Phenomenography: A qualitative Research Approach for Exploring Understanding in Education.

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Introduction

Phenomenography is a research method adapted for mapping the qualitatively different ways in which people experience, conceptualise, perceive, and understand various aspects of, and phenomena in, world around them. Phenomenographers seek to identify the multiple conceptions that people have for a particular phenomenon.

Aims

To review the literature and gain a deeper understanding of phenomenography as a qualitative research method.

Discussion

There seems to be an agreement that phenomenography has helped to the re-conceptualisation of learning and teaching. Phenomenographic research has as its outcome a set of categories of description that characterise the variation in the way a phenomenon may be experienced. The process is at follows:

Participations

The variation of a phenomenon comes to saturation when it reaches around 15-20 cases, after this, no more new concepts arise.

Researcher Position

Set aside the researcher’s personal views and beliefs and constantly adapt his/her reasoning in the light of dialogue.

Data collection

1. Through an interview (semi-structured) or through the text written by the person in response to specific question.
2. The researcher and interviewee must establish a shared definition of the phenomenon.
3. Should refrain from making assumptions regarding the nature of the phenomenon.
4. Exploring different aspects of the interviewee’s experience as thoroughly as possible by continuous probing.

Analysis

High degree of openness to possible meanings with the ultimate aim of illuminating the whole by searching for the outcome space.

Outcome space

1. Structured set of categories of description.
2. Categories of description are created by grouping of meaning statements.
3. Themes of expanding awareness: extra information that help constitute the relationship between the categories.
4. It is considered to be final result of phenomenographic investigation.

Conclusion

There is much evidence that supports the effectiveness of phenomenography as qualitative research method to discover the ways that students experience learning. This poster has focuses on the data analysis stage of phenomenographic research, elucidating what is involved in terms of variation and commonality in accepted practice.

References