

Qualitative Methods

Georg Reischauer (georg.reischauer@wu.ac.at)

LMU Munich, Master of Business Research (MBR), 2 hours

Winter Semester 2025

v1 (Aug 2025)

Contents: The PhD course “Qualitative Methods” provides a birds-eye understanding of planning, implementing, and writing up qualitative research.

Learning objectives:

1. Understand and reflect the merits and pitfalls of qualitative research in management studies
2. Apply good practices to collect and analyze qualitative data, to write and publish qualitative manuscripts, and to review qualitative manuscripts

Course room: Seminar Room 314 (3rd floor, Schackstrasse 4, 80539 München)

Course content and schedule:

<i>Day and time</i>	<i>Agenda</i>
Day 1: Oct 15 2025 <i>09:00-11:45: Interactive lecture & discussions</i> <i>13:15-15:00: Interactive lecture & discussions</i> <i>15:00-18:00: Check-in & group work</i>	Introduction, Research design 1/2, Qualitative data collection 1/2 Qualitative data collection 2/2, Introduction-section of a qualitative paper Group and/or individual Q&A with lecturer on ongoing qualitative work; independent group work on group presentations
Day 2: Oct 16 2025 <i>08:30-09:00: Check-in as needed or group work</i> <i>09:00-10:30: Group presentations</i> <i>10:45-12:15: Interactive lecture & discussions</i> <i>13:30-16:00: Interactive lecture & discussions</i> <i>16:00-18:00: Check-in & group work</i>	Group and/or individual Q&A with lecturer on ongoing qualitative work; finetuning of group presentation Group presentations (<u>expected arrival no later than 8:55</u>) Research design 2/2, Qualitative data analysis 1/2 Qualitative data analysis 2/2, Publishing qualitative research Group and/or individual Q&A with lecturer on ongoing qualitative work; independent group work on group presentations
Day 3: Oct 17 2025 <i>08:30-09:00: Check-in as needed or group work</i> <i>09:00-10:30: Group presentations</i> <i>10:45-12:00: Interactive lecture & discussions; course reflection</i>	Group and/or individual Q&A with lecturer on ongoing qualitative work; finetuning of group presentation Group presentations (<u>expected arrival no later than 8:55</u>) Reviewing qualitative research; Q&A, wrap up

NB: There will be several breaks throughout!

Grading:

Assignment elements

You will be assessed based on two elements:

- *Review* (individual assignment): 60%
- *Abridged proposal* (team assignment): 20 % (presentation Day 2), 20% (presentation Day 3)

Ad “Review”

- Select a qualitative study that was recently (= within last 7 years) published in your field
- Review the paper focus only on methodological aspects against the background of insights discussed in class – do NOT review content (i.e. theories) or grammar/spelling!
- Around 2,500 words, excl. references
- Have cover page with family name, given name, student ID
- Please e-mail your review as single PDF by **December 17 2025 EOD**

Ad “Abridged Proposal”

In teams (of up to 5 students), you will present key aspects of a qualitative research project:

- ➔ First presentation: research question(s), empirical setting, research design, data collection
- ➔ Second presentation: only include VERY BRIEF recap of first presentation (max. 1 slide!), data analysis plan, planned form of theorizing

For both parts:

- A presentation should be 10 minutes at maximum (strict!), followed by Q&A of 5 minutes; thus 15 minutes per presentations
- Do NOT focus on content, i.e. theories; sole focus should be as outlined above
- Think especially about the “why” -> why is what you propose adequate in your research question?

Readings & 2DOs Day 1

Methodological papers suggested to read before this class:

Graebner M. E., Martin J. A., & Roundy, P. T. (2012). Qualitative Data: Cooking without a Recipe, *Strategic Organization*, 10(3), 276–284.

Empirical studies to skim-read before class. Read the introduction and methods sections, especially data collection in advance of the session:

Reischauer, G. & Ringel, L. 2023. Unmanaged transparency in a digital society: Swiss army knife or double-edged sword? *Organization Studies*, 44(1): 77-104.

Reischauer, G. & Mair, J. 2018. How Organizations Strategically Govern Online Communities: Lessons from the Sharing Economy. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 4(3): 220-247.

Readings & 2DOs Day 2

Morning

Methodological papers suggested to read before this class:

Eisenhardt, K. M., & Graebner, M. E. 2007. Theory Building from Cases: Opportunities and Challenges. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1), 25–32.

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. 2013. Seeking Qualitative Rigor in Inductive Research: Notes on the Gioia Methodology. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1): 15-31.

Empirical studies to read **before this class** especially with respect to method section:

Hannah, D. P. & Eisenhardt, K. M. 2018. How Firms Navigate Cooperation and Competition in Nascent Ecosystems. *Strategic Management Journal*, 39(12): 3163-3192.

Corley, K. G. & Gioia, D. A. 2004. Identity Ambiguity and Change in the Wake of a Corporate Spin-off. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 49(2): 173-208.

Ansari, S., Garud, R., & Kumaraswamy, A. 2016. The Disruptor's Dilemma: TiVo and the U.S. Television Ecosystem. *Strategic Management Journal*, 37(9): 1829-1853.

Afternoon

Methodological papers suggested to read **before this class**:

Grant, A. M. & Pollock, T. G. 2011. Publishing in AMJ - Part 3: Setting the Hook. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(5): 873-879.

Empirical studies to read **before this class** especially with respect to “hook”, theorizing, and contributions:

Heimstädt, M. & Reischauer, G. 2019. Framing Innovation Practices in Interstitial Issue Fields: Open Innovation in the NYC Administration. *Innovation: Organization & Management*, 21(1): 128-150.

Reischauer, G. & Mair, J. 2018. How Organizations Strategically Govern Online Communities: Lessons from the Sharing Economy. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 4(3): 220-247.

Wenzel, M., & Koch, J. 2018. Strategy as Staged Performance: A Critical Discursive Perspective on Keynote Speeches as a Genre of Strategic Communication. *Strategic Management Journal*, 39(3), 639–665.

Readings & 2DOs Day 3

Methodological papers suggested to read **before this class**:

Cornelissen, J. 2017. Developing Propositions, a Process Model, or a Typology? Addressing the Challenges of Writing Theory Without a Boilerplate. *Academy of Management Review*, 42(1): 1-9.

Optional Further Readings

Principles & Research Designs

Cunliffe, A.L. 2011. Crafting Qualitative Research: Morgan and Smircich 30 Years On. *Organizational Research Methods*, 14(4): 647-673.

Cloutier, C., and Langley, A. (2020). 'What makes a process theoretical contribution?'. *Organization Theory*, 1(1), 2631787720902473.

Dorobantu, S., Gruber, M., Ravasi, D., and Wellman, N. (2024). 'The AMJ management research canvas: A tool for conducting and reporting empirical research'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 67(5), 1163-1174.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (2021). 'What is the Eisenhardt method, really?'. *Strategic Organization*, 19(1), 147-160.

Gephardt, R. (2004). Qualitative Research and the Academy of Management Journal. *Academy of Management Journal*, 7(4), 454-462.

Gioia, D. 2018. Gioia's Rules of the Game. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 28(1): 113-115.

Greenhalgh, T. 2019. Twitter Women's Tips on Academic Writing: A Female Response to Gioia's Rules of the Game. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 28(4): 484-487.

Howard-Grenville, J., Nelson, A., Vough, H., & Zilber, T. B. (2021). Achieving fit and avoiding misfit in qualitative research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 64(5): 1313-1323.

- Langley, A. 1999. Strategies for Theorizing from Process Data. *Academy of Management Review*, 24(4): 691-710.
- Pratt, M. G. 2009. For the Lack of a Boilerplate: Tips of Writing (and Reviewing) Qualitative research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(5): 856-862.
- Tracy, S. J. 2010. Qualitative Quality: Eight “big-tent” Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(10), 837–851.
- Yin, R. K. (various editions). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Data Collection

- Langley, A., and Meziani, N. (2020). 'Making interviews meaningful'. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 56(3), 370-391.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. 2005. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Spradley, J. P. 1980. *Participant Observation*. Orlando, FL, Harcourt.

Presentation of Findings & Writing

- Ertug, G., Gruber, M., Nyberg, A., & Steensma, H. K. 2018. A Brief Primer on Data Visualization Opportunities in Management Research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(5): 1613-1625.
- Feldman, D. C. 2005. Writing and Reviewing as Sadoomasochistic Rituals. *Journal of Management*, 31(3): 325-329.
- Reay, T., Zafar, A., Monteiro, P., & Glaser, V. 2019. Presenting Findings from Qualitative Research: One Size Does Not Fit All! *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*, 59: 201-216.

Data Analysis & Theory-Building/Theorizing

- Cornelissen, J. P. (2017). 'Preserving theoretical divergence in management research: Why the explanatory potential of qualitative research should be harnessed rather than suppressed'. *Journal of Management Studies*, 54(3), 368-383.
- Cornelissen, J. P. (2023). 'The problem with propositions: Theoretical triangulation to better explain phenomena in management research'. *Academy of Management Review*, 50(2), 342-365.
- Cornelissen, J., Höllerer, M. A., and Seidl, D. (2021). 'What theory is and can be: Forms of theorizing in organizational scholarship'. *Organization Theory*, 2(3), 26317877211020328.
- Klag, M. & Langley, A. 2013. Approaching the Conceptual Leap in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 15(2): 149-166.
- Grodal, S., Anteby, M., & Holm, A. L. (2021). Achieving Rigor in Qualitative Analysis: The Role of Active Categorization in Theory Building. *Academy of Management Review*, 46(3): 591–612.
- Shepherd, D. A. & Suddaby, R. 2016. Theory Building: A Review and Integration. *Journal of Management*, 43(1): 59-86.

Contributions

- Cornelissen, J. P. & Durand, R. 2014. Moving Forward: Developing Theoretical Contributions in Management Studies. *Journal of Management Studies*, 51(6): 995-1022.
- Locke, K., & Golden-Biddle, K. 1997. Constructing Opportunities for Contribution: Structuring Intertextual Coherence and “Problematizing” in Organizational Studies. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40(5), 1023–1062.
- Tihanyi, L. (2020). From “that’s interesting” to “that’s important”. *Academy of Management Journal*, 63(2), 329-331.