

Study Guide

EIPT 6043: Qualitative Research Methods

Perspectives of Research & Social Life

1. Define the following terms (one short paragraph for each):
 - a. Ontology
 - b. Epistemology
 - c. Axiology
 - d. Conceptual Framework
 - e. Construct
 - f. Generalization
 - g. Ethical Universalism
 - h. Cultural Relativism
 - i. Triangulation
 - j. Saturation
2. Explain the basic ideas in the positivist paradigm.
3. Explain the basic ideas in the interpretive paradigm.
4. Contrast the ideas about subjectivity and objectivity in positivist and interpretivist theories of research.
5. Contrast the relationship of theory, research, and practice in positivist and interpretivist theories of research.
6. What counts as validity in positivist and interpretivist theories of research?
7. What are three features or characteristics of qualitative research that most clearly distinguish it from quantitative research? (Describe them and defend your position.)
8. Discuss the significance of context in qualitative research.
9. Discuss the continuum of researcher roles and how the role taken may affect the data gathered in the qualitative study.
10. What philosophical assumptions guide all qualitative studies? (Be very familiar with Creswell Table 5.1, p.75).

Five Traditions

1. Compare the five traditions covered by Creswell. (Be very familiar with Creswell Table 4.1, p. 65.)
2. What is Purposeful Sampling? Creswell presents Miles & Huberman's Typology of Sampling Strategies (Figure 7.3, p. 119). Be familiar enough with the 16 types presented that you can discuss them. Which strategies are likely to be most appropriate to the five traditions covered in the Creswell text?
3. How do the five traditions covered by Creswell differ with regard to data collection activities? For each tradition, Who or what is studied? What are typical access and rapport issues? How are sites or individuals for study selected? What forms of data are typically collected? How is information recorded? What are common data collection issues?
4. What are the general data analysis strategies suggested by Bogden & Biklin, Huberman & Miles, and Wolcott? (see Creswell, Table 8.1, p. 141).

5. How do the five traditions covered by Creswell differ with regard to data analysis?
6. Discuss Standards of Quality and Verification for each of the five traditions covered by Creswell.
7. What are the reporting approaches for each tradition? (Be familiar with Creswell, Table 4.2, p. 67.)

Hermeneutics

1. What is “Hermeneutics”?
2. What is the hermeneutic circle (spiral, cycle)? How might it be used to lend understanding to, for example, the theory-practice dilemma in educational inquiry?

Critical Theory

1. What are the characteristics of critical theory that differentiate it from other approaches to qualitative research?
2. What are the characteristics of critical theory that make it recognizable as a form of qualitative research?
3. What is praxis?
4. What is a criticalist? (see Kincheloe & McLaren)
5. What are the basic assumptions of a criticalist?
6. Name the four “emergent” schools of critical social theory (and the primary names associated with each) that have influenced critical ethnography.
7. According to Kincheloe & McLaren, what is the purpose of critical research?