

Building New Qualitative Methods — Why Cultural Psychology Is Ahead? —

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I will tell you a joke that you know, probably. Man is looking for something under the lamppost. The passerby asks what they're looking for. The man says I lost my keys. The passerby asks, did you lose your keys here? The man says no, I lost them in the darkness. The passerby asks so why are you looking for the keys here when you lost them in the darkness? I asked my boss where to look for them. And the boss says the right way to look for the keys is where it is enough light. Even though he lost them elsewhere.

When we're building new qualitative methods as in today's lecture, then the new qualitative methods have a focus and a notion, 'new', not existing qualitative methods but new methods. And why cultural psychology is ahead? So, the starting point with today is the notion of methodologies not method. But the general process of how to create methods. Why do we need to talk about it? This is an idea that is around 25 years old by now. And we looked at something that we call the methodology cycle. It's a visual organization of all relevant components of the research process. This is an original article that was published for the first time by my Brazilian colleague and myself on that cycle. And here is the cycle itself. All parts of the cycle are needed for the whole. There are four important features of the circle. The first one, no part can be separated from one another. The second one, methods are not to be selected from a pool box of methods. They all are constructed to fit the goals of the research. The third point is very important. The researcher develops one's own educated intuition to work and live within the cycle. And the last feature, they cannot exist as humans. They are taken, derived from phenomenon. They are not collected as if they were fixed or locatable. They are derived or constructed based on the whole cycle. We go through the cycle, to illustrate what it means in practice. We go through the cycle counterclockwise, against the clock. Not with the clock, but against the clock. Why is this important? What value does it have for educational sciences? Educational sciences are a very interesting field between ideologies and science. They share with ideologies specific values. But at the same time, they emphasize being relevant in scientific knowledge.

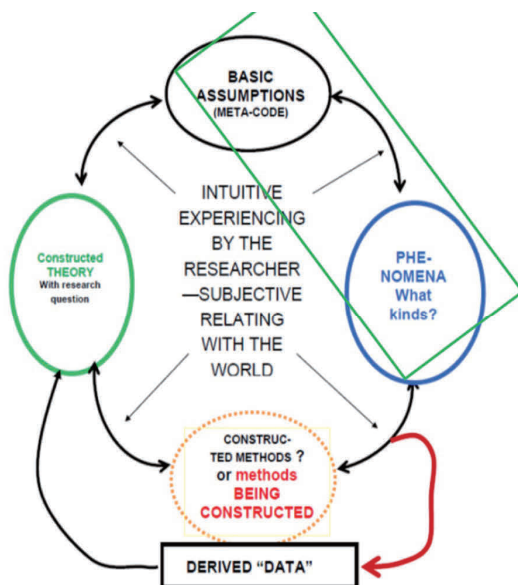
The step one involves the researcher's decision to locate the phenomenon that interests you for research. And this, it depends on your intuition at first, which is not anticipated but deeply personal and intuitive. Deeply personal, intuitive, not based on any science, but based on a human being growing up in a human society. It is just a human intuition about a phenomenon. For example, many of you are interested in kindergarten, preschool education. But from a specific point of view. As teachers, from the point of view of teachers. The point of view of children, maybe. So, in other sense, the interest in educational process in kindergartens, preschools, depends on your, as educator, or as a researcher, primary human interest in children. You help the children and each day you want to know how children develop. This is your personal standpoint.

Now you go from that interesting phenomenon on the right-hand side to the top which we call metacode. This linkage is extremely important. Why? The metacodes in mathematics, we call them axioms, set up the stage for all of your educational practice and also all your research process in education. You have a starting point for any questions you ask further and then also endpoints for what kind of knowledge you can get from your research or practice. In all of the world of social sciences, the metacodes, in the most general sense, are of two kinds. One is how everything is, ontology. The other is how everything forms, development. The two are mutually supportive but they are not reduced, they cannot be reduced to another. So, let us look at some of this. What does it mean for educational science? For example, you are interested in differences between children

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which go to first grade, or which go to fourth grade. The difference can be seen, which is how the difference is-ontologically, is that first grade children are different than fourth grade children. It can also be seen developmentally. How a first-grade child is different developmentally than a fourth-grade child. The first question on differences does not tell us anything about development. The second question is developmental, but it depends on the way how we look at that process of transformation. So, ontology versus transformation is the question. So, the contrast here, I've utilized to show two aspects of very simple activities all of you are invited to do almost every day. You are invited to give an evaluation to something in everyday life, services and so on, on a rating scale, on a line in which you set up- very bad, bad, neutral, good, very good, the answer to your feedback to the services. This is a deeply ontological stance. You put one marker somewhere on a rating scale and that the result, this marker, is supposed to represent the truth of your evaluation of the object. In contrast, in the second example, in the second line, you see a depiction of the evaluation in terms of a range, in terms of an area. This allows you to see that there is no true stance of a particular evaluation but there is a certain range of developmental possibilities within which the particular object may be. Ontological or transformational/developmental, we have two very differing perspectives on the very same phenomenon. Let us take the phenomenon which I understand for many of you is for interest in research. Kindergarten teachers relating to aggressive children fighting with one another. This fighting can be seen from two perspectives. Ontological perspective, we look at how aggressive is each of the children. Developmental perspective, not how aggressive is each of the children, but what is the role they are going through, that is seemingly aggressive, for the development of all the children. Children fight and children fight to develop.

HOW TO THINK WITH THE METHODOLOGY CYCLE (a stepwise guide)



STEP 1

LOCATE phenomena of your interest (HOW? Use your INTUITION that at first is not yet educated but will become so)

- **EXPLORE (in your mind) WHAT ARE YOUR EXISTING BELIEFS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION of the phenomena, List these. THESE ARE YOUR starting META-CODES**
- **Ask yourself IF YOUR BELIEFS are NECESSARILY „true“? THIS IS TEST OF META-CODES**

7

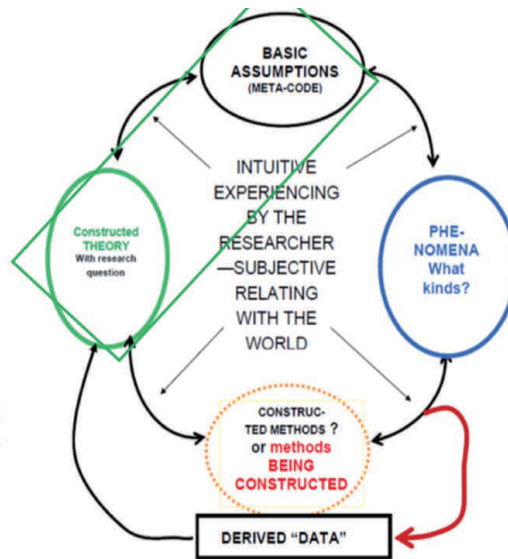
After specifying the relevance of metacode as it directs the educator and the researcher in the direction of seeing the child from two different perspectives, we can look at how particular theoretical perspectives are now constructed. This you'll see in step 2.

Let us take the example of very well-known developmental theory of Jean Piaget, which all over the world is represented as Stage Theory. Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3, Stage 4. This is a non-developmental aspect but an ontological aspect of looking at cognitive development. Children is this level, this level, this level, this level. But what is not covered in stage theory is the transformation from one stage to the next stage to the third stage to the fourth stage. At the same time, Jean Piaget also has a developmental/ transformational theory of human development which explains how children go from stage one to stage two to stage three to stage four. But this is usually not utilized in the study of cognitive development. So, you see that the metacode determines what

direction theories are constructed in order to move toward empirical study of children’s educational development. There are two directions. The metacodes give different answers to questions or to theories set up.

STEP 2

- THINK what kind of theory would fit your established relation between your meta-codes and phenomena
- CREATE theoretical propositions („under conditions A or B X is Y but under conditions C and D X is Z’“)
- These propositions lead to TESTABLE HYPOTHESS in the framework of N=1 (systemic science)

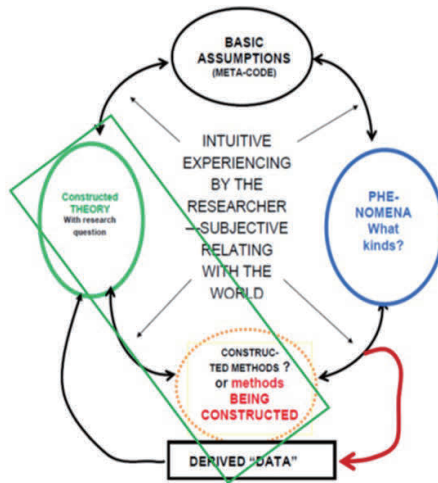


The step three in the method construction goes from the positive theory using the construction of methods. The methods come last, not first, in both the research and in educational application process. Why last? Because the methods have to be to the theory and the theory is built on the metacode. So, then the composition of the counterclockwise mode has to be adequate. One step, second step, third step have to be in good coordination. Look at the green square in this diagram. When you look at the green square, you see that the theory has to lead the construction of methods, not the other way around. The methods have to be made also true to the phenomenon. So, the result is that specifically testable methods preceded by testable ideas have to be following metacode and the theory. The method has to be constructed in such a way. Let me give in this slide an example of how two theories of migration give us a totally different answer to the same persons migrating from one place to another. This is the example of Berlin. When people move from one country to another, the traditional social psychological question has been that of assimilation, fitting into the life another society. If, however, you look from a developmental point of view, then the issue is not assimilation but what we call “proculturation”, namely in what ways the person adjusts to a new society and develops something that is hybrid between one’s own background and one’s new society.

You see that the two theories need to complete the different questions asked in methods. One leads to the simple question, how well is a child adjusted in a new society? The other leads to the question, in which ways has the child benefited from the new society and one’s own background society? What is the innovation that the immigrant child brings to the given society? If the assimilation theory were adequate, then no possibilities for Chinese, Korean, or Japanese restaurants to migrate to Europe would be possible. All the Japanese, Korean, and Chinese skillful cooks working in German restaurants would be preparing German food, perhaps better quality than German’s can do. Obviously, this is not true. But you see all over the world, there is a rapid development of Japanese, Chinese, Korean restaurants, which German’s and other east persons from the European side deeply appreciate. In a sense, the immigration to Europe brings something Europe did not have. This is a result of proculturation theory.

STEP 3

- THINK what kind of METHODS would be adequate for your inquiry (e.g. OUTCOME oriented or PROCESS oriented)?
- INTROSPECTIVE or EXTROSPECTIVE?
- OBSERVATIONAL or EXPERIMENTAL?
- CREATE these new methods. Can use parts of previous methods or re-do them for your purposes. THE KEY IS FIT WITH THE PHENOMENA METACODE THEORY move so far



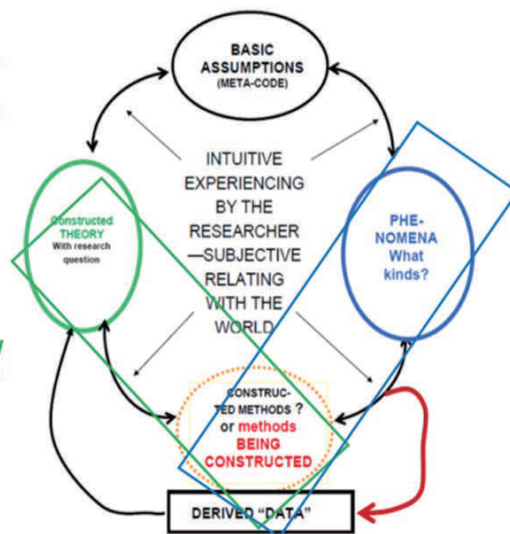
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Now we come to step 4, where we go to the actual construction of the methods. Qualitative methods are necessarily the way of dealing with the phenomenon of human development for the simple reason that often phenomena of human development are qualitative in their nature. Therefore, qualitative methods fit the theories of development and the metacode of developmental perspectives. So, these would be the examples of what kind of questions you would ask. But more importantly, what is crucial is the next step. Here is where you see the educated intuition coming into being. This is in the center of the methodology cycle. The result of educational practice or research practice similarly, the researcher or the educator develops deep seated, personal feelings about how to understand the phenomenon. So, in this sense, their educated intuition leads to the construction of all the methodology cycle.

This graduation of intuition is exactly the goal of all of our educational teachers and educational researchers. Because it is not following that certain set of rules that our practices mean, but it is exactly the creative, personal invention of a particular feeling, “How can I study this phenomenon?” “How can I better educate these pupils?” And so on. This is a question of art, education and science become forms of art rather than separated from art. So, now we look at the birth of educated intuition. It involves new combination of well-known concepts, namely reality and imagination. And these concepts were brought together in 2004 in Kyoto, in the development of *Trajectory Equifinality Model (TEM)*.

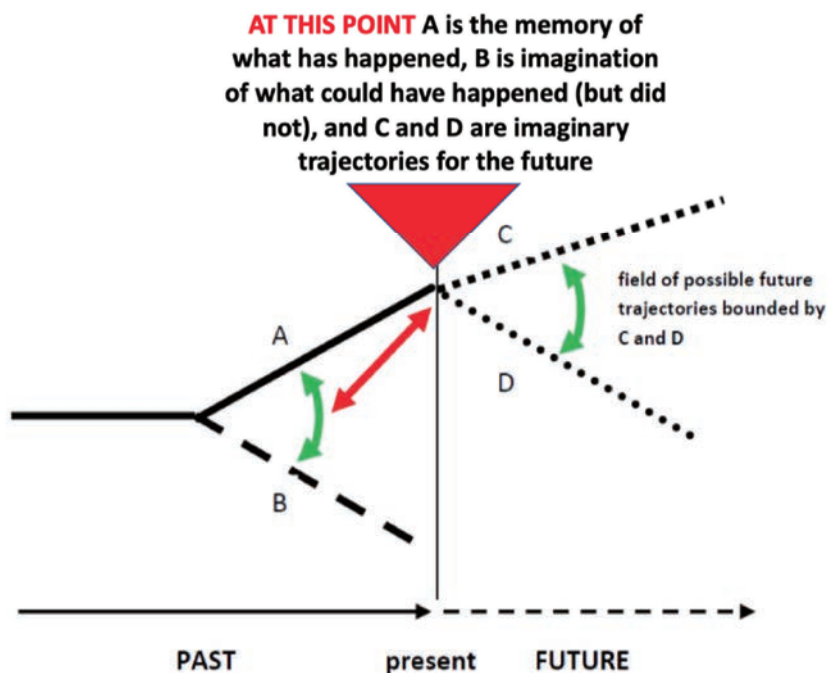
STEP 4

- Use the created methods to DERIVE THE DATA
- THINK if the derived data actually answer your research questions (green quadrangle)
- COMPARE the empirical results with the intuitive look (now a bit more educated) – BLUE BLOCK ON THE RIGHT)
- ASK YOURSELF what NEW have you found (that you did NOT imagine in the beginning of your project). If there is SOMETHING NEW your empirical research has been success



Let us use the TEM as an example of how the methodology cycle has led to the construction of totally new method. TEM is a method that is built on notion of the irreversible time of development. There is no possibility of turning back. In the triangle you see where the present moment is located in any area of educational or research processes alike. The important metacode for developing TEM is considering reality and imagination to be equal and relevant. In TEM model here, you have one line, line A that represents what actually happens in development. All other lines, B, C, D are hypothetical, imaginary. B is something that could have happened some time ago but did not. C and D looking forward from the present moment creates the range that is expected that can happen, but nobody knows if it really will. You will see that the important aspect of TEM coincides with a non-developmental perspective of simply drawing trajectories of actual development, there are many of those in human developmental psychology, by the simple act of adding the imaginary component. B, C, and D. This all happens to lead us to the possibility of creating very concrete interview methods which are systematically covering all the four components, A, B, C, D, and coordinating the tensions between A and B and C and D. And the importance here is looking at the relations, A and B and C and D, and then relation of the relations, AB related to CD. Here you see the linkage of the past lived through experience, AB, and the expectations for the future, CD. So let us play it out with a little example. The person tells you that he had always been shy in school, not social in school, being afraid of other pupils. But had succeeded in school well, that is A. Being shy of everybody is B. That the tension between actually performing in school well under the condition of not wanting to be social leads to the present state, prepares him to the future of next studies. But he or she also expects that one can nicely develop academic skills but do not want to deal with social side.

Is afraid of social relations but wants to succeed in studies. The person confesses that the success in school has been the result of isolating oneself with educational materials, being afraid of all peer group relations and social relations with other pupils. So, now the person is facing the future and the tension from the past between A and B carries forward to their anticipation for the future. So, you see that continuity development based on a particular AB tension, now becoming a CD tension. Now TEM model would have been impossible without assuming, metacode wise, the irreversibility of time in development. The irreversibility of time is given in the low line, low arrow. Most of our social sciences, if they treat time, they treat it as similar as space dimension and time becomes reversible as space is reversible. The irreversibility of time, you can never turn the development process backward. You cannot live to tomorrow as if you were to live the day before yesterday.



We have gone through the cycle and you can see here how important it is for both practitioners and researchers to understand the underlying nuance of metacode. And metacode determines what kind of empirical evidence, in practice and in research, we will find. So, now I'm going to invite all of you to discuss what kind of metacodes in your own work you are discovering that have fertilized your look at phenomena you're interested in and what kind of other metacodes are possible which you have not covered. So, I want to open the door to questions, commentaries, and counterarguments of any kind. Thank you very much for your attention.