

Educational Scholarship and Inquiry Community (ESIC) Launch Event

Thinking Methodologically: Ways of seeing: examples
from higher education (TW- emphasis on qualitative,
interpretive paradigms)

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Overview of our conversation

- Moving beyond 'seeing'
- Making familiar unfamiliar
- Identifying similarity in difference

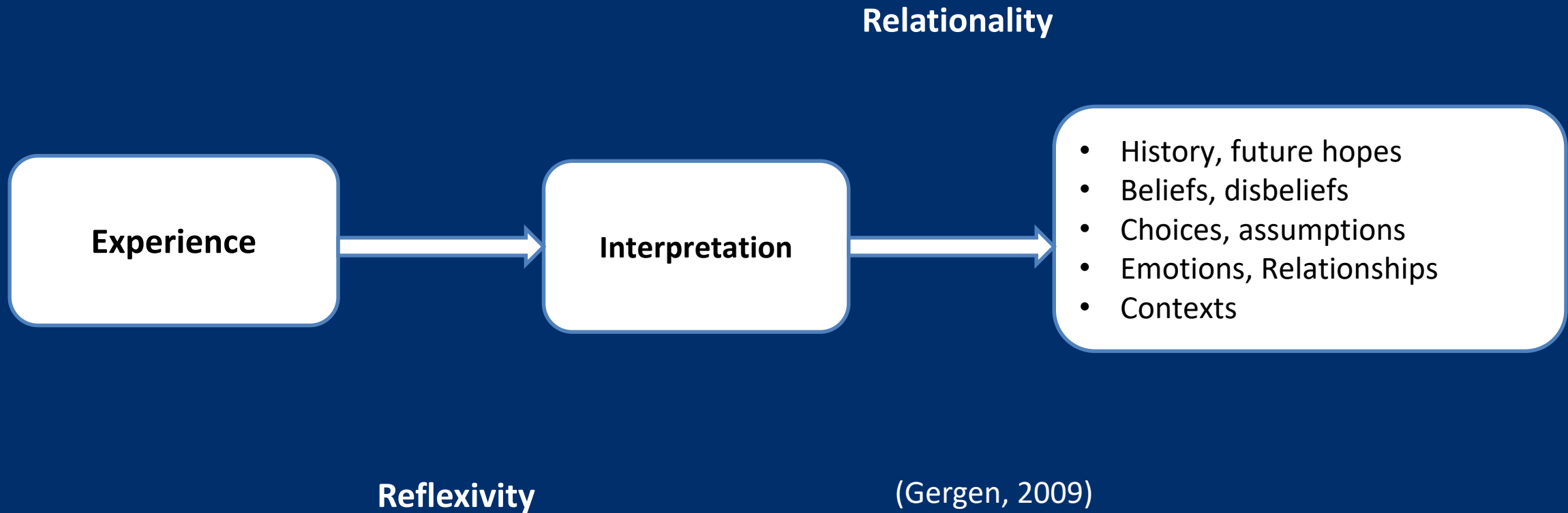
'Who' are we and 'why' we are?

- How (un)comfortable are you, in doing research within your own disciplinary area? Why?
- How do you find inquiring a different discipline (history/Creative Arts/cultural studies/education etc ?

Discuss with your neighbour.

What are the key ideas that emerged from your conversation?

Connections



Changing thought paradigms

What is a paradigm?

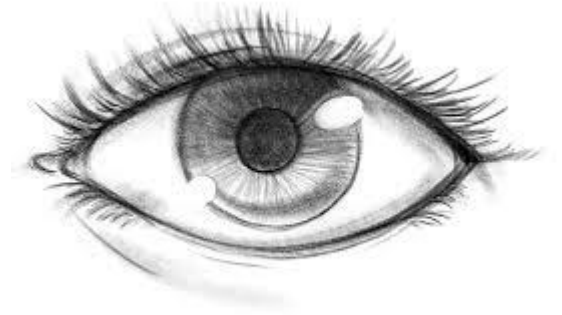
- A way of seeing that is shaped by beliefs, practices, habits etc
- A way of understanding the world around us
- A framework of thoughts or beliefs through which one's world or realities are interpreted



God Given view of the world



Science



Beyond science



August Comte

A single, objective reality exists beyond ourselves, 'out there'. Therefore, knowledge is out there to be discovered by the researcher. Trust objectivity: an understanding of reality free from any pre-conceived ideas, beliefs, theories etc Objective reality can be discovered by observation Knowledge should be empirically tested and value free.



Post positivism

Karl Popper

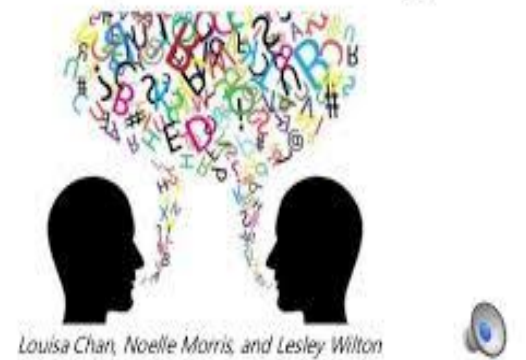
A reformation of positivism and does not fully reject positivism but modified it.

Not a form of relativism but retains the idea of objective truth, reintroduces the desirability and possibility of objective truth (Nancy Cartwright).

Believe in 'truth' that is universal. 'Reality' is out there but there are limits in capturing reality accurately. Knowledge obtained through direct observation and measurement can be probable and falsifiable through future research.

Believe that science is a deductive process.

The Interpretivist Paradigm



Wilhelm Dilthey, Max Weber, Gadamer

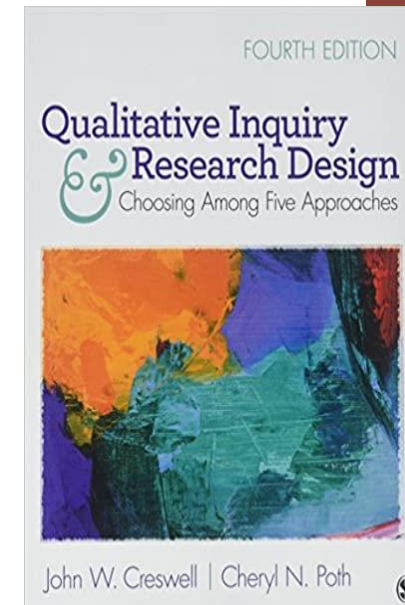
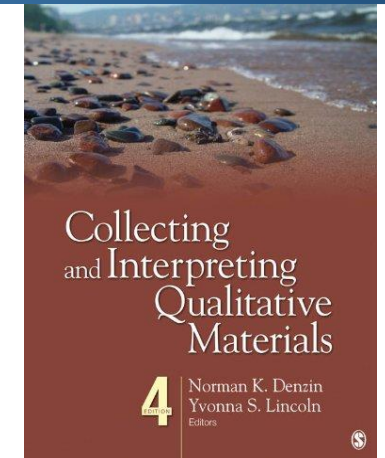
Social reality is not singular or objective, but is rather shaped by human experience & interactions within social contexts. Therefore, social reality is best studied within its socio-historic context, considering subjective interpretations of its participants.

The interpretive turn

1. overarching, generalisable truth vs multiple/absence of reality
2. Discovery vs understanding how a particular phenomenon is understood by those who have personal experience of it
3. Information/facts vs thick and rich description
4. All presentations are re-presentations



We are slices of the worlds we inhabit



When interpretation becomes confusing...



Absence of 'reality'



Student experience in a diverse and an interconnected world

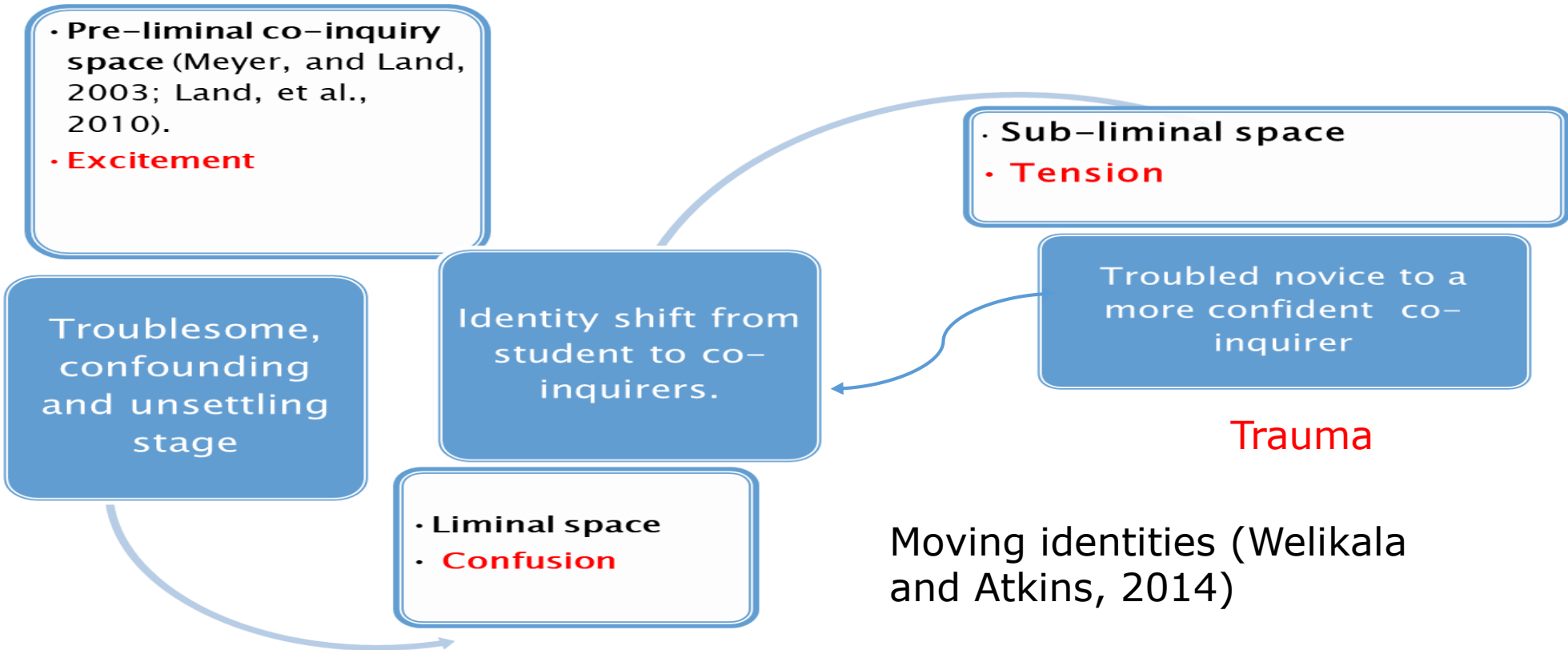
Sociology of absence (Santos, 2018), autoethnographic reflexivity (Huang, 2015) and narratology (Onega & Landa, 2016)

Higher Education Academy and UK Council for International Student Affairs funded project on student experience across three geopolitical contexts; India, Ireland and England.

Participatory research

Emergent insights

Becoming co-inquirers



Positioning ourselves

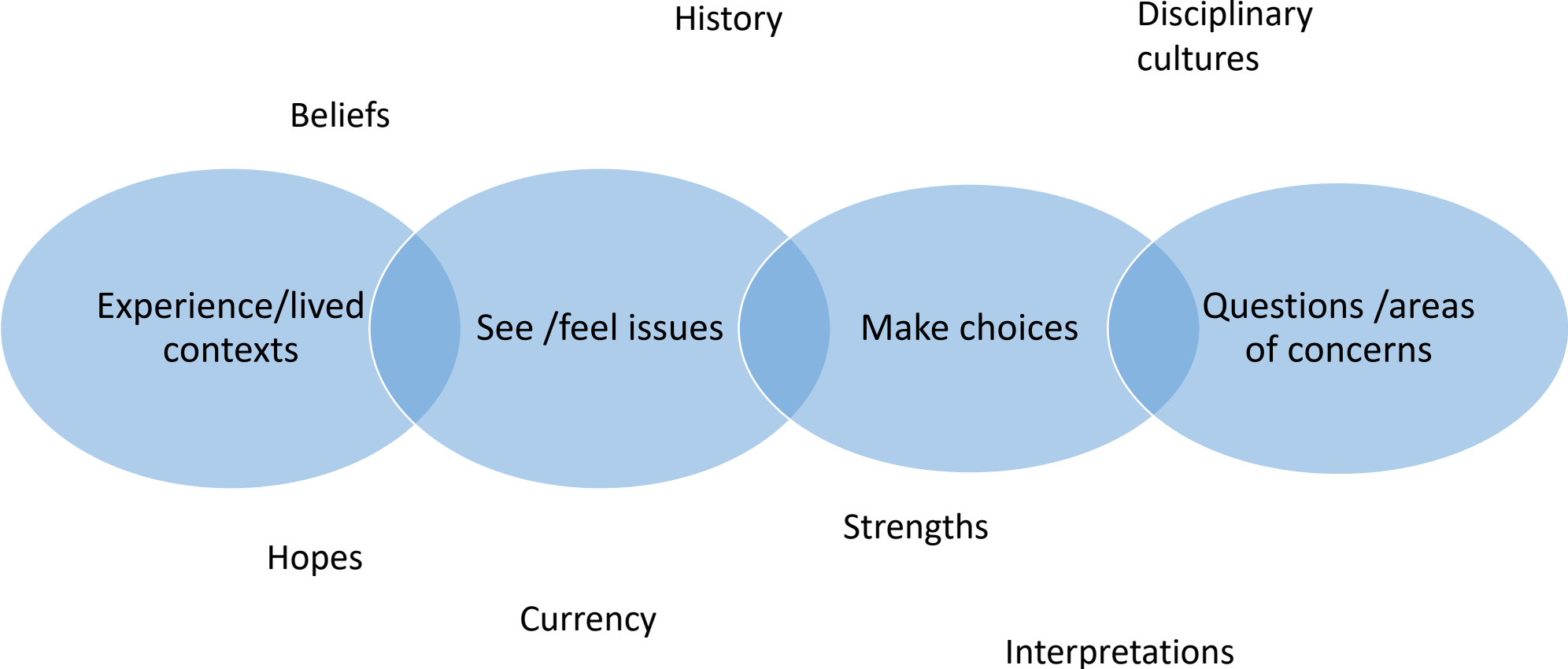


- What would a sociologist or an anthropologist be interested in doing in this context?

- What research might they wish to conduct?

Can you talk with your neighbor and develop a possible research question?

Educational inquiry





What would a scientist/healthcare professional be interested doing in this context?

- What research might they wish to conduct?

Can you talk with your neighbour and develop a possible research question?

Positivist paradigm

- The social world is different from the natural world
 - What is the connection between a patient and the medication prescribed?
 - What does a blood test actually measure apart from a deviation from a given standard?
- To be meaningful it has to be interpreted in the context of the person particular activities, over time, so that a norm for that particular person can be established

Interpretivist paradigm

- Researcher's presence and bias
- 'Emerging' questions
- Lack of generalisability
- Poor replication and validity
- Context –influenced meaning
- Possibility of continuing imagination
- Fragility in meaning

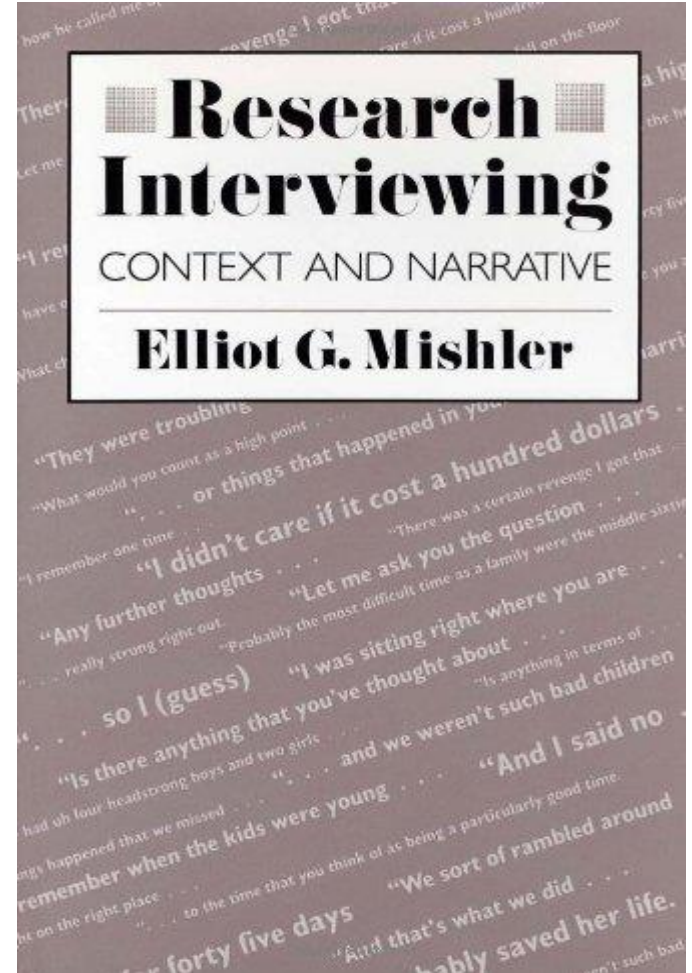
Case study
Action research
Ethnography
Autoethnography
Autobiographical
Participatory research
Grounded theory

Science and social science, or ?

THE DISCOURSE OF MEDICINE

**Dialectics of
Medical Interviews**

Elliot G. Mishler



Language and Learning for Human Service Professions
A Series of Monographs

Quantitative research

Explains social life

Interested in establishing law-like statements, causes, consequences etc...

Aims at testing theory

Believes in objective approaches to research

Focuses on studying elements and variables

Believes in generalizable, grand narratives

Provides clear answers to specific causal questions.

Rigorous research involves validity and reliability

Qualitative research

Understands social life

Describes reality as it is (ideographic)

Aims at generating theory

Employs a subjectively objective approach to research

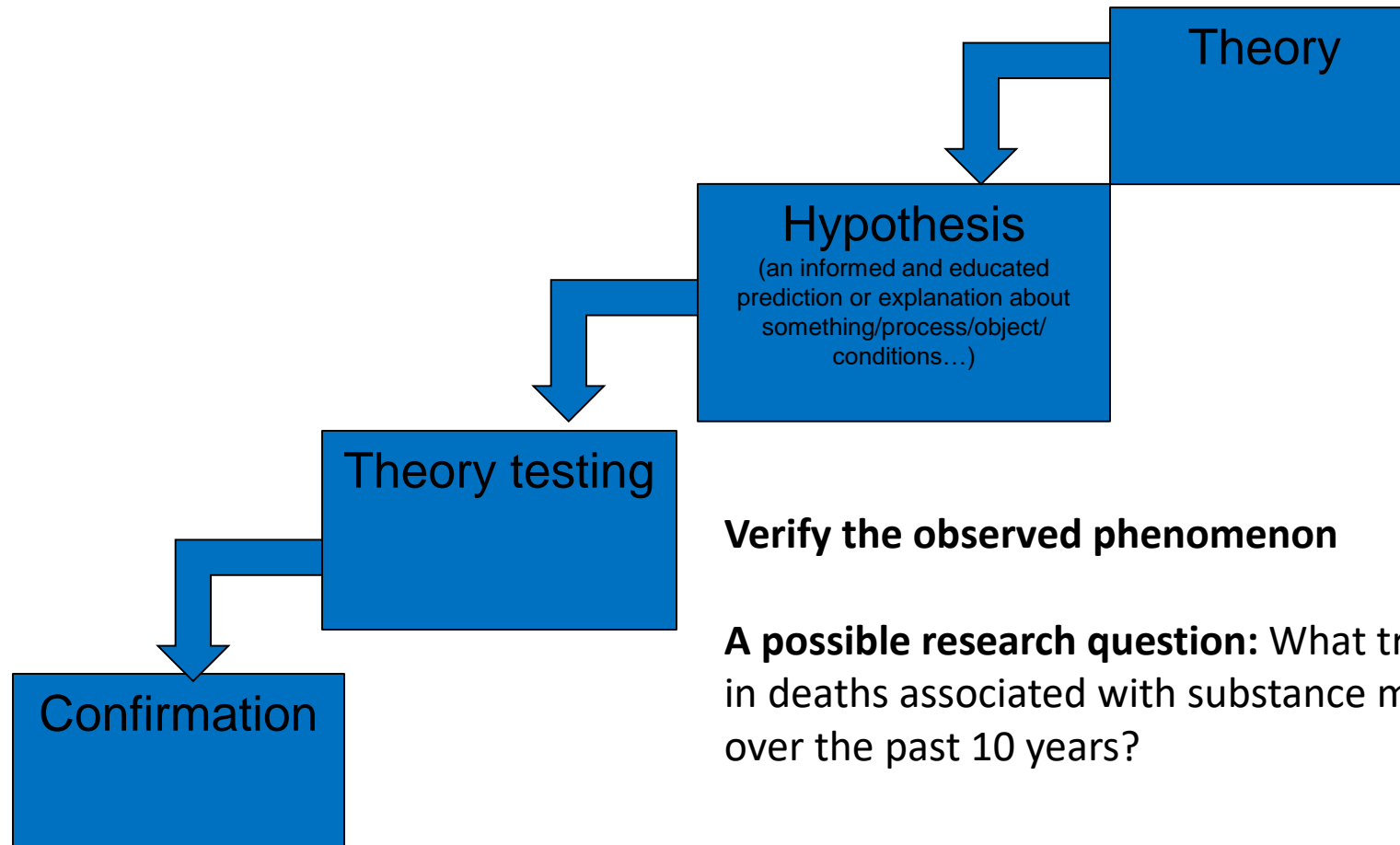
Normally, the sample size is small

Is holistic (studies whole units)

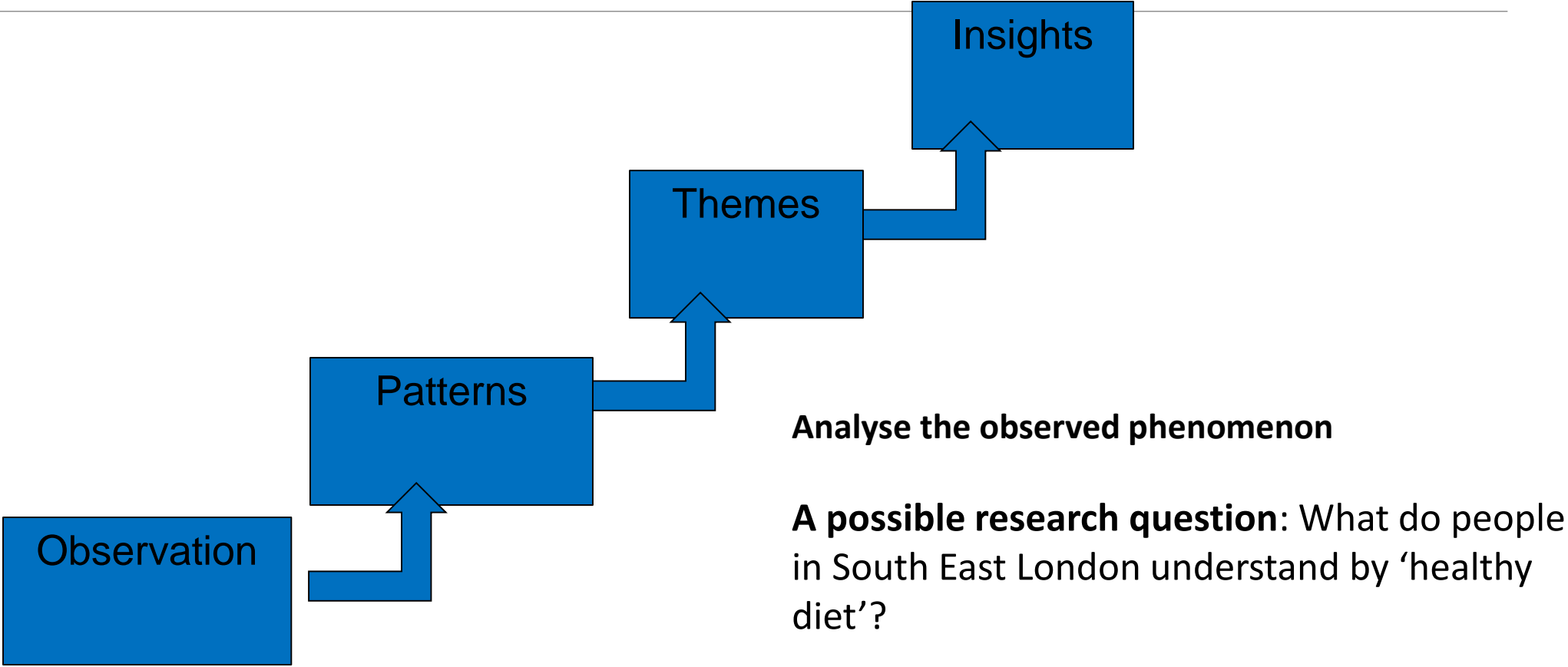
Doubts that research can contribute to generalizable narratives

Trustworthy research offers plausible insights, applicable within specific contexts

Deductive thinking and quantitative research



Inductive thinking and qualitative research



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