

5-15-2023

The Research Question in Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Grounded Theory Research

Pilar Folgueiras-Bertomeu
University of Barcelona, pfolgueiras@ub.edu

María Paz Sandín-Esteban
University of Barcelona, mpsandin@ub.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr>

 Part of the [Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons](#), and the [Quantitative, Qualitative, Comparative, and Historical Methodologies Commons](#)

This Article has supplementary content. View the full record on NSUWorks here:
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol28/iss5/12>

Recommended APA Citation

Folgueiras-Bertomeu, P., & Sandín-Esteban, M. (2023). The Research Question in Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Grounded Theory Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(5), 1452-1472.
<https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.5715>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the The Qualitative Report at NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Qualitative Report by an authorized administrator of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact nsuworks@nova.edu.



The Research Question in Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Grounded Theory Research

Abstract

Formulating the research question is a key but complex task in qualitative studies. The question should be framed consistently with the approach chosen; in other words, question and approach are interdependent. This article aims to contribute to the understanding of the nature of the research question; to this end, we address its meaning by presenting two qualitative approaches: applied hermeneutic phenomenology and grounded theory. Although both approaches draw from the experience of the participants in research, they are vastly different and comparing them provides an exemplar of the important decision-making required for crafting research questions epistemologically aligned with their designs. From this starting point, in this paper we discuss the specific nature of the research question in two qualitative approaches: applied hermeneutic phenomenology and grounded theory. In hermeneutic phenomenology, the question is related to the phenomena of lived experience, with the goal to describe its disclosed/apprehended essence, in the meaning structures of the studied experience. In grounded theory, the question is driven by the purpose of developing theory in a specific field, either to grant exhaustive knowledge in the exploration of hitherto little-known situations or to further our understanding of human behavior. Taking the research question as our central theme, we divide this article into three parts. First, we specify the main characteristics of each of the two approaches. Second, we discuss the formulation of the research question in each. Third, we offer an example of a research question for each of the approaches.

Keywords

phenomenology, hermeneutics, grounded theory, research question, qualitative research

Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

Acknowledgements

This work was carried out with the support of the State Research Agency (AEI). Spain

The Research Question in Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Grounded Theory Research

Pilar Folgueiras Bertomeu and María Paz Sandín Esteban
University of Barcelona, Spain

Formulating the research question is a key but complex task in qualitative studies. The question should be framed consistently with the approach chosen; in other words, question and approach are interdependent. This article aims to contribute to the understanding of the nature of the research question; to this end, we address its meaning by presenting two qualitative approaches: applied hermeneutic phenomenology and grounded theory. Although both approaches draw from the experience of the participants in research, they are vastly different and comparing them provides an exemplar of the important decision-making required for crafting research questions epistemologically aligned with their designs. From this starting point, in this paper we discuss the specific nature of the research question in two qualitative approaches: applied hermeneutic phenomenology and grounded theory. In hermeneutic phenomenology, the question is related to the phenomena of lived experience, with the goal to describe its disclosed/apprehended essence, in the meaning structures of the studied experience. In grounded theory, the question is driven by the purpose of developing theory in a specific field, either to grant exhaustive knowledge in the exploration of hitherto little-known situations or to further our understanding of human behavior. Taking the research question as our central theme, we divide this article into three parts. First, we specify the main characteristics of each of the two approaches. Second, we discuss the formulation of the research question in each. Third, we offer an example of a research question for each of the approaches.

Keywords: phenomenology, hermeneutics, grounded theory, research question, qualitative research

Introduction

From an epistemological and methodological point of view, the research question is the "guide" in an empirical study. Thus, the nature of research questions shows what is of interest, what engages us as researchers and, at the same time, defines all the steps of the study. Therefore, the research question is an essential issue and, as such, invites us to ask ourselves: How do research questions arise? On this basis. In this article, we focus on the formulation of the research question in hermeneutic phenomenology (hermeneutic phenomenology¹ and grounded theory (grounded theory). These approaches share some of the main characteristics of the qualitative studies, while at the same time having distinguishing features that make them unique and different. This singularity and difference are already established in the research question itself and is the result of the specificity of each approach. We chose these designs

¹ Hermeneutic phenomenology is one of three types of Western phenomenology (Kafle, 2011, cited in Lauterbach, 2018).

based on our experience deliberating on which once to employ for a study of young women's political participation. As we discussed the possibilities for each design we crafted and reflected on the research questions that would guide them. We share our deliberative process to illustrate the minutia of research question development.

Taking the research question as our central theme, we have divided this article into three parts. In the first we specify the main characteristics of each of the two approaches. In the second we discuss the formulation of the research question in each. Lastly, in the third we offer an example of a research question for each of the approaches.

We consider that our article will contribute in (1) highlighting the importance of adequately formulating the research question, (2) contributing to the confusions that exist in the formulation of the research question in the two qualitative approaches, establishing their substantial differences when constructing them, and (3) providing examples where research questions in applied hermeneutic phenomenology and grounded theory are used as a starting point.

On Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Grounded Theory

Hermeneutic phenomenology as a research approach is based on phenomenological philosophy and applied hermeneutics. As a philosophical current, phenomenology was developed in the first half of the 20th century mainly by Edmund Husserl (1970), who defined it as a descriptive philosophy of pure experience and essences, through which we seek to capture an experience at its origins without categorizing, interpreting, or theorizing it (Van Manen, 2016). Hermeneutics, on the other hand, is rooted in the Greek term *hermeneuein* (Fuster Guillen, 2019), and was largely developed by Gadamer (1993). It may be defined as a philosophical current that can be applied to data analysis. Max Van Manen wrote that hermeneutic phenomenology was “a method of abstemious reflection on the basic structures of the lived experience of human existence” (Van Manen, 2017, p. 775). By “method,” Van Manen meant the researcher's attitude towards and way of approaching a phenomenon. He used the term “abstemious reflection” to refer to the deliberate renunciation of theories, preconceptions, principles, etc. that might interfere with our grasp of the essential meanings of a phenomenon. In phenomenology we focus, then, on the way we experience “things” in the first person (Roth, 2004), seeking to capture the world exactly as we experience it, not as we categorize or conceptualize it (Ayala-Carabajo, 2017; Van Manen, 2016).

The ultimate objective of hermeneutic phenomenology is to gain access to the meaning structures of lived experience by appropriating them, clarifying them, and reflectively making them explicit (Van Manen, 2003, p. 320). In fact, in hermeneutic phenomenology, similarly to qualitative research, the main epistemological grounding is experience as it is lived by people. In hermeneutic phenomenology, however, this has a special meaning, since “lived experience” also refers to the intention of investigating a phenomenon in a “pre-reflective” way; in other words, attempting to capture how we “live” it directly, as opposed to how we experience it reflectively. In addition to this pre-reflective orientation, hermeneutic phenomenology also encompasses the interpretation of lived experience through written texts or other symbolic forms (Ayala-Carabajo, 2008, 2016; Ricoeur, 1991; Van Manen, 2003). In hermeneutic phenomenology we distinguish, then, between pre-reflective experiential knowledge (Pitard, 2016) and our reflective perception of the phenomenological structure of this experiential meaning (Ayala Carabajo, 2017; Van Manen, 2003); a distinction between (a) our “lived experience,” of time for example (pre-reflective knowledge); and (b) the meaning structure of the lived experience of time: what time “is” (reflective perception). Another example, from the educational sphere in this case, would be “the experience of being an educator” (pre-reflective knowledge) and “what it means to be an educator” (reflective perception).

To gain access to both pre-reflective knowledge and the reflective perception of lived experience, Van Manen suggested that six research activities should interact dynamically. The dynamic interaction of these six methodological activities would be the basic methodical structure of phenomenological research. The following table shows a list of the six activities proposed by Van Manen and examples of how each of these activities can be put into practice. In the examples, we recover the experience of "being an educator" cited above:

Table 1

Six Methodological Activities in Van Manen's (2003, 2016)

Van Manen's Activities	Example
Focusing on a phenomenon that genuinely engages the investigator.	The researcher should be interested in and committed to the subject of study: "being an educator."
Enquiring into the experience as it is lived, not as it is conceptualized.	To select participants who can describe (through anecdotes, stories, interviews) the experience of being an educator as it is lived (pre-reflective knowledge).
Reflecting on the essential themes that characterize the phenomenon.	To reflect on the essential aspects of the experience of being an educator, based on the descriptions gathered in the previous activity (reflective perception).
Describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting.	Writing and rewriting about the phenomenon to create a phenomenological text. Writing and re-writing will allow the experiential deepening of the texture of the story. Some moments of writing and rewriting, would be: When the researcher asks the participants for descriptive accounts of the experience of being an educator. Often, participants will have to write and rewrite the accounts several times until they get these pre-reflective descriptions. When the researcher reflects on these pre-reflective descriptions, writing will also be the used method. Writing will create a deeper understanding of the meaning of the phenomenon. In the example given on the "phenomenon of being an educator."
Maintaining a strong pedagogical relationship with and orientation towards the phenomenon.	The researcher must constantly ask herself: What is the ethical and pedagogical meaning of the lived experience of being an educator? The pedagogical and ethical value must be present throughout the hermeneutic phenomenology work, and this is how phenomenology helps us glimpse educational understandings and intuitions.
Keeping a constant balance by taking both the parts and the whole into account (Van Manen, 2003, cited in Folgueiras et al., 2021, pp. 3-4.	The starting point should be the most concrete; for example, anecdotes, descriptive accounts of the lived experience of being an educator (this would be the parts, the concrete

experiences of the study participants), to arrive at the meaning structures of the lived experience of being an educator (this would be the whole, the final phenomenological text)

Even with these activities guiding phenomenological inquiry, the research process cannot be reduced to a set of strategies and tools. The phenomenological approach is dynamic and needs to be reinvented, adapted, and recreated constantly in the course of the study (Van Manen, 2016). In fact, neither the empirical methods used in hermeneutic phenomenology for gathering lived experiences (the phenomenological narrative, the phenomenological interview, the observation of experience, etc.) nor the reflective methods employed for understanding the meaning of texts (phenomenological thematic analysis) occur in isolation. That is, their meaning emerges alongside other techniques adopted, whether philosophical (the *epoché* and the reduction), existential (relationality, corporality, spatiality, temporality, materiality), or philological (the vocative).

This combination of flexibility and use of different methods (empirical, reflexive, philosophical, existential, and philological) requires from researchers a certain intellectual, affective, ethical, and philosophical orientation, which allows them to face the main challenges we will encounter. This orientation implies bracketing both our prejudices about the phenomenon under study and our theorizations about it. Without this orientation, it is not possible to penetrate phenomenologically into the lived experience, nor touch (or be touched) by its eidetic meanings.

To do hermeneutic phenomenology is, above all, to opt for a flexible approach to questioning, which seeks access to pre-reflective knowledge and reflective perception of the phenomena, requires an open and flexible orientation on the part of the researchers, and offers a glimpse to educational understandings and intuitions about the phenomenon under investigation.

Grounded theory, on the other hand, emerged from the convergence of two different intellectual and academic traditions in North American sociology, developed by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss. Glaser brought a quantitative methodological influence with an emphasis on empirical research and Strauss brought a qualitative tradition and the influences of symbolic interactionism and pragmatism. The two currents came together in an original synthesis of Grounded Theory, considered a general methodology for developing theory that is rooted in systematically collected and analyzed information. Grounded theory evolved during extensive six-year fieldwork in which death, as a phenomenon experienced by medical staff and patients, was explored in various hospitals and specialised wards (Glaser & Strauss, 1965). The approach was unveiled two years later in their work, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), in which they set out the interest and utility of the methodology for research in which the objective is to develop a theory describing human behaviour and the social world. After the foundations of what is now known as classical grounded theory had been established, the same and other authors developed new approaches in the field, such as that of Strauss and Corbin (1990), known as the Straussian perspective, more oriented towards verification than theory discovery and more concerned with producing a detailed description of the cultural scene (Babchuk, 1996); and that of Charmaz' (2006) constructivist view (see Table 2).

Table 2
Main Currents of Grounded Theory

Classical grounded theory	It refers to the original grounded theory methodology established by Glaser and Strauss in their study <i>Awareness of Dying</i> (Glaser & Strauss, 1965). They used the usual qualitative techniques for data collection, but through inductive processes and constant comparisons, conceptualizations of social phenomena were constructed, attempts were made to transcend detailed descriptions and generate mid-range theories. Theory is conceived as a process, a developing entity rather than a finished product. Classical grounded theory combines its interpretative purposes with the empiricism, logic, rigor, and systematic analysis of quantitative research.
Straussian perspective	At the end of the 1980s the original grounded theory underwent a schism. In 1990 Straus and Corbin (Glaser's former student) published <i>Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory</i> where they refer to their research methodology also as Grounded Theory. Glaser requested that this version of Grounded Theory be renamed but his request was not granted. This reformulation is known as Straussian Grounded Theory. Both strands shared an objectivist position, situating the researcher outside a cognizable object. The fundamental divergence lies in the fact that Strauss and Corbin recognized the interpretative character of the theoretical formulation. They also complement that the construction of theory entails considering that knowledge is framed in a historical, social, and cultural context, and is therefore temporal and diverse.
Constructivist view	Reacting to the objectivism inherent in both proposals (classical and Straussian), Kathy Charmaz brings a vision of grounded theory reformulated from the foundations of constructionism. She rescues the inductive, comparative, emergent and open approach to data. She replaces the idea of discovering grounded theory with that of constructing grounded theory. The main contribution was to recognize the active role of the researcher in the whole process of collecting, selecting and interpreting information, and how this interpretation incorporates experience, interests, and personal assumptions. Meanings are co-constructed in an interpretative exercise and interaction between the researcher, the participants, and the data. A process of subjective and intersubjective construction. Charmaz proposes the division between positivist theory and interpretive theory.

Grounded theory is a structured yet flexible methodology (Chun et al., 2019). Grounded theory is suitable for studies of people's behaviour and for understanding the processes through which we construct meaning based on intersubjective experience. It is used to discover ideas on social relationships and group behaviour, known as "basic social processes" (Glaser & Holton, 2005)– the mainstays of the theory. It can be described as both a methodology and style of doing research and, at the same time, a way of analysing social phenomena to develop theory. The main feature distinguishing it from other qualitative approaches – and particularly from HP – is the stress on theory building. Thus, in grounded theory we go beyond existing conceptual frameworks and seek new understandings of social processes taking place in natural

contexts. The ultimate objective of a study performed from this inductive perspective is to create or discover a theory, that is, an abstract analytical schema that explains a phenomenon in a particular situation and a context. By the end of a grounded theory study, the products of the analysis should have been systematically worked on to turn them into theory.

A theory is generally more than a set of findings, since it also aims to explain phenomena. Strauss and Corbin defined theory as a set of well-developed categories; for example, topics and concepts that are systematically linked to each other through statements indicating relationships, and that are taken together to build a theoretical framework that can explain specific phenomena in sociology, psychology, education, or other fields. Strauss and Corbin argued that these statements explained the “who, what, when, where, why, and how” of events, in addition to their consequences (Strauss & Corbin, 2002). A distinction should be made between substantive theory, that is, that developed for an empirical field such as patient care or teaching-learning processes, and formal theory, that is, that developed for a conceptual field of social research such as studies into stigma, socialisation, or social mobility, since in the latter we develop a higher level of abstraction (Woods, 1992). Grounded theory is more related to the former; in it we seek to build a substantive theory; theory that is constructed on the basis of a particular area of empirical research, and which facilitates transference or application to specific situations or contexts: for example, substantive theories that have been elaborated in and that we can use to explain the real world of education (Sherman & Webb, 1988).

Procedures for making comparisons, formulating questions, and constructing samples based on theoretical concepts in constant evolution are essential characteristics of grounded theory; through these we can distinguish it from other approaches, and these are the way to theory building (Strauss & Corbin, 2002). Information-gathering techniques are like those used in other research methods: interviews, observation, documentation, audio-visual recordings, and so on. Both qualitative and quantitative data are collected, although the former tend to predominate due to their suitability for capturing the meanings that emerge from social interaction (Sandín, 2003). In grounded theory, we switch back and forth continuously between data collection and analysis, so that information-gathering, analysis of the information and the resulting theory-building are in constant and close relationship, and theory is seen as a preliminary understanding that we are permanently evolving. Through the theorization process and the construction of categories and relationships between them, the researcher can use the theory created to develop or confirm explanations of the “how” and “why” of phenomena. We focus the theory on the way that people interact with the phenomenon studied.

To sum up, the three basic tenets of grounded theory are: (1) coding is approached also as theory, since through coding, theoretical concepts of an explanatory nature regarding phenomena are developed; (2) in grounded theory we are guided by theoretical sampling procedures, drawing up memos and formulating propositions that we subsequently use to direct ongoing data collection; and (3) comparisons are drawn between phenomena and contexts, and we elaborate theoretical concepts from these comparisons (Legewie & Schervier-Legewie, 2004).

Formulating the Research Question in Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Grounded Theory Research

While there is much literature on writing qualitative research questions and on conducting specific qualitative studies (Birks & Mills, 2014; Hancock et al., 2001) there are limited examples of the elements, careful attention, and processes required for crafting them. Well formulated research questions are the necessary starting point for any qualitative inquiry and yet they are often indistinguishable and ill-suited for their corresponding qualitative approaches. That is, research questions are as unique to their designs as the content of the

studies they energize. The research question's uniqueness is since it condenses epistemological and methodological aspects. The epistemological aspects allude to the theory of knowledge, which implies the posing of questions related to: how do we apprehend the world? How do we apprehend our study phenomenon? Methodological aspects refer to the necessary path to carry out the research process; that is, the steps to be followed.

Qualitative research questions guide the entire inquiry process and vary according to the approach. The nature of the research question is different if we use an ethnographic, narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, case study, etc. approach. Opting for one approach or another will answer: How are we going to apprehend our phenomenon? And based on this, the steps to follow (methodology) will vary.

A research question is the question around which a study is initiated². Its adequate formulation and its concordance with the general objective are a compass that guides the methodological process. Therefore, the selected approach must be adequate to answer the research question. In this sense, the research question (or questions) will be different if the study is focused on hermeneutic phenomenology or grounded theory.

A Research Question in Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Determining the meaning structures of lived experience is the main objective in hermeneutic phenomenology, and this involves the fundamental belief that approaching the study of a human experience from the phenomenological perspective represents a contribution to the field of research chosen. At the outset, the researcher should begin by deciding whether hermeneutic phenomenology is an approach method that is appropriate for the research interests. Hermeneutic phenomenology is a suitable process when the study is oriented towards questioning rather than getting specific answers or establishing conclusions, guidelines, rules, or generalizations. Orienting oneself towards inquiry in this way means that, in a phenomenological study, researchers question something in a phenomenological way (they inquire about pre-reflective experiences) and ask what this something is really like (Van Manen, 2003, p. 62). Therefore, approaching an experience through phenomenology always involves gaining a fresh perspective; that is, the fact that there is academic literature on a phenomenon, and an abundant theoretical framework about it, does not imply that we cannot obtain new insights when we investigate it from the standpoint of pre-reflective experience. Therefore, given that our main purpose is to reveal meaning structures that we can use to gain insight into the significance of human phenomena, and the meaning of human experience (an event, occurrence, situation, thought, feeling, etc.), phenomenological research questions are formulated “from a posture of wonder” (Van Manen, 2016).

The inquired into experiences arise in daily life; that is, in life worlds in which any ordinary experience tends to become extraordinary if approached from wondering and the phenomenological point of view. Thus, through phenomenology we can understand that our day-to-day experiences are wonderful, and less simple than we initially think. Thus, the attitude of wonder is a fundamental necessity when framing the phenomenological research question (Ayala-Carabajo, 2017). In a good phenomenological study, we almost always begin in or pass through a phase of wonder.

Wonder, according to Van Manen (2016) is a disposition that has, in turn, a dispositional effect: it both unsettles and moves us. It should not be confused with delight, admiration, curiosity, fear, etc. Wonder, seen as an attitude, cannot appear automatically; and neither can it be artificially induced or form part of an approach (Ayala-Carabajo, 2017; Van Manen, 2016). In the same way that imagination can be the spur to creating an artwork, our

² A qualitative study can also begin with several questions that will be refined, redefined, etc. during the study.

feeling of wonder can prompt phenomenological questioning. In the space between wonder and phenomenological questioning we find knowledge, reflective skill, and intuition (Ayala-Carabajo, 2017). Wondering means embracing the fact that things may also exist in a different way to the way they are (Waldenfels, 2017). In other words, it involves assuming that there is a distinction between appearance and reality (Beltrán, 1982). This distinction between appearance and reality means that experiences can sometimes be shown through an appearance that distorts them (this does not mean that they are not real). For example, an optical illusion.

In the table below are examples of hermeneutic phenomenology studies whose research questions suggest an attitude of wonder. Table 3 is a summary of a range of studies that have adopted the hermeneutic phenomenology approach.³In the articles outlined the authors focus on lived experience and tackle a variety of topics, yielding a series of findings linked to meaning structures. The sample shows the potential of hermeneutic phenomenology for investigating lived experience in depth.

Table 3
Studies in Hermeneutic Phenomenology

	Area of interest	Initial question⁴	Some findings
Redmond (2021)	The pedagogical value of the lived experience of abandoned communities	What is the experience of educators when they explore the remnants of an abandoned community?	Place as a heuristic teacher. The pedagogical power of place. The need to include local, meaningful, place-based experiences in the curriculum.
Morse & Blenkinsop (2021)	The lived experience of being outdoors	What is the lived experience of being outdoors?	A feeling of humility. Being alive to the present. Paradox and living with the irresolvable: vulnerability/comfort, sharpness/smoothness, stability/change, continuity/complexity.
Levinsson et al. (2020)	The lived experience of being teacher educators confronted with neoliberal agendas	What is the meaning of the lived experience of being teacher educators confronted with neoliberal agendas?	Alignment slaves. Audit puppets. Technophobes.
Foran et al. (2020)	Relationality experienced by beginning teachers	What is experienced when relationality is the focus for beginning teachers?	Relationships between novice teachers and their students inform identity in becoming a teacher and allow teacher educators to deconstruct the “taken-for-granted-ness” of the type of teaching stuck in a rational-technical model.

³*Phenomenology & Practice* (<https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/pandpr/index.pHermeneuticPhenomenology/pandpr/>). We chose this journal because it is comprehensively centered on applied phenomenology. The studies chosen were those that best exemplified the topic of this article.

⁴ In some cases, the question is not explicitly framed.

Buckley (2013).	The experience of living sustainably	What is the experience of living sustainably?	Lived and reflective relationship with the earth and humanity. A reconciliation of every person with the earth and embracing humanity.
-----------------	--------------------------------------	---	---

Hermeneutic phenomenological research questions should be arrived at from a place of wonder, but they also implicitly focus on what Husserl referred to as “existentials,” or the fundamental themes that give our life worlds meaning. According to Husserl, human experiences –for example those listed in Table 3 – are always lived through existentials: fundamental themes that are useful in exploring meaningful aspects of our life worlds (Husserl, 1970). Everyone experiences the world through the existentials of lived relationships, the lived body, lived space, lived time and lived things (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, explored these in his work *The Phenomenology of Perception*; Table 4).

The phenomenological research question also tacitly asks about the existentials, since, as we commented in the previous paragraph, all human experience is lived through them. Below we give some examples of questions referring to the existentials that are implicit in any phenomenological research question:

Table 4

Examples of “Tacit” Questions in the Phenomenological Research Question

Relationality – the lived I-Other: the existential theme of relationality refers to relationships lived with others in interpersonal space. In a study of a human experience this means asking questions such as: How are people connected to each other? What is the ethics of being together? How exactly is the subject-object relationship established? – among others relating to the specific experience investigated.

Corporality – the lived body: the existential theme of corporality refers to the fact that we are always physically present in a certain way in the world. In a study of human experience this means asking questions such as: How is the body experienced? How are our fears, desires, anxieties, joys, etc. embodied? – among others relating to the specific experience investigated.

Spatiality – lived space: the existential theme of spatiality refers to the way of experiencing/feeling a space. In a study of a human experience this means asking questions such as: How is space experienced? How are interior spaces experienced differently to exterior? – among others relating to the specific experience investigated.

Temporality – lived time: the existential theme of temporality refers to subjective time as opposed to clock time or objective time. In a study of a human experience this means asking questions such as: How is time experienced? – among others relating to the specific experience investigated.

Materiality – lived things: the existential theme of materiality refers to the things of our world. In a study of a human experience this means asking questions such as: how are things experienced? – among others relating to the specific experience investigated.

In summary, the phenomenological research question is derived from an attitude of wonder and enquires into an aspect of a human experience as lived through the existentials; and this always involves the implicit question of whether this human experience may be different from what it seems. In other words, it involves assuming that there is a distinction between appearance and reality in any experience, however mundane, familiar or taken-for-granted it may seem (Beltrán, 1982).

The Research Question in Grounded Theory Research

Grounding concepts in data is a primary main objective in grounded theory, and this involves the essential belief that new ideas on a phenomenon can be added to knowledge in any discipline or field of interest by putting forward theoretical propositions based on the data obtained, rather than by analysing such data in the light of or within the framework of existing theories. For example, when dealing with a specific research topic, authors may offer theories that were developed or tested with samples and populations differing from those of interest to the analysis; or theories may exist, but they may be incomplete, since the authors may not have encompassed dimensions that are potentially valuable for the purposes of the study. At the outset, then, the researcher should begin by deciding whether grounded theory is an approach that is appropriate to their research interests. Grounded theory is useful when we do not have a theory that explains a process, as using it we can explore the latter through questions such as: What process is taking place? In what conditions? How do the people taking part understand it, feel, and act? When, why, and how does this process change? What are its consequences? (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). The research questions in grounded theory are initially broad-based and are driven by two basic purposes: to investigate the cases of interest in more depth, favouring the production of answers regarding social processes; and to increase our understanding of the theoretical issues involved in a particular phenomenon.

Since the main purpose of grounded theory is to build theory, the question is formulated in such a way that through it, researchers have the flexibility and freedom to explore the phenomenon in depth and can condense it into a question on how people act in a certain context. Carmen de la Cuesta-Benjumea (2006, p. 138) remarked that a “grounded theory study starts with a general question, not with a hypothesis.” Such a question is normally of the type “What is happening here? What’s going on?” and is oriented towards the way that people define a phenomenon or event through social interaction. Strauss and Corbin write that the formulation of the initial research question in a grounded theory study is established broadly at first, and then gradually comes into sharper focus as the concepts and relationships are discovered (Strauss & Corbin, 2002).

At the outset of a grounded theory study, particularly in the classical approach, “the problem is not identified, delineated and written up *a priori*, before we begin to collect data, but emerges from the concerns of the participants in the substantive field [...] Researchers come to the substantive field with an initial idea of what they wish to study, but the problem in itself gradually takes on form and definition on the basis of the data as it is gathered” (Barrios, 2015, p. 36). Grounded theory researcher moves into an area of interest with no problem, the methodology processes out the emergent problem and questions regarding the problem emerge (Glaser, 2021). This can be illustrated by Table 5, that summarises several studies carried out using classical grounded theory⁵; these articles are focused on different topics, each yielding new emerging theory in an area of interest. Researchers use unstructured, in-depth interviews, with a broadly worded question about the topic area called the grand tour question (Simmons, 2010). This question invites participants to discuss what is significant to them within the topic area, it is a general, non-leading “grand tour” question to begin to get at what is relevant to the respondent. As a theory begins to emerge, there is more selectivity in data collection and grand tour questions become “less and less grand.” This sample also shows the interdisciplinary potential of grounded theory for developing theories across a wide range of fields and topics, in addition to its applicability and conceptual power in a variety of social contexts.

⁵Examples from the journal *Grounded Theory Review. An International Journal*. <http://groundedtheoryreview.com/>. We chose this journal because it is wholly centered on grounded theory. The studies chosen were those that best exemplified the topic of this article.

Table 5
Grounded Theory Studies

Studies	Purpose, context of the study	Area of interest	Initial question posed to participants (“grand tour” question)	Resulting theory theme
Leger & Phillips (2021)	To discover what happens in a little-studied area of interest in the nursing profession	The perspectives of bedside nurses about patient safety in the adult acute care environment	What does patient safety mean to you?	Exerting capacity
Cashwell (2021)	To widen theory around the concept of “authenticity,” in terms of becoming more authentic across the lifespan (not as a state or trait)	The experience of being highly sensitive	Talk to me about the experience of being deeply affected by people and situations	Coming home
Rolle-Whatley & Vander (2021)	To develop a theory that offers a richer conceptual explanation than those currently available on bringing up children.	Experiences of active bringing up	Tell me about your experience as a mother or father.	Transforming loyalty
Chametzky (2020)	To discover and explain what Ph.D. candidates and students need for success in their courses	Achieving Ph.D. studies (success, not dropping out)	What is like to be a Ph.D. student?	Becoming an expert
Klimek (2018)	The phenomenon of surviving breast cancer has been identified through qualitative methods but lacks an explanatory theory.	Surviving breast cancer	Broad, open questions to stimulate discussion of thoughts and feelings around prolonged survival	Negotiating emotional order

In grounded theory, the researcher should set aside all preconceptions to allow a central problem to emerge as a stable focus for the study (Glaser, 2021). To this end, framing questions is strictly necessary in grounded theory, as these questions are an analytical means of “opening up” a line of enquiry and guiding theoretical sampling. Once the core phenomenon has been determined, there will be many questions on the phenomenon and how it relates to the events observed. The researcher directs the thrust of the questions towards the dynamic flux of the events, accepting the natural complexity of the relationships involved. What researchers are looking for is interaction in time, since this is where they find a series of conditions that lie behind the changes observed. An example of a problem/question emerging in this way can be found in de la Espriella and Gómez (2020, p. 131), based on a study by Chun et al. (2019), in

which the initial question was: “What role do gifts play in the patient-nurse relationship?” and responded to the researchers’ observation that patients often offered gifts to nurses in return for the care they had received. During the study, it became clear that the essential topic was that of the specific patient-nurse relationship, which led to the question being reframed as: “How does the patient-nurse/nurse-patient relationship develop?” During transcription and codification, the researchers defined the terms process and change as key, and negotiation of the relationship as the core category, in addition to identifying the different types of relationship, dividing them into mutual and unilateral, with subcategories.

Grounded theorists wish to learn more about the stages and phases of something, and what leads to these stages and phases. In the process of interrogating the data, a good question is one that leads the researcher towards answers that are useful for formulating the theory under construction. There are different types of questions referring to different aspects of the study, some directed more towards substantive issues, others towards more theoretical ones, and yet others of a more practical nature, as depicted in the table adapted from Strauss and Corbin (2002). See below: Table 6.

Table 6

The Usefulness of Asking Questions in a Grounded Theory Study.

Type of questions	Sensitizing questions	Theoretical questions	Questions of practical and structural nature	Guiding questions
Function	Help the researcher tune into what the data might be indicating	Help the researcher to see the process and to make connections between concepts.	Provide direction for theoretical sampling and help with development of evolving theory	Guide interviews, observations, and documentary analysis
Examples	What is going on here; that is, issues, problems, concerns? Who are the actors involved? How do they define the situation? Or what is its meaning to them? What are the various actors doing? Are their definitions and meanings the same or different? When, how, and with what consequences are they acting, and how are these the same or different for various actors, and	What is the relationship of one concept to another; that is, how do they compare and relate at the property and dimensional level? What would happen if...? How do events and actions change over time? What are the larger structural issues here and how do these events play into or affect what I am seeing or hearing?	Which concepts are well developed and which are not? Where, when, and how do I go next to gather the data for my evolving theory? What kinds of permission do I need? How long will it take? Is my developing theory logical, and if not, where are the breaks in logic? Have I reached the saturation point?	These questions change over time, are based on the evolving analysis and are specific to the particular research. For this reason, it is difficult to give examples. They begin as open-ended and tend to become more focused and refined as the research moves along.

various situations?			
---------------------	--	--	--

Note. Adapted from Strauss and Corbin (2002).

To summarise, the grounded theory researcher moves into an area of interest without a preconceived problem. The research question in a grounded theory study is not a statement that identifies the phenomenon to be studied. The problem emerges and questions regarding the problem emerge by which to guide theoretical sampling. Out of open coding, collection by theoretical sampling, and analyzing by constant comparison emerge a focus for the research (Glaser, 2021, p. 10).

Examples from Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Grounded Theory

In this section we discuss how we formulated research questions for two specific example studies, each using one of the two approaches. The examples presented here were part of a study funded by the Spanish Ministry for Science and Innovation (see footnote 6). The study used the applied hermeneutic phenomenology approach, and among its general objectives was one centred on the methodological reflection or meta-research. Through this objective we sought to contribute to methodological reflection of hermeneutic phenomenology in the three phases of research (development, application, and communication). Pursuing this objective led us to, amongst other things, contrast our research question with other research methodologies, such as grounded theory. This was particularly relevant to the first phase of the study, especially to the construction of the phenomenological research question. The research team discussed and assessed the possibilities of both approaches for proposing and answering questions relevant to our research issue, which contributed to enrich our understanding of the differences between the two approaches. Thus, through the examples below we illustrate the specific differences around how the research question is constructed in hermeneutic phenomenology and grounded theory.

An Example from Hermeneutic Phenomenology

As we have stated throughout this paper, hermeneutic phenomenology focuses on the study of human experiences. In our first example, the studied experience was political participation among women aged 18 to 35.⁶ Thus, the study was a phenomenological investigation into the experience of “political participation⁷ as a young woman” (pre-reflective knowledge) that aimed to gain insight on what “political participation as a young woman is” (reflective perception). This situation, then, is seen as a phenomenon distinct from participation in general. Taking these considerations into account, we started the study with the following research question:

What is the lived experience of political participation as a young woman?

⁶This case formed part of a study funded by the Ministry for Science and Innovation titled "Socio-political participation of young people from a gender perspective: conceptual, methodological and educational contributions." The study is carried out by the University of Barcelona and is funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation (PID2019-104804RB-I00).

⁷In our study, “political participation” referred to the activity/ies of citizens participating collectively in public campaigns seeking the common good (2022).

Expressed in another way: What is the nature, meaning, significance, singularity or particularity of the lived experience of political participation as a young woman?

Or, what in the experience of political participation as a young woman manifests itself as an experience/phenomenon distinguishable from others?

These three questions expressed three different ways of formulating the research question, and tacitly enquired into participants' experience of the existentials. That is, the phenomenological research question also involves asking: How can the existentials of relationship, body, space, time and lived things guide us in exploring the structures of meaning in the experience of political participation as a young woman?

To construct the question, the research team faces several challenges. The first -referred to the formulation- revolves around how to ask, with a What or with a How. That is: "What is the lived experience of political participation as a young woman?" or "How is the lived experience of political participation as a young woman?" The What introduces a question about the differentiating elements of the phenomenon (political participation as a young woman) in relation to other similar phenomena. The How introduces a question about the way in which the phenomenon (political participation as a young woman) happens. We opted for the What because we assumed that it was the appropriate question to arrive at the structures of meaning about what makes an experience of political participation as a young woman. That is, about those structures that make it unique.

The second and more challenging step has been to put in brackets all our conceptions, theoretical frameworks, prejudices, etc.; that is, to practice epoché. This difficulty has been even greater, because most of the members of the team have a long history of research in participatory processes and in the exercise of participation. To practice epoché, the team members wrote stories about political participation, made epistemological diaries, etc. The process was long until we came to understand and feel that, putting our conceptions, theoretical frameworks, etc. in brackets, we could approach the phenomenon from an attitude of wonder. This attitude is allowing the phenomenon to "speak to us," to give us new interpretations and allow us to open new dialogues with theoretical frameworks on young women's political participation.

The third challenge has been to collect the lived experience of the participants through the descriptive narrative technique (empirical methods). Although, as a team, we considered it impossible to reach this type of knowledge, it was essential (to approach phenomenological knowledge) to have applied the epoché in constructing the research question, when collecting the descriptions of lived experience and when applying the reflexive methods (thematic analysis).

A fourth challenge has been to understand that both the empirical methods and the reflexive methods we are using throughout our research cannot be mechanical processes, based on calculating frequencies, coding terms, establishing inductive and deductive categories, and so on. Understanding - and doing our research in line with the understanding of - that phenomenology flees from such processes is what is allowing us to culminate in the writing of a phenomenological text on young women's political participation.

A fifth challenge has been to apply the criteria of objectivity and subjectivity from the phenomenological gaze, so as not to deviate from our research question. For phenomenology, objectivity means that the researcher remains faithful to the "object of study." Something like a guardian of the "authentic" "nature of the object." "He wants to show it, describe it, interpret it and, at the same time, be faithful to it, aware that people can easily be confused, misled or fascinated by extraneous elements" (Van Manen, 2003, p. 34). Subjectivity refers to the

capacity of the researcher to "penetrate" the object of study and delve into all its richness. Ayala-Carabajo (2017) also refers to/understands subjectivity as the "firmness" of the researcher who tries not to be influenced/deflected by their pre-conceptions, prejudices. Undoubtedly, again, the epistemological diaries of the researchers and the meetings on the content of our diaries have been key.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that opting for hermeneutic phenomenology in our research has meant opting for a method for questioning, not for discovery, nor for drawing conclusions, nor for elaborating proposals. A method where, thanks to its inherent pedagogical and ethical value, we are also being able to glimpse educational understandings and intuitions about the political participation of young women.

An Example of Grounded Theory

Hermeneutic phenomenology was the approach adopted in our study with the goal to describe the meaning of the lived experiences of political participation of young women. In this section, we follow that same research theme, assuming a grounded theory approach, whose essential purpose is to generate or discover theory in an area of interest, showing the nuances in the questions that can direct the study or focus progressively during its development.

Although in grounded theory we also use certain phenomenological techniques and assumptions, we focus less on people's subjective experiences *per se* (with stories, their details and participants' specific words as the units of analysis), and more on how we can raise these to the level of abstraction of theoretical formulations regarding causal relationships, thereby developing an explanation (theory) of a process, action or interaction, formulated on the basis of participants' own views. Situations are studied in response to a social and psychological phenomenon in which people interact, perform actions or are part of a process. In essence, grounded theory studies how people react to a phenomenon and, by inquiring about human behavior or interaction in such a phenomenon, it tries to provide a new perspective.

If we focus on the substantive field of the previous example, political participation, within this we might study the specifics of time, history, biography, space, economy, sex, power, or politics, all of which are conditions that can be meaningful (Strauss & Corbin, 2002, p. 228). To continue with this example, age (youth) and gender (being a woman) and the associated phenomena are topics of interest that we could explore to build an understanding of the subject, always bearing in mind that this understanding emerges from the data. How do young women participating in politics act and feel? This broad question would allow us to explore the dynamic social and psychosocial processes of political participation that are the focus of the grounded theory methodology, and which may be inferred from listening to what informants say about themselves and others and from observing social interactions, as any and everything is data to a grounded theorist (Glaser, 2007). Other questions that may support the discovery of a conceptual framework that explains the scene being investigated could be:

- *What meaning does participation have for women and in what contexts do they participate?* This is a sensitizing question (see Table 6) that keeps us close to the data while allowing us to begin to examine, refine and develop ideas and intuitions about young women's experiences of participation. Pandit (1996) points out that one of the difficulties of using grounded theory is the existence of periods of ambiguity and uncertainty due to the absence of hypotheses or prior research questions when beginning a study. With the aforementioned question in mind, we can explore, for example, whether the contexts of participation referred to by the women participating in the study are varied (neighborhood actions, ecological movements, peace

movements, etc.), or whether, as in our research, there is a tendency for young women to be mostly involved in political participation movements linked to the gender perspective (LGTBI movements, for example). We can explore the processes of participation in these contexts and collect new cases that provide data that is more empirical and from other contexts on the phenomenon under study.

- *How do they arrive at the decision to take part? How do people come to take part in political movements or actions?* “Every researcher wants to ask good questions, ones that will enhance the discovery of new knowledge. Asking questions enables the researcher to probe, develop provisional answers, think outside the box, become acquainted with the data” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 8). Let’s see how the above questions can be explored in the following paragraph, in which we report on a fragment of an interview in our study where a young woman recounts her memory of how she decided to participate in a feminist group: “the whole story and the expectations generated began a few weeks before, when I found a poster on the networks that encouraged women, lesbians and trans women to get together to go to a feminist group. Quickly, I passed it to a friend and comrade of struggle by WhatsApp, to see if we were to go together and we decided yes. The shared emotion gained in disproportion and pushed me to go to the meeting; at the same time, I was generating expectations about how it would be, projecting my desire to find an enriching space that would challenge me to grow in the feminist struggle.” When we look at this piece of data/fragment, as we are just brainstorming, we can ask questions that are very exploratory. What does “the history and the expectations generated started a few weeks before” mean? What kind of expectations, desires and wishes does a young woman project before an eventual experience of participation; participation is seen as a space where “to grow,” then, we ask ourselves, is the concept of “personal growth,” of “challenge” essential, conditioning, the process of participation in young women? If it were not given, would participation be abandoned? Could it be that some people participate and acquire political awareness, and others do not? These are some questions that can generate the establishment of propositions about the process of participation, statements that express a relationship between two or more categories in the analysis of the phenomenon and its properties.
- *How do they build up a feeling of belonging? When do they develop an identity for political participation?* These are questions clearly linked to the grounded theory approach for two main reasons: on the one hand, in terms of their nature, they place us on a theoretical plane, their function is to help the researcher see the process and to make connections between concepts and, on the other hand, they are questions that address the very process of political participation, it is worth remembering that grounded theory fits very well in the study of “actions,” what people do; often people get involved in a movement, action or campaign on the basis of previous relationships, which generate and affect new relationships, which in turn affect their career activism (Della Porta & Diani, 2006). These are questions that lead us to elucidate both the construct of “identity” itself (sense of belonging, multiple identities, self-representation, etc.) and to situate

ourselves in the temporal axis of the experience, contributing to the chronological explanation (linear, non-linear, systemic, or other) of the studied phenomenon (mechanisms by which action "constitutes" identity, membership in social movements, dynamic nature of the relationship between group membership and participation, etc.). This will occur at a probably advanced stage of the analysis, when the grounded theory study attempts to create a network of meanings, establishing relationships between the set of components (categories), identifying central categories in the phenomenon and, in short, building the theoretical profile of the phenomenon under study.

In conclusion, what we would wish to learn, then, would be when, how, and where (structure and process) the data reveal the ways that age and/or gender act as conditioning factors in the field of political participation, influencing action and interaction. The "social situations" are the units of analysis of interest for grounded theory (Clarke, 2005) to explore actions, transition, and change processes.

Discussion

Posing the research question is a key, but complex, aspect of qualitative studies. While there are certain characteristics that are common to qualitative research studies, and to both hermeneutic phenomenology and grounded theory, such as the importance of relevance, feasibility, ethics, and impact, through the particularities of the two approaches we arrive at different constructions and procedures.

Thus, a question inquiring into lived experience in hermeneutic phenomenology is the starting point and we take it as a guide throughout the study to direct the process by means of which we achieve the phenomenological reduction of the experience studied. Making the reduction – combined with the *epoché*, a Greek term used by Husserl (1970) to refer to the act of setting aside scientific and other beliefs and assumptions (Schmitt, 1959, cited in Butler, 2016; Van Manen, 2016) – helps us gain access to meaning structures. In hermeneutic phenomenology, reduction, then, means coming back to the world as we experience it in a pre-reflective state. As Van Manen remarked, it is, "ironically," the opposite of reductionism (codifying, categorizing, abstracting). Thus, in phenomenology we recover the etymological meaning of the word "reduction" (from the Latin *reducere*, to lead back; Van Manen, 2016, cited in Folguez Bertomeu, et al., 2021, p. 4). In this process of going back to "the essential," neither our prior theories on the phenomenon studied nor our theory-building play any role. Further, our return to "the essential" bears no relation to essentialism, which Van Manen defined as the tendency to view things in absolute terms and to build moral convictions on that foundation.

Grounded theory, on the other hand, is not a theory but a methodology through which we discover theories hidden in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 2002); it is a set of tools for analytically interpreting participants' worlds and the processes by which they construct their worlds (Charmaz, 2006). We begin by identifying an area of interest to explore; and we frame our research question with the express aim of contributing to the development of theory in that specific area, whether to afford more exhaustive knowledge of an unknown situation or to enhance our understanding of human behaviour by producing theory regarding specific phenomena (psycho-social, educational, health, etc.).

The research question is a specific question that we formulate to give form to the study, thereby establishing the project parameters and prompting the choice of methods used for data gathering and analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 2002, p. 39). Through this question we generally

enquire into how people interact in a certain context, and the use of “grand tour questions” is recommended when exploring the phenomenon, since we can utilize them to stimulate a more open dialogue that can reveal the main interests of a social group or groups (Paucar-Villacorta, 2016). We drive the analytical process with our ongoing process of theory-building, in which good questions are those that we can use to develop theoretical formulations for the specific field.

References

- Ayala-Carabajo, R. (2008). La metodología fenomenológico-hermenéutica de M. Van Manen en el campo de la investigación educativa. Posibilidades y primeras experiencias. *Revista de Investigación Educativa*, 26(2), 409–430. <https://revistas.um.es/rie/article/view/94001>.
- Ayala-Carabajo, R. (2016). Formación de investigadores de las ciencias sociales y humanas en el enfoque fenomenológico hermenéutico (de van Manen) en el contexto hispanoamericano. *Educación XX1*, 19(2), 359–381. <https://doi.org/10.5944/educXX1.16471>.
- Ayala-Carabajo, R. (2017). *Retorno a lo esencial: fenomenología hermenéutica aplicada desde el enfoque de Max van Manen*. Caligrama.
- Babchuk, W. A. (1996). Glaser or Strauss? Grounded theory and adult education. *Proceedings of the 15th Annual Midwest Research-to-Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing, and Community Education*, 12(2), 1-6.
- Barrios, B. E. (2015). Tres momentos críticos de la teoría fundamentada clásica. *Revista Universitaria de Investigación*, 16(1), 31-47. <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/410/41059090003.pdf>
- Beltrán, M. (1982). La realidad social como realidad y apariencia. *Reis: Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, (19), 27-53. [10.2307/40182908](https://doi.org/10.2307/40182908)
- Birks, M., & Mills, J. (2014). *Qualitative methodology: A practical guide*. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Bryant, A., & Charmaz, K. (Eds.). (2007). *The SAGE handbook of grounded theory*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848607941>.
- Buckley, J. (2013). Re-storing the earth: A phenomenological study of living sustainably. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 7(2), 19-40. <https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr21166>
- Butler, J. L. (2016). Rediscovering Husserl: Perspectives on the epoché and the reductions. *The Qualitative Report*, 21(11), 2033-2043. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2327>
- Cashwell, E. (2021). Coming home: A journey back to the authentic self. *Grounded Theory Review: An International Journal*, 20(1), 26-39. <http://groundedtheoryreview.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Cashwell-Coming-Home-volume20-issue01-june2021.pdf>
- Chametzky, B. (2020). Becoming an expert: A classic grounded theory study of doctoral learners. *Grounded Theory Review: An International Journal*, 19(2), 20-35. <https://groundedtheoryreview.com/2020/12/30/becoming-an-expert-a-classic-grounded-theory-study-of-doctoral-learners/>
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.
- Chun, Y., Birks, M., & Francis, K. (2019). Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers. *SAGE Open Medicine*, 7, 2050312118822927. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2050312118822927>
- Clarke, A. E. (2005). *Situational analysis: Grounded theory after the postmodern turn*. Sage.
- De la Cuesta-Benjumea, C. (2006). La teoría fundamentada como herramienta de análisis.

- Cultura de Loscuidados*, Año X, 20, 136-140.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14198/cuid.2006.20.19>
- De la Espriella, R., & Gómez Restrepo, C. (2020). Teoría fundamentada. *Revista Colombiana Psiquiátrica*, 49(2), 127-133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rcp.2018.08.002>
- Della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (1999). Social movements and organizational form. In D. Della Porta & M. Diani (Eds.), *Social movements: An introduction* (2nd ed.; pp. 74-87). Blackwell Publishers.
- El Hussein, M., Hirst, S., Salyers, V., & Osuji, J. (2014). Using grounded theory as a method of inquiry: Advantages and disadvantages. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(27), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2014.1209>
- Folgueiras Bertomeu, P., Ormaechea-Otalora, A. V. D., Salvà, A., & Comet, M. (2021). La actitud fenomenológica de la epojé en un estudio sobre participación política de mujeres jóvenes. *REIRE. Revista d'Innovació i Recerca en Educació*, 15(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1344/reire.35693>
- Foran, A., Robinson, D., Eilifsen, M., Munro, E., & Thurber, T. (2020). Pedagogy: A teacher's practice. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 14(1), 39-56. <https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr29397>
- Fuster Guillen, D. E. (2019). Qualitative research: Hermeneutical phenomenological method. *Propósitos y Representaciones*, 7(1), 201-229. <https://dx.doi.org/10.20511/pyr2019.v7n1.267>
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1993). *Verdad y método*. Editorial Sígueme.
- Glaser, B. G. (2007). All is data. *The Grounded Theory Review*, 6(2), 1-22. <https://groundedtheoryreview.com/2007/03/30/1194/>
- Glaser, B. G., & Holton, J. (2005). Basic social processes. *The Grounded Theory Review*, 4(3), 1-27. <https://groundedtheoryreview.com/2005/06/22/1533/>
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1965). *Awareness of dying*. Aldine
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Aldine
- Glaser, B. G. (2021). Getting started. *The Grounded Theory Review*, 20(1), 8-11. <http://groundedtheoryreview.com/2021/06/21/getting-started-3/>
- Hancock, B., Ockleford, E., & Windridge, K. (2001). *An introduction to qualitative research*. Trent Focus Group.
- Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology: An introduction to phenomenological philosophy*. Northwestern University Press.
- Klimek, J. A. (2018). Negotiating emotional order: A grounded theory of breast cancer survivors. *Grounded Theory Review: An International Journal*, 17(1), 22-35. <http://groundedtheoryreview.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/04-Klimek-Negotiating Emotional Order grounded theoryR Dec 2018.pdf>
- Lauterbach, A. A. (2018). Hermeneutic phenomenological interviewing: Going beyond semi-structured formats to help participants revisit experience. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(11), 2883-2898. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3464>
- Leger, M. J., & Phillips, C. A. (2021). Exerting capacity: Mindsets of bedside nurses in keeping patients safe. *Grounded Theory Review: An International Journal*, 20(1), 12-26.
- Legewie, H., & Schervier-Legewie, B. (2004). Anselm Strauss: Research is hard work, it's always a bit suffering. Therefore, on the other side research should be fun. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 5(3), <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0403222>
- Levinsson, M., Norlund, A., & Beach, D. (2020). Teacher educators in neoliberal times: A phenomenological self-study. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 14(1), 7-23. <https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr29395>
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of perception*. Routledge.

- Morse, M., & Blenkinsop, S. (2021). Being outdoors: Lived experience on the Franklin River. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 16(1), 57-70. <https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr29501>
- Pandit, N. R. (1996). The creation of theory: A recent application of the grounded theory method. *The Qualitative Report*, 2(4), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/1996.2054>
- Paucar-Villacorta, D. (2016). Sobre una manera de crear teoría sociológica. La teoría fundamentada clásica: una introducción comentada. *Revista La Colmena*, (9), 72-87. <https://revistas.pucp.edu.pe/index.pHermeneuticPhenomenology/lacolmena/article/view/19033>
- Pitard, J. (2016). Using vignettes within autoethnography to explore layers of cross-cultural awareness as a teacher. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 17(1). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-17.1.2393>
- Redmond, K. (2021). Experiential intensity of exploring place abandoned. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 16(1), 71-89. <https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr29502>
- Ricoeur, P. (1991). L'attestation: Entre phénoménologie et ontologie. In J. Greisch & R. Kearney (Eds.). *Les métamorphoses de la raison herméneutique* (pp. 381-403). Les Éditions du Cerf.
- Rolle-Whately, R., & Linden, K. (2021). Transforming loyalty: A classic grounded theory on growth of self-acceptance through active parenting. *Grounded Theory Review: An International Journal*, 20(1), 88-104.
- Roth, W.-M. (2004). Cognitive phenomenology: Marriage of phenomenology and cognitive science. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 5(3). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-5.3.570>
- Sandín, M. P. (2003). *Investigación cualitativa en educación. Fundamentos y tradiciones*. MacGraw-Hill.
- Sherman, R., & Webb, R. (1988). *Qualitative research in education: Focus and methods*. Falmer Press.
- Simmons, O. E. (2010). Is that a real theory or did you just make it up? Teaching classic grounded theory. *Grounded Theory Review*, 9(2), 15-38.
- Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Sage.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (2002). *Bases de la investigación cualitativa. Técnicas y procedimientos para desarrollar la teoría fundamentada*. Editorial Universidad de Antioquia.
- Van Manen, M. (2003). *Investigación educativa y experiencia vivida*. Idea Books.
- Van Manen, M. (2016). *Phenomenology of practice. Methods of building meaning in research and phenomenological writing*. Routledge.
- Van Manen, M. (2017). But is it phenomenology? *Qualitative Health Research*, 27(6), 775-779. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1049732317699570>
- Waldenfels, B. (2017). Fenomenología de la experiencia en Edmund Husserl. *Areté*, 29(2), 409-426. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18800/arete.201702.008>
- Woods, P. (1992). Symbolic interactionism: Theory and method. In M. D. LeCompte, W. L. Millroy, & J. Preissle (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research in education* (pp. 337-404). Academic Press.

Author Note

Pilar Folgueiras Bertomeu is Professor of Socio-educational research and citizenship education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Barcelona, Spain. She has researched in the fields of participation and education for critical citizenship. In the methodological field

she works with methodologies oriented towards social change, qualitative methods, and mixed methodologies. Pilar can be reached at pfolgueiras@ub.edu

María Paz Sandín Esteban is Professor of Qualitative Research in the Faculty of Education at the University of Barcelona, Spain. She has researched in the fields of intercultural education and teacher training with participatory, ethnographic, and improvement-oriented studies as well as studying and writing about qualitative research methods. María Paz can be reached at mpsandin@ub.edu.

Acknowledgements: This work was carried out with the support of the State Research Agency (AEI). Spain

Copyright 2023: Pilar Folgueiras Bertomeu, María Paz Sandín Esteban, and Nova Southeastern University.

Article Citation

Folgueiras Bertomeu, P., & Sandín Esteban, M. P. (2023). The research question in hermeneutic phenomenology and grounded theory research. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(5), 1452-1472. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.5715>
