

## Qualitative Methods: From description to theory

28-29-30<sup>th</sup> November 2018

University of Evry Val d'Essonne

2, rue du Facteur Cheval, 91025 Evry

Excellent qualitative / inductive research is profoundly stimulating. But how does it get that way? In this workshop, we will examine the processes from research theme or question, to site emersion, to description, to theory driven observations and conclusions. Our goal is to work hands-on, helping the participants to think through and master for themselves key questions about doing qualitative research.

Emersion in a site of research requires rich interaction with the researched, awareness of circumstantial complexity, and well-developed skills of observation and writing. It is not easy to understand a research context or to gain sufficiently deep access to researchees that events become comprehensible. It is often difficult to satisfactorily link the complexity of what is described with sufficiently illuminating ideas or theories. How do we judge whether the theory used really corresponds to the site? Is the theory too abstract or too distanced? Can it do justice to the singularity of the case; how can one be sure that the theory applied does not force research analysis in an unwanted and/or unjustified direction? Will the research be truly productive of knowledge, awareness, and/or change? How does research make description and theory enlighten and challenge one another? Is the implementation of theory too far from the field, universalizing, and/or reifying? How abstract should theory be? How close do descriptions, commentary and analysis have to (not) be to organization members' reflexivity? Where, when and how do you introduce the researcher's voice into both description and theory? From what authorial position and with what personal pronoun do you write, and why? To what extent do you adapt, extend, and/or recreate theories?

This is a workshop into the methods of inductive qualitative research; their adequacy and pitfalls. Thus, we include ethnography, grounded theory, inductive case studies, auto-ethnography in/on organizations, in our scope. For research using such approaches, a successful thesis requires rich, close and multidimensional site description, which is analyzed with a correspondingly, telling and convincing theorization. But, in addition, the researcher needs to examine her/his own reflexivity and how it plays a role in her/his interactions and engagements with the field as well as with theory. Finding the right match and the right circulation between data collection, the theory used to achieve data analysis, and authorial self-awareness often proves to be difficult. This workshop is meant to help doctoral students in questioning and bettering the match, and in finding a successful track from description to theory, to one's authorship.

This workshop is designed for doctorate students in management, organization or social studies. It will be open to a small group in order to be able to work in a workshop mode. The three days will be devoted to examples and reflective discussion of the path from description to theory. During three half-day sessions senior researchers will present (counter-)examples, pose questions, examine the stakes, point to tricks of the trade, exchange experiences, and examine doubts and convictions. The three other half-days will

be reserved for participants' presentations of the research questions/issues that research has raised for them.

We are committed to an open, challenging, demanding, and we hope constructive and collective discussion. Participants will be able to test and develop their research perspectives. They should expect to envisage and explore possible methodological alternatives and to better learn to understand the quality criteria appropriate in qualitative research, in order to be more ready to research and write purposively.

To participate you will need to contact us at [jean-luc.moriceau@imt-bs.eu](mailto:jean-luc.moriceau@imt-bs.eu) before November 19<sup>th</sup>. For those with an [adum.fr](http://adum.fr) account, please prioritize registration via the platform. Participants are expected to attend all three days and to contribute actively to the collective learning process. In preparation, participants will be required to prepare a one or two-page summary of their research goals, current stage of investigation, the theories they have thought of using, and what problems they have encountered. It is the intention that you come focused to the workshop, ready to explore methodology with the tutors and fellow researchers.

#### **The Organizers are:**

Hugo Letiche is Professor Management & Organization, University of Leicester (UK) and Professorial Invited Researcher at Institut Mines-Telecom Business School, Evry. Previously he was Director of the practitioner PhD program at the UvH Utrecht (NL). His publications include (co-edited/authored): *Turn to Film*, Brill (*forthcoming*), *Post-Formalism*, Peter Lang (2017), *Demo(s): sense publishing* (2016); and *The Relevant PhD: sense publishing* (2014). His current research interests are in the turn-to-affect and the ontological-turn in ethnography, and in research ontology (object-oriented-ontology).

Jean-Luc Moriceau is Professor of research methods and accountability, he is responsible for doctoral education seminars for the LITEM research laboratory. His research emphasizes the turn to affect, ethical reflexivity as well as performative and creative writing. He has guest edited six academic journal special issues. Three co-edited books are due out soon: *Composer sa méthode de recherche qualitative* (EMS), *L'art du sens dans les organisations* (Eska); *Turn to Film* (Brill).