PhD course in Law and Organizational Studies for People with Disability a.y. 2022/23

Qualitative research methodologies: ethico-onto-epistemological perspectives

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Course description

This course provides a historical and conceptual framework of the post-positivist paradigms that guide qualitative research. In this course, students will learn about different qualitative approaches and examine ways in which various philosophies and theories (specifically post-structuralism, post-colonial and queer theory) deconstruct knowledge of contemporary social, political and organizational phenomena. More specifically, the following approaches will be presented: neo-positivist, interpretative, emancipatory and post-structuralist. The course is also situated within the context of the new material feminism and ethico-onto-epistemology posthuman research that has underpinned the work of researchers interested in producing more affirmative engagements with human/non-human relationalities.

The course aims to problematize conventional qualitative methodology, and this is achieved through a commitment to embedding core, transversal tenets throughout the course. The first of these is the appreciation of affirmative critique, which is a critique that is not destructive but which interrogates the normative certainties of methods, without advocating methodological anarchy. The second core tenet is the influence of feminism and feminist methodologies in qualitative research which explore questions of agency and the distribution of power in the context of research investigations. The third theme is a conceptualization of power as a set of relational forces that are continuously reconfigured in the research process. A fourth theme is the belief that events and phenomena do not have a beginning or an end but are always somewhere in the middle, entangled with what precedes and what follows them. This influences the structure of the course, which can in some ways be rambling, meandering through the many threads which make up the research process itself. Another feature of the course is that, in addition to academic research, it draws on the arts in their multiple forms (painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry, film…). Art plays an important role in the course as it will be used to engage the student at different levels: to generate emotions, to provoke thoughts, to open-up conversations and discussions

that are political, emancipative and queer.

Aims

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify the differences between scientific paradigms.

- Develop critical qualitative research questions.

- Evaluate research designs.

- Question the normative practices governing research and bureaucratic modes of knowledge. production.

- Think critically about the production and use of empirical material.

- Problematize the writing of research results.

- Discuss the questions connected to validity of research.

- Take into account ethical considerations in qualitative research.

Learning methods

The course consists of 10 interactive lessons of two hours each, during which students will experience the complexity of thinking-doing qualitative research. Each lesson requires the active involvement of students who will be asked to read in advance the mandatory texts (such as scientific papers, book chapters, empirical material/some piece of data listed in the detailed program below) related to each class. Specific class times will be allocated for the examination of a few exemplars of research design; for data analysis exercises; and for the writing and communication of results. Discussion groups will serve as a forum to examine any problems, concerns, and possible conceptual difficulties which may arise from the study of qualitative approaches. Each lesson will have a discrete focus, dealing with one or more of the course topics and allowing students to problematize and deal with one of the typical phases that lead to producing a piece of qualitative research. Oral lectures, supported by ppt files, will complete the course. All students are expected to take an active part in the debate, by making comments and raising questions on the issues discussed in class. Doctoral students will have to prepare a final presentation consisting of an in-depth examination of one of the topics studied. The work will be presented during the final class. The teacher will be teaching remotely, while the students will be in the classroom.

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Course material

The Course material will consist of scientific papers, book chapters, images, pieces of empirical material/data. In addition to the required readings listed for each lecture, further readings will be suggested during the classes covering specific topics in greater detail. Students who may have problems with material retrieval can contact the teacher at the following email: a.benozzo@univda.it

Exam & Evaluation

Doctoral students will be evaluated on the basis of their constructive participation in class and the final presentation. The quality of in-class participation accounts for 60% of the evaluation. Undergraduate students will agree their evaluation method with the teacher during the Course.

Final presentation

Doctoral students will prepare a presentation decided together with the teacher consisting of an in-depth examination of one of the topics presented in the class, at their choice. This can be produced in any format (power point presentation, project work, scientific paper, performative presentation and so on), and must be discussed with the class during the the last lesson.

Detailed program

Class 1 14/11/2022 15:00-17:00	**Encountering the course: students, teachers, classroom, materials and … and … and…**

Class 2 21/11/2022 15:00-17:00	**At the thresholds of research**
Mandatory readings	• Benozzo A. and Priola, V. (2022), *Interrogare la ricerca qualitativa. Pratiche critiche e sovversive.* Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, (Chapter 1 "Tracce: Avvicinare la ricerca qualitativa"), 11-31.
Optional readings	• Koro-Ljungberg, M. (2016), Reconceptualizing Qualitative Research: Methodologies without Methodology. Sage, Los Angeles, (Chapter 1 "A proxy for a foreword"), 1-9.

Class 3 28/11/2022 15:00-17:00	**Research paradigms – Paradigm Lost (part one)**

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Mandatory readings	• Benozzo A. and Priola, V. (2022), *Interrogare la ricerca qualitativa. Pratiche critiche e sovversive.* Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, (Chapter 2 "Forme: modellare, deformare… "), 33-52.
Optional readings	• Law, J. (2004), *After Methods: Mess in Social Science Research*. Routledge, London, (Chapter 2 "Scientific practices"), 18-43.

Class 4 05/12/2022 15:00-17:00	**Research paradigms – Paradigm Lost (part two)**
Mandatory readings	• Benozzo A. and Priola, V. (2022), *Interrogare la ricerca qualitativa. Pratiche critiche e sovversive.* Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, (Chapter 2 "Forme: modellare, deformare… "), 53-81.
Optional readings	• Jackson, A.Y., Mazzei, L.A. (2017), *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research. Viewing Data across Different Perspectives* (2nd edition), Routledge, London, (Chapter 1 "Plugging one text into another"), 1-16.

Class 5 12/12/2022 15:00-17:00	**The data production machine**
Mandatory readings	• St. Pierre, E.A. (1997), "Methodology in the fold and the irruption of transgressive data". In *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 10, 20, pp. 175-189.
Optional readings	• Koro-Ljungberg, M., Löytönen, T., Tesar, M. (2017) (eds), *Disrupting Data in Qualitative Inquiry: Entanglements with the Post-Critical and Post-Anthropocentric*, Peter Lang, New York (Chapter 1 "Multiplicity of data encounters"), 1-10.

Class 6 19/12/2022 15:00-17:00	**Decomposing and re-assembling empirical material**
Mandatory readings	• Benozzo A. and Priola, V. (2022), *Interrogare la ricerca qualitativa. Pratiche critiche e sovversive.* Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, (Chapter 4 "(De)composizioni: separare, accostare, assemblare… "), 137-158. •
	• Brinkmann, S. (2012), "Doing without data" *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20, 720-725.

Class 7 09/01/2022 15:00-17:00	**On writing up qualitative research: authors, audiences and communities**
Mandatory readings	• Taylor, C., Benozzo, A. (first on line February 2023) Im/probabilities of post/authorship and academic writing otherwise in postfoundational inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*
Optional readings	• Benozzo, A., Koro-Ljungberg, M., Carey, N. (2015) Post/autorship: Five or more IKEA costumers in search of an author. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 22, p. 568-580.
Class 8 16/01/2023 15:00-17:00	**Ethical questions in/for qualitative research**
Mandatory readings	• Benozzo A. and Priola, V. (2022), *Interrogare la ricerca qualitativa. Pratiche critiche e sovversive.* Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, (Chapter 4 "(De)composizioni: separare, accostare, assemblare… "), 137-158.
Optional readings	• McLeod, J. and O'Connor K. (2020) "Ethics, archives and data sharing in qualitative research." *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 53, 523-535.

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Class 9 23/01/2023 15:00-17:00	**What validity can do in/for qualitative research?**
Mandatory reading	• Lather, P. (1993) "Fertile obsession: Validity after poststructuralism". *The Sociological Quarterly*, 34, 673-693.
Optional readings	• Faulkner, S. L. (2016). "The art of criteria: Ars criteria as demonstration of vigor in poetic inquiry." *Qualitative Inquiry*, 22, 662-665.

Class 10 13/02/2023 15:00-17:00	**Final presentation**
	Every student has to prepare a presentation consisting of an in-depth examination of one of the aspects of their choice which is touched upon in the class. This can be delivered in any format (power point presentation, project work,multimedia work, performative presentation, scientific paper, and so on), and will be discussed in class with the other students and the teacher.

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