

Lecture 2

Terms Addressing Rules of Language

- **Emic (from phonemic):** Refers to constructs or behaviors unique to an individual or sociocultural context and are not generalizable. Examples include the Jewish High Holy Days or the Christian Easter celebration, which are religion-specific and not universally acknowledged.
- **Etic (from phonetic):** Refers to universal laws and behaviors that transcend cultures and apply to all humans. For instance, the concept that people are biological organisms is etic because all humans need to eat, drink, and sleep to survive. Etic perspective considers knowledge objective.

The Research Wheel (Adapted from Johnson and Christensen, 2004:18)

What is Meant by a Paradigm?

Definition: According to the English Cambridge Dictionary, a "paradigm" is a model or a very clear and typical example of something.

Origin: Late 15th century, from late Latin via Greek paradeigma, from paradeiknunai ('beside' + 'to show').

General Framework: Paradigms are general frameworks or viewpoints that provide ways of looking at life, grounded in sets of assumptions about the nature of reality.

Background About Research Paradigm

- **First Usage:** The term was first used by the American philosopher Thomas Kuhn (1962) to indicate a philosophical way of thinking.
- **Definition:** Kuhn defined a paradigm as "the set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed."
- **Components:** Abstract beliefs shaping how a researcher views, interprets, and performs in the world.
- **Function:** Directs the research process, determines suitable data collection and analysis methods, and ensures coherence between the research paradigm and methodology.

Components of a Research Paradigm

1. Ontology:

- **Definition:** The nature of reality—whether it is external or internal to the knower.
- **Key Questions:**
 - What is the form and nature of reality?
 - Is this reality external to social actors?
 - What are the fundamental parts of the world and their relationships?
- **Types:**
 - **Objectivism:** Assumes an independent, external reality.

- Constructionism: Assumes reality is socially constructed through processes.

2. Epistemology:

- Definition: The study of knowledge—its nature, scope, and limits.
- Key Questions:
 - What does knowledge mean?
 - How is knowledge acquired?
 - How do we know what we know?
- Types of Knowledge:
 - Practical knowledge: Skills-based (e.g., driving, using a computer).
 - Knowledge by acquaintance: Familiarity with someone or something (e.g., knowing a person or an apple).
 - Factual knowledge: Based on facts (e.g., the sun rises every morning). Epistemology focuses on propositional knowledge.

3. Methodology:

- Definition: The systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study.
- Function: Guides the researcher in deciding what data is required and which data collection methods are most appropriate.
- Key Aspects:
 - Deciding when and how often to collect data.
 - Developing or selecting measures for variables.
 - Identifying a sample or test population.
 - Choosing a strategy for contacting subjects.
 - Planning data analysis.
 - Presenting findings.

4. Methods:

- Definition: The specific techniques and procedures used to collect and analyze data.
- Dependence: Methods depend on the design of the study and the research questions.

Research Paradigms

1. Positivism:

- Characteristics:

- Social science is seen as an organized method combining deductive logic with empirical observations.
- Postulates that social reality is controlled by unchangeable laws.
- Focuses on objective, quantifiable knowledge.
- Criticisms:
 - Insensitivity to context, complexity, and change.
- Treats the social world like the natural world, emphasizing cause-effect relationships.

2. Post-Positivism:

- Characteristics:
 - Reality exists independent of the observer but recognizes the researcher's influence.
 - Promotes triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Emphasizes critical realism and the possibility of multiple viewpoints.

3. Constructivism (Interpretivism):

- Characteristics:
 - Focuses on understanding the social phenomenon in its context.
 - Knowledge is constructed by the researcher and participants.
 - Utilizes qualitative data collection over extended periods.
- Differences from Positivism:
 - Positivism generates knowledge scientifically; constructivism maintains that knowledge is constructed.

4. Pragmatism: Characteristics:

- Not committed to a single philosophy.
- Concerned with practical ways to answer research questions. Pragmatism emphasizes that the research question is the most important determinant of the research method.
 - Often associated with mixed methods research.
- Advantages:
 - Provides a more complex understanding of problems.
 - Combines strengths of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Pragmatism answers research questions from various perspectives.

Quality Criteria in Constructivist Research

- Credibility (Internal Validity): Ensuring the findings are believable and accurate.

- Transferability (External Validity): Ensuring findings can be applied to other contexts.
- Dependability (Reliability): Ensuring the findings are consistent and repeatable.
- Confirmability (Objectivity): Ensuring the findings are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias.

* Notes :

- Etic perspective considers knowledge objective.
- Epistemology focuses on propositional knowledge.
- Pragmatism relies on abductive reasoning.
- Qualitative research does not utilize an Etic approach.
- Contrast between Interpretivist and Pragmatism.
- Deductive method involves formulating hypotheses and testing theories.
- Epistemology is not about the nature of reality.
- Constructivism concerns with depth of analysis rather than inference.