

3.2-3 Primer on Data Collection Strategies

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Created for HP/MHSEd 747

McMaster University

Winter 2017

Marathon module....

- Notes on Protocol Development/Qualitative Research Design
- Types of Interviews
- Designing & Conducting your Interview
- Iteration between data collection and analysis
- Focus Groups

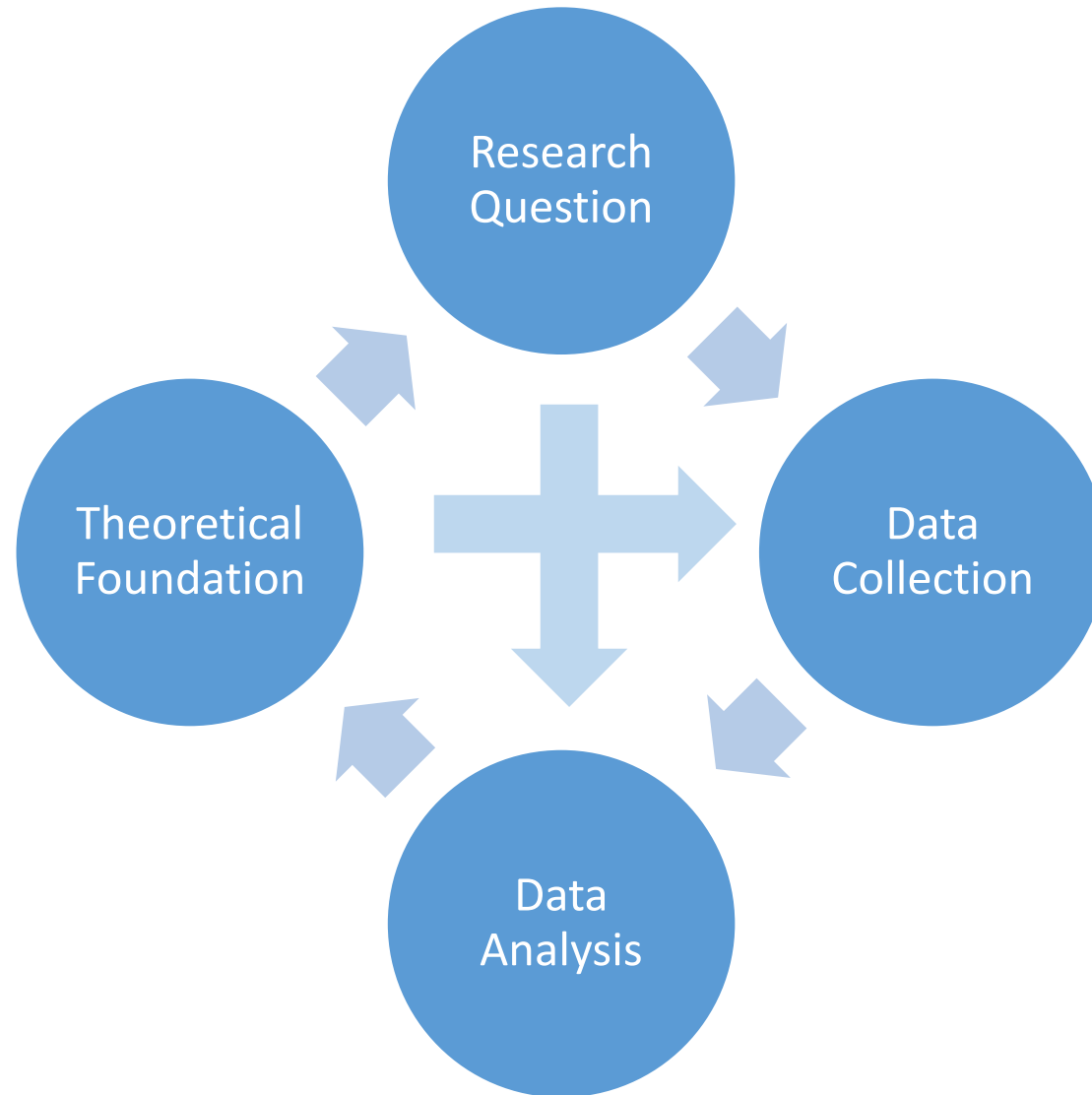
Notes on Protocol Development & Data Collection



- Start to contextualize Charmaz & Yin information
- Analytical exercises on publicly available “data”, how might it be different with collected data, how/why does collecting data influence analysis?



Elements of Qual Research Project



Qualitative Research Design

- Units of analysis
 - Language, text
 - Narratives
 - Cases, organizations, persons, etc.
- What is sampled?
 - Often more than one data source
 - Often more, or other, than “participants”
- Purposive sampling
 - Purposive sampling – general features
 - “Snowball” approach
 - Theoretical sampling



Notes for protocols: The Qualitative Research Question

Note: the qualitative research “question” is often not expressed as a question, but rather as a study objective, or as a topic for investigation

- **Content**
- **Coherence**
- **Structure**



See: Mantzoukas, S. (2008). "Facilitating research students in formulating qualitative research questions." *Nurse Education Today* 28(371–377).

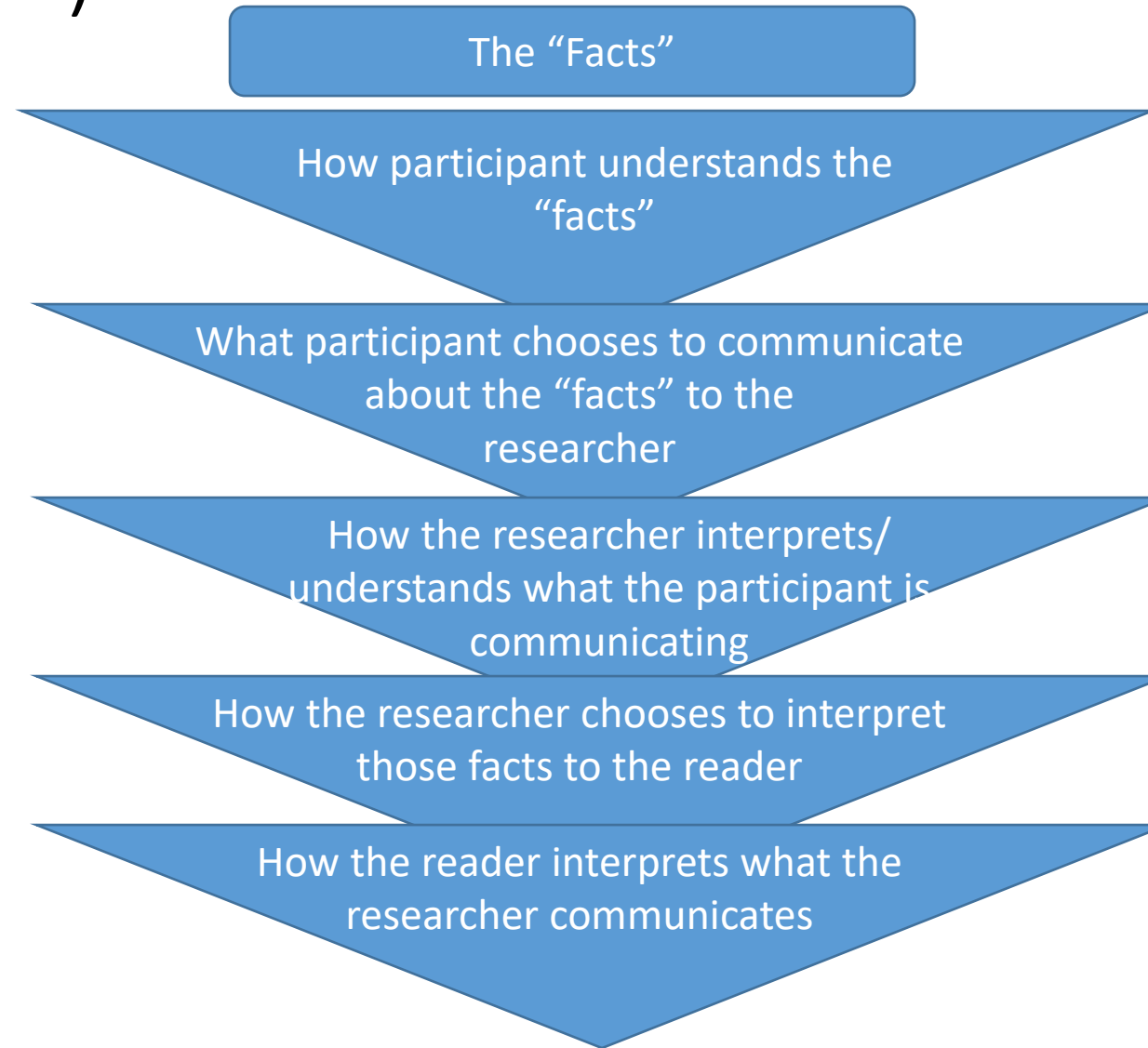
Qualitative Data Collection Methods

- “Researchers conducting qualitative studies will want to collect as much data as they can that will allow them to capture all of the elements of an event that come together to make it the event that it is” (Sandelowski)
- “Grounded theories may be built with diverse kinds of data-fieldnotes, interviews, and information in records and reports. The kind of data the researcher pursues depends on topic and access.” (Charmaz)

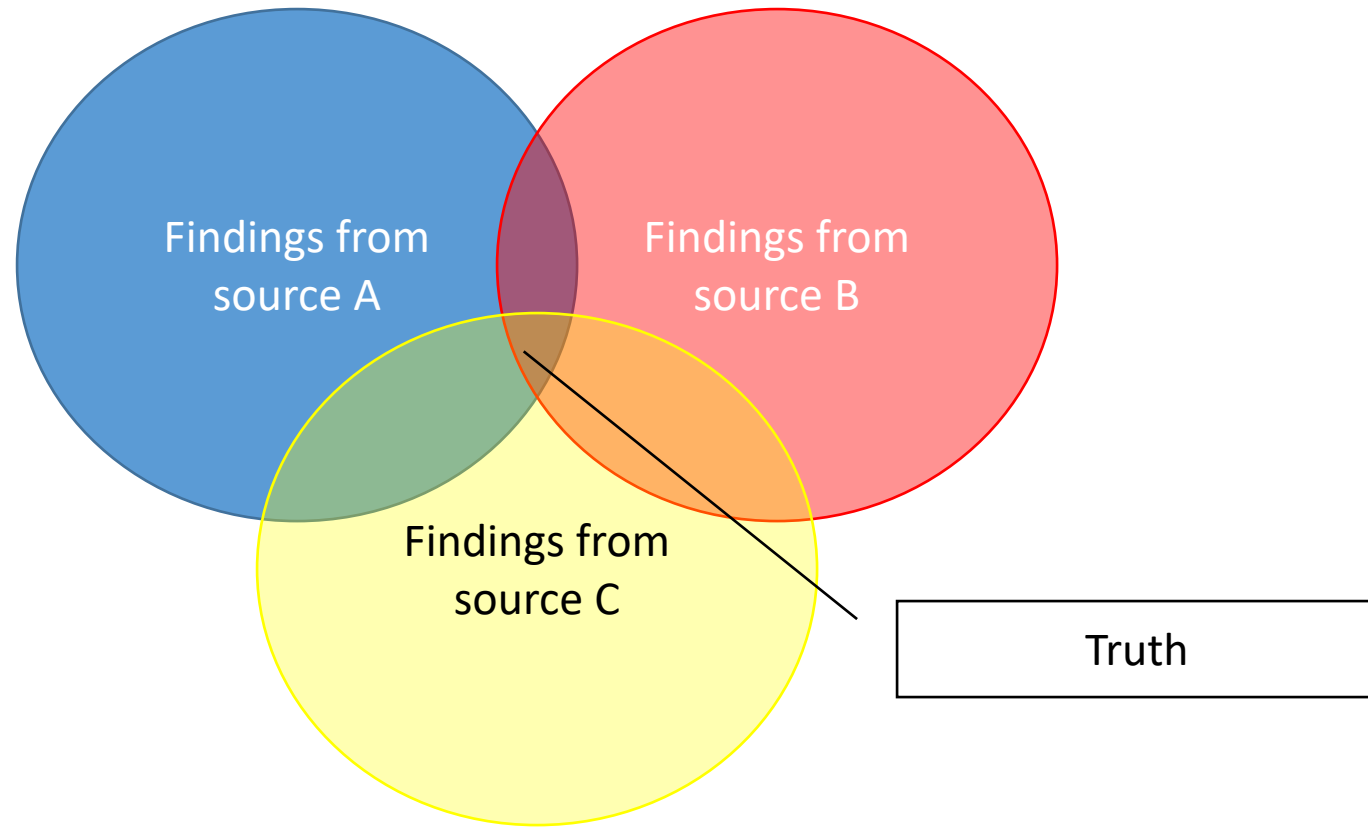
Research Q -> Data Collection

- How you collect data affects which phenomena you will see, how, when, and where you will view them, and what sense you will make of them. (Charmaz)

The relationship of data to “truth” (according to Charmaz)



The relationship of data to truth (according to Yin)



Types of Data Collection

Elicited

- Created with researcher participation
- Created without researcher participation, but with direction from researcher

Extant

- Created with neither participation nor direction from researcher

Types of Data Collection

Elicited

- Created with researcher participation
 - Interview
 - Focus group
 - Participant observation
- Created without researcher participation, but with direction from researcher
 - Photovoice
 - Reflective journalling
 - Arts-based approaches

Extant

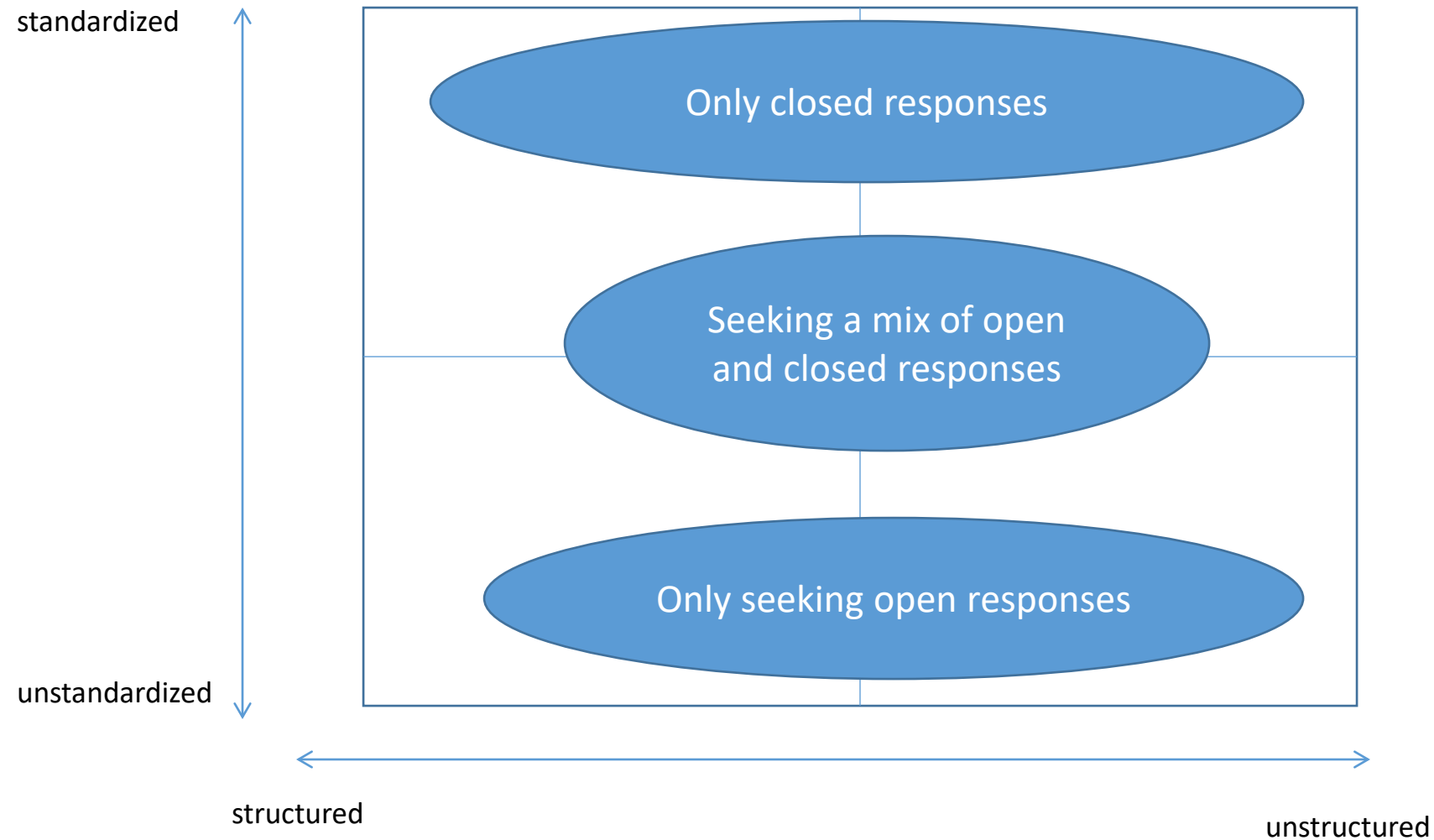
- Created with neither participation nor direction from researcher (found).
 - Document analysis
 - Analysis of video or audio recordings taken for another purpose (e.g. security footage)
- Created with neither participation nor direction from researcher, but with awareness of the (virtual) presence of the researcher.
 - Non-participant observation

Method <-> Methodology



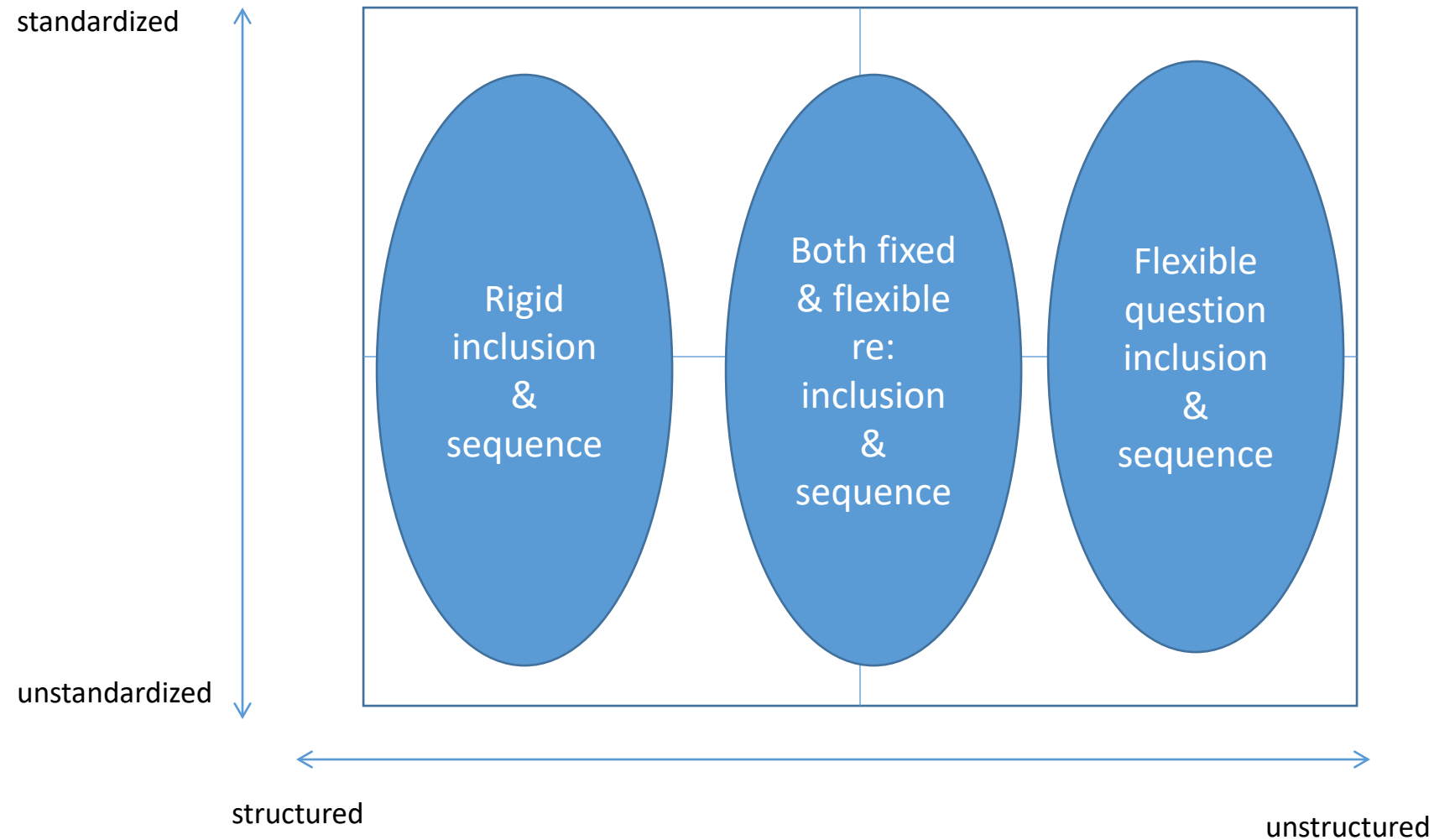


Variation in Interviewing



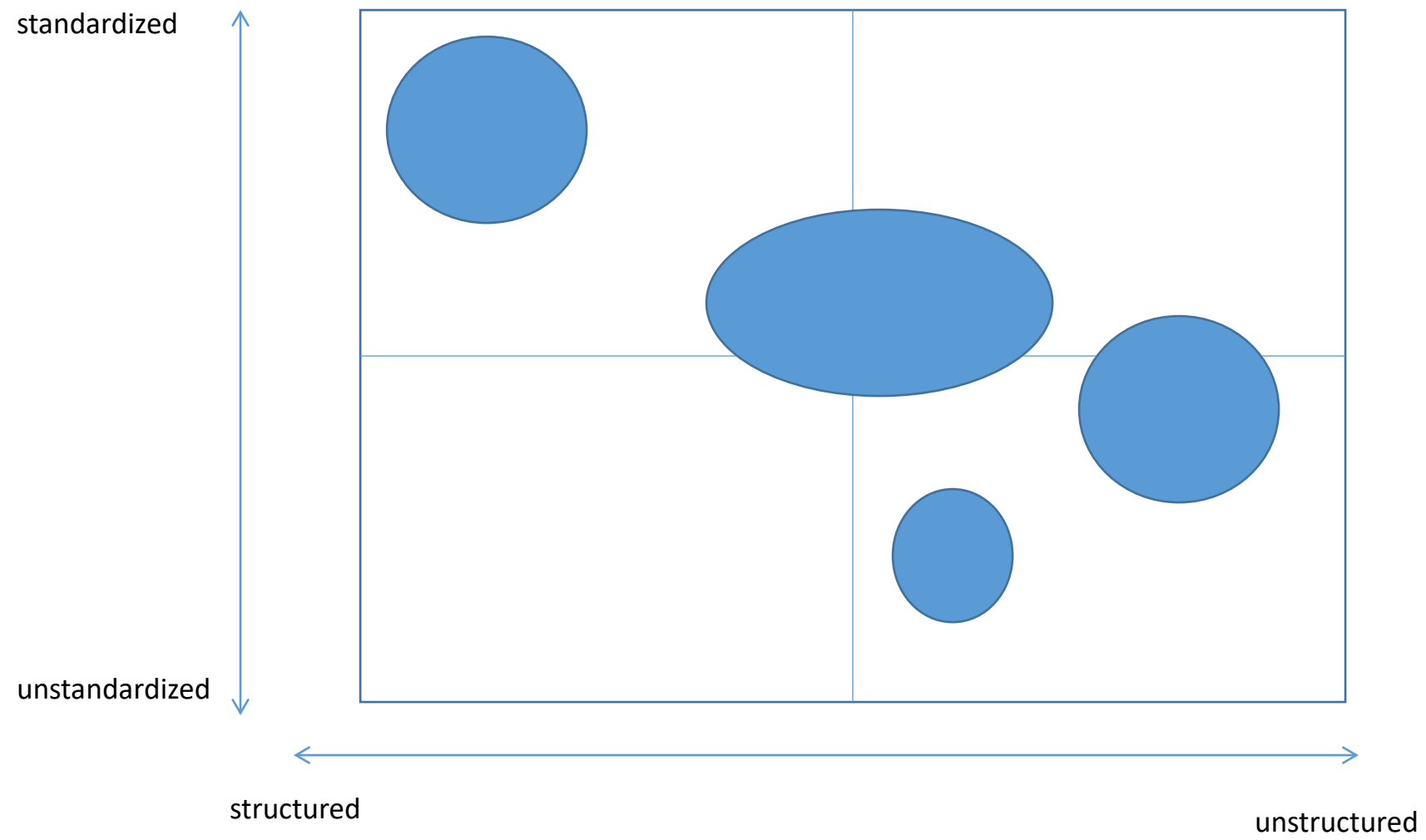


Variation in Interviewing



Which one to choose?

- Check methodology handbook
 - Narrative inquiry: unstructured
 - Grounded theory: semi-structured
 - Ethnography: unstructured or semi-structured, depending on type of interview.
- Structured interviews are used to maintain high levels of reliability and repeatability
 - Similar to a verbal survey; most qual methodologies use unstructured or structured.
- Unstructured interviews are able to emphasize the depth of each individual's experience. Lets the interviewee direct the priority and flow.



Writing an interview or focus group guide

- First, pick what type of guide you are writing.
 - Check methodological handbook
 - Think about what type of information you will need.
- Outline what you are seeking to investigate
 - From background literature
 - Your own interpretation of the material and topic
- Approach may vary depending on methodology.
 - Their own stories, meanings, interpretations about a particular event?
 - Narrative, phenomenology
 - Responses to questions about different potential factors of influence.
 - Grounded theory, case study

balance

- Initial questions have to come from somewhere.

BUT

- You want to influence responses as little as possible.

SO

- Try to be as open-ended as possible, especially at the beginning.



My process

1. Identify specific areas of interest
 1. From lit review, personal experience
2. Brainstorm potential themes of interest for each issue.
 - What might a participant talk about in relation to that issue?
 - What do you think might be relevant?
 - Some themes may become questions in their own right.
3. Write an open-ended question about the initial issue.
 - Note some of your themes as “probes” to keep in mind as interviewing, and ask if relevant.
4. When finished, check questions for redundancy, gaps in logic. Arrange in a logical order.



Piloting the interview guide

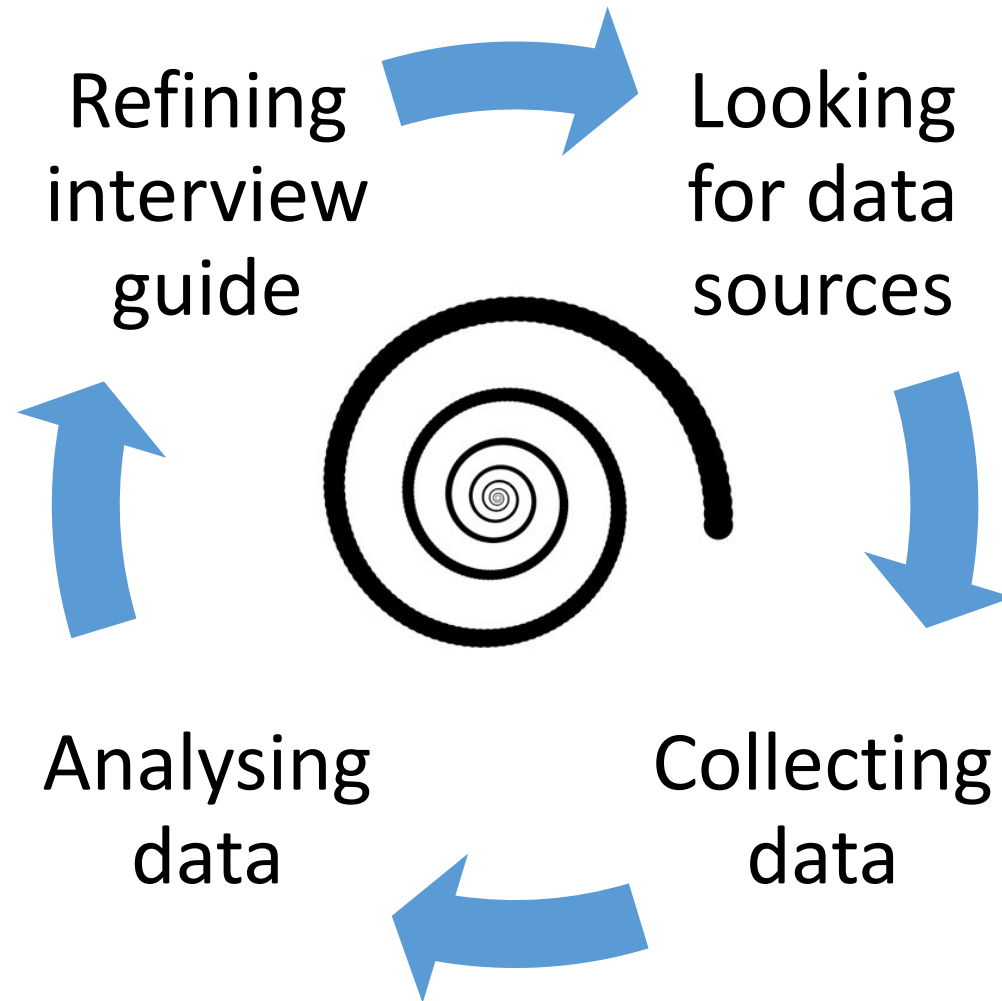




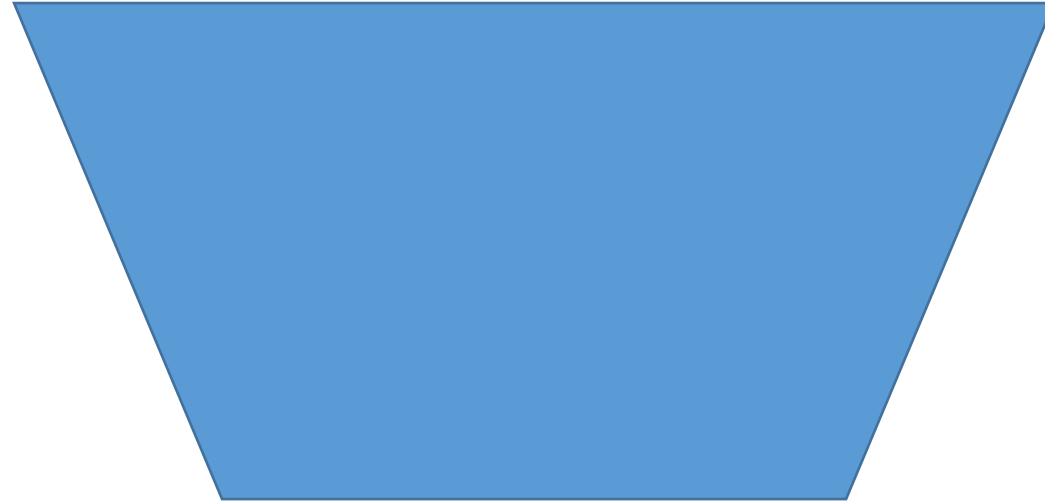
Evolution of interview guides



Iterative process of qualitative research



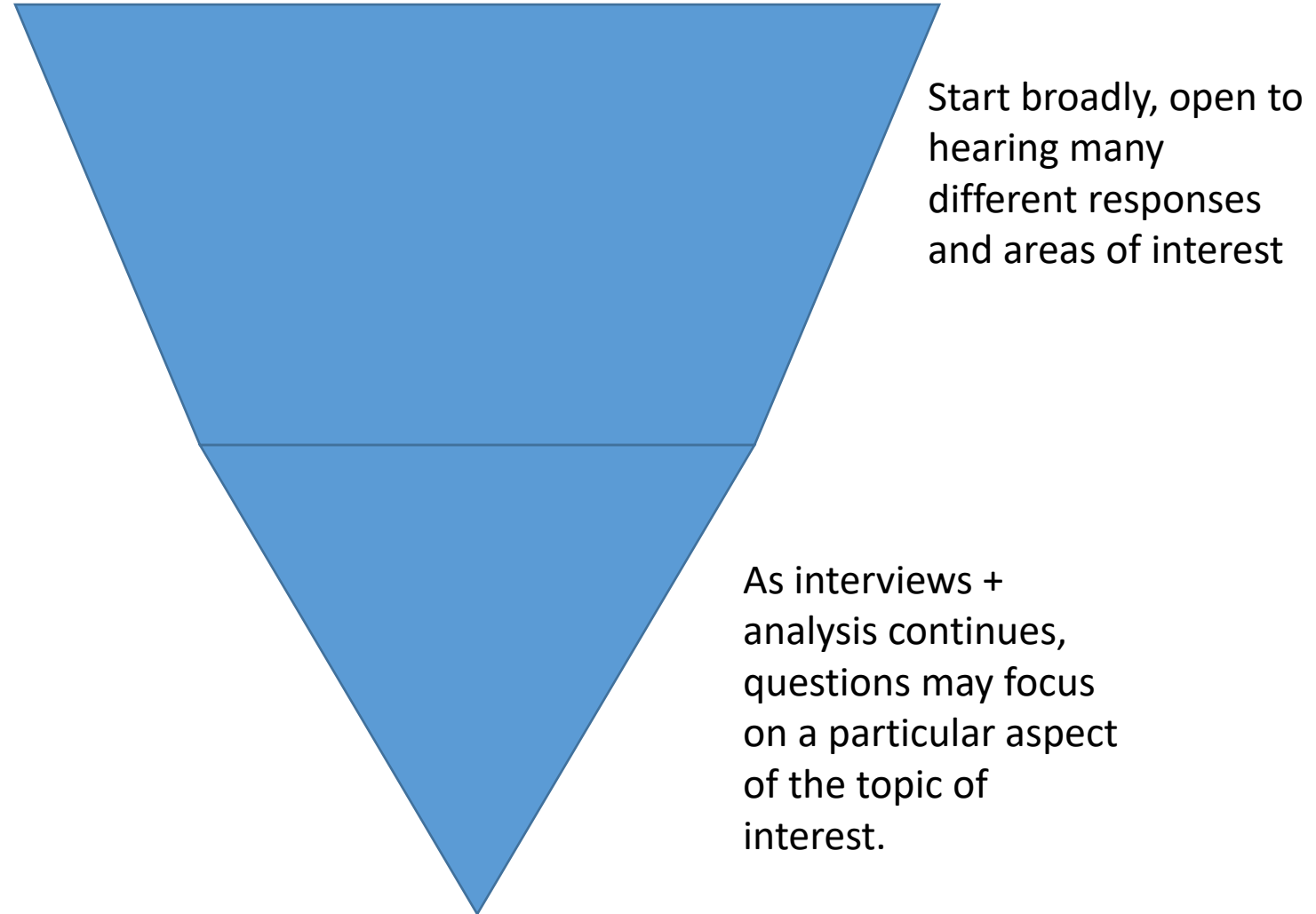
Narrative, phenomenology



Initial interviews use wide, broad questions to explore the research area, and let the participants guide the researcher to particular issues of importance.

Further interviews may use slightly more focused questions that have been adapted from analysis of initial interviews, but questions remain broad and wide.

Grounded theory, case study



General tips for writing interview questions

- No matter what stage you are in your analysis, ensure your questions are phrased in a way which:
 - Invites all sorts of answers
 - Does not presume the experience or opinions of the participant
 - Phrased in “every day” language.

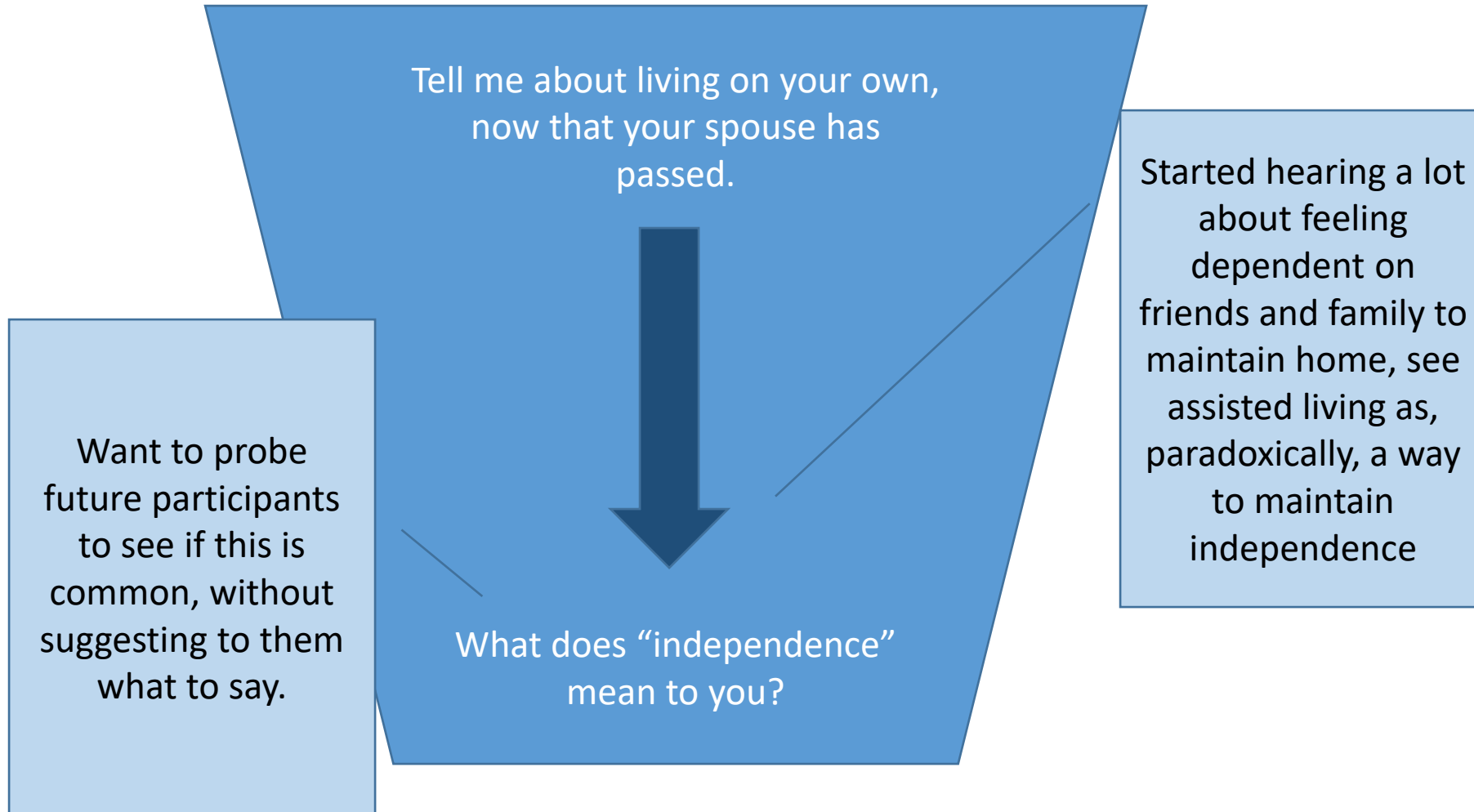
example

- Research question:

What is the process widowed men and women go through when making the decision to move to assisted living facility?



Refining interview guide





Performing the interview



What is your role?

- Think about who you are in relation to your participant?
 - Do they usually interact with people like you?
 - Can you use that interaction to your advantage?
 - E.g. are you like a grandchild, or a student, or a friend?
- Dress the part. Consider the impact of your physical appearance, language, body language.
- Use accessible language, but don't talk down
- Be aware of educational differences, power differences and how these might affect the dynamic of the interview.

My experience





Interviews are demanding of the interviewer

Outwardly



Inwardly



Tips

- Practice! Practice! Practice!
 - Friends
 - Pilot interviews with people you don't know well.
- Know your questions/prompts really well
 - I memorize the whole script before conducting an interview, but bring it anyway to refer to if needed.
- Don't be afraid of making mistakes
 - Comfort comes from experience
- Feel mentally prepared and calm before interview.



Taking notes

PRO



CON





My strategy



Focus groups





Interviews v. Focus groups



FG Purpose

- Group interview
- Focus on participant-participant interaction
- Good for exciting, interesting topics that are not too personal.
- Want to encourage participants to bounce ideas off each other, agree, disagree, elaborate.
 - Worst case scenario: each participant answers one by one.

How many people?

If topic is unfamiliar, 6-12

- Won't have thought about it before
- Might not have much to say

If topic is familiar, 4-7

- Lots to talk about

I prefer small focus groups, 3-6

- Everyone speaks
- More time for debate
- N.B. Much of my research has involved highly educated, engaged participants with a lot to say.

Who?

- Homogeneous
 - Similar characteristics.
 - May encourage people to act according to those characteristics
 - Might be useful to compare to other types of groups
 - Might make participants feel more comfortable
- Heterogeneous
 - Gain insight of others' perspectives
 - See how differences play off each other

Who?

- Considerations:
 - Power differentials
 - Dominant groups may dominate opinion
 - Ethical reasons (e.g. teachers/students, students may feel uncomfortable expressing opinions that may be seen as negative by teachers)
- You can try both ways, see what happens.

Role of a second researcher

- Optional.
- Second researcher can help organize the group, run the recorder, etc.
- Second researcher can take notes about the group dynamic, body language, and other things that will not be noted on the audio-recording.
- This lets the facilitator engage fully with the group.

Finished!

