested readings:

- Blaikie, N. W. H. (2010). Research Questions and Purposes (chapter 3 pp. 56-78). *Designing social research* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gibson, W. J., & Brown, A. (2009). Introduction to qualitative data: analysis in context (chapter 1 pp. 1-14). *Working with Qualitative Data*. London: Sage.
- Spencer, L., Ritchie, J., O'Connor, W., & Barnard, M. (2014). Analysis: Principles and Processes (chapter 10 pp. 269-293). In C. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. M. N. Nicholls & R. Ormston (Eds.). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: Sage.

## SEMINAR 2

April 10, 2024 (Wednesday) 9.30-12:30 – Room 32, Marco Biagi Foundation

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### Case study

The Case Study methods are a well-known approach in management studies. This seminar introduces to the logic of case study thinking, from a plurality of epistemological standpoints ranging from the positivist to the interpretivist. For each paradigmatic assumption, the core features of the method will be presented, with a critical review of the leading scholars' work and arguments.

### Suggested readings:

- Easton, G. (2010). Critical realism in case study research, *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39: 118-128.
- Eisenhardt, K.M., (1989). Building Theories from Case Study Research, *Academy of Management Review*, 14 (4): 532-550.
- Sayer, A. (1992). *Method in social science: A realist approach* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Siggelkow, N. (2007). Persuasion with case studies, *Academy of Management Journal*, 50 (1): 20-24.
- Stake, R.E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Welch, C., Piekkari, R., Plakoyiannaki, E., & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E. (2011). Theorising from case studies: towards a pluralist future for international business research, *Journal of International Business Studies*, 42(5): 740-762.
- Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case Study Research*, 4th ed. California: Sage.

## SEMINAR 3

April 16, 2024 (Tuesday) 9.30-12:30 – Room 32, Marco Biagi Foundation

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### Thematic analysis as a Family of approaches (I)

Thematic Analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. Thematic analysis is a well-known method in the social sciences that can be used for examining the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and for summarizing key features of a large data set. The different approaches to TA are presented, which encompass the so-called small-q TA and Big-Q TA. In this seminar, the following approaches are explained: Thematic/Template Analysis, Content Analysis, Framework Analysis.

### **Suggested readings:**

- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- King, N., & Brooks J.M. (2017) Template Analysis. London: SAGE Publication Ltd.
- Saldana, J. (2012). The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, doi:10.1177/1609406917733847

## **SEMINAR 4**

April 17, 2024 (Wednesday) 9.30-12:30 – Room 32, Marco Biagi Foundation

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### **Thematic analysis as a Family of approaches (II)**

Thematic Analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. Thematic analysis is a well-known method in the social sciences that can be used for examining the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and for summarizing key features of a large data set. The different approaches to TA are presented, which encompass the so-called small-q TA and Big-Q TA. In this seminar, the following approach is presented: Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

### **Suggested readings:**

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77-101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Thematic analysis: a practical guide. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Saldana, J. (2012). The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Terry, G., & Hayfield, N. (2021). Essentials of thematic analysis. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Furthermore, an additional online seminar will be delivered within my one-month professorship, as follows:

## **ONLINE SEMINAR**

April 05, 2024 (Friday) 9.30-12:00 – Teams

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### **Performing a literature review**

The focus of this seminar is to present the process of performing a literature review. The suggested steps will be presented, and how to make sense of the document analysis to present a critical and integrative review.

Specifically, the seminar will focus on the following:

- Finalising the research question for a literature review
- Identifying the key concepts and terms

- Boolean research strategies
- Reading and selecting – an iterative process
- Coding and analyzing – a recursive process
- Hands-on strategies to write an effective review chapter/section.

**Suggested readings:**

- Fan, D., Breslin, D., Callahan, J. L., & Iszatt-White, M. (2022). Advancing literature review methodology through rigour, generativity, scope and transparency. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 24(2), 171-180. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12291>
- Jesson, J., et al. (2011). *Doing your literature review: traditional and systematic techniques*. Los Angeles, SAGE.
- Miles, M. B. and A. M. Huberman (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE Publications.

**Coordinator of the cycle of seminars**

Ylenia Curzi, Associate Professor at Department of Economics Marco Biagi  
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, "Marco Biagi" Department of Economics