

Case study research or anecdotal evidence?  
**Preparation and Collection**

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**Preparation**

**What data to collect**

Questions about multiple case patterns



Questions asked in the individual case



Interview questions



**Preparation**

## **Contact with site: first questions**

- **Case study objectives**
- **Contact person**
- **Confidentiality**
- **Access to background material**
- **Practical arrangements**



**Preparation**

## **Planning data collection**

- **What type of documents and databases do you need access to?**
- **Which activities do you want to observe or participate in?**
- **Who should be interviewed?**
- **When should data be collected?**



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## **Triangulation**

- **Data (source) triangulation**
- **Observer triangulation**
- **Methodological triangulation**
- **Theory triangulation**



## **Assignment**

- **Assume that researchers from Lund University, department of pedagogics, should interview you about teaching.**
  - **What would you know that they do not know?**
  - **What would they know that you do not know?**
  - **Why would you participate?**
  - **Why would you not like to participate?**



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## Data sources

- **First degree (direct involvement of people)**
  - Interviews
  - Questionnaires
- **Second degree (indirect involvement of people)**
  - Observations
  - Instrumenting systems
- **Third degree (study of work artifacts only)**
  - Analysis of Electronic Databases of Work Performed
  - Analysis of Tool Use Logs
  - Documentation Analysis

[Lethbridge et.al. 2005]



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## Interviews



	Unstructured	Semi-structured	Fully structured
Procedure	Interview guide, open in some areas	Open and closed questions	Closed questions
Objective	Explorative	Descriptive, explanative	Descriptive, explanative



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## Interviews

- Present case study objectives issues such as confidentiality
- Start with simple questions (name, project, experience,...)
- Record on tape/mp3/etc
- Don't talk too much



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## Interview sessions [Seaman]

Interview session



a)



b)



c)

a) funnel, b) pyramid, c) time-glass



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## Questionnaire (data from many participants)

- Simple language
- Unambiguous questions
- Non leading questions
- One question at a time
- One answer at a time
- Short concise questions
- Not too sensitive questions
- Complete set of possible answers
- ...



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## Observations

	Knowledge of being observed	
Interaction	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
<i>High</i>	Observing participant	Complete participant
<i>Low</i>	Participating observer	Complete observer



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## Focus groups “collective interviews”

### Pros

- Group dynamics – multi-perspective
- Feedback from other participants
- Cost efficiency
- Network for participants

### Cons

- Group dynamics – moderator needed
- Hidden agendas
- Social acceptability



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## Documents

- Project documents
- Organization documents
- Product documents
- In different versions...



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## Archival records

- Error reports
- Time reports
- Organizational charts
- ...



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## Collected metrics

- How accurate/trustworthy are the metrics?
- If not collected by yourself
  - Who collected the metrics?
  - In what process were the metrics collected?
  - Why was they collected?





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## Feedback

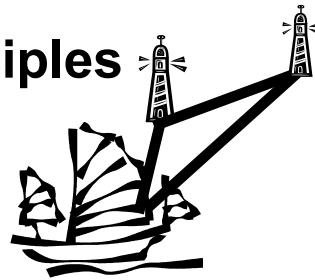
- A basis for cooperation
- Directly and when all data is analysed
- Validation of results



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## Important principles

- Flexible process
- Use multiple sources of evidence
- Create a case study database
- Maintain a chain of evidence



## **Task**

**For the study of your choice**

- 1. What data sources were used?**
- 2. What types of interviews were carried out?**
- 3. How was triangulation carried out?**
- 4. How were ethical issues and confidentiality handled?**



## **Task**

**If your selected paper publishes the interview instrument, read it, or read Appendix B.**

- Compare questions to the criteria for questionnaire questions**
  - Similarities?**
  - Differences?**
  - Why?**

