

[論文]

A Call for More Qualitative Approaches to Second/ Foreign Language Classroom Research : Why? What? How?

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This paper calls for more qualitative approaches to second/foreign language classroom research (CR). There has been an over-reliance on traditional scientific laboratory type research approaches and methods to investigate CR issues that typically hinge on controlled experiments and objective analysis. Particularly, antecedent scientifically oriented CR has ignored what teachers bring to the classroom in terms of their thought processes, i.e., their beliefs, perceptions and views for doing what they do. Teacher beliefs are major indicators to understand teachers' actions in the classroom. However, scientific approaches have backed off from exploring teacher beliefs because the data are 'messy', uncontrollable and subjective. A qualitative approach using ethnographic orientations is more suitable to explore the teachers' thought processes. This paper will discuss why qualitative approaches and ethnographic orientations are needed in CR, what these approaches involve and how they can be carried out to manage the 'messy', but salient data on teacher thinking.

Key Words : Qualitative, Quantitative, Ethnographic, Grounded Theory

1. Introduction

This study calls for more classroom research (CR) studies that use ethnographic orientations grounded in a qualitative methodology as a means to better understand what goes on in second/foreign language (S/FL) classrooms. In turn, the paper argues that there has been an over-reliance on experimental approaches embedded in traditional scientific-positivist methods using a quantitative methodology to investigate classroom practices. Although outcomes of traditional scientific orientations to CR have provided some understandings of S/FL classroom practices, their depictions of what goes on in the classroom have been limited. Consequently,

several researchers posit that this has caused a gap in knowledge between what researchers claim happens in the classroom and what teachers actually experience (e.g., Burns, 1992; 1996; Freeman, 1996; Hodge, 2003; Woods, 1996). One reason for this gap is that traditional scientific approaches to CR have avoided the teacher factor, i.e., the teachers' beliefs, attitudes and perceptions that form their hidden pedagogies, which motivate their actions in the classroom. Pajeres (1992) claims that research on teacher beliefs may be the most significant factor in understanding what goes on in classrooms.

However, research on beliefs, attitudes or perceptions are murky concepts that lie hidden in the dark realms of the mental construct of teachers. To those attached to scientific research orientations, getting data from this area is a messy process. It is difficult to measure teachers' thought processes that involve beliefs, perceptions, etc. through an experimental approach. Therefore, in the past many researchers have avoided looking into what teachers bring to the classroom--in terms of eliciting teachers' insights on why they do what they do in their teaching practices. In order to fill in this void, CR grounded in a qualitative methodology supported by ethnographic orientations has begun to emerge since the 1990s in second/foreign language CR.

First, CR and the orientations of research in second/foreign language classroom that entail qualitative and quantitative approaches will be defined. The emphasis will be to clarify the differences of research traditions that are consonant with either quantitative or qualitative approaches. Second, the paper will move on to provide a clear understanding of the relationship between a qualitative methodology and an ethnographic approach, and *why* the two are needed in CR. Third, to better understand *what* an ethnographic orientation in CR involves, principles of ethnography are discussed. Finally, data collection and analysis techniques rooted in ethnography are explicated to show *how* CR with ethnographic orientations underpinned by a qualitative approach can be implemented.

2. Qualitative and quantitative approaches and research traditions in foreign/second language classrooms

There are considered to be four main research traditions in second/foreign language CR (Chaudron, 1988):

- Psychometric studies typically involve the so-called experimental method with pre- and post-tests for both control and experimental groups.
- Discourse analysis investigates classroom discourses in linguistic terms through the study of classroom transcripts, which typically assign utterances to predetermined categories.
- Interactional analysis takes place in a classroom setting and investigates relationships, such as the extent to which learner behaviour is determined by teacher-controlled interactions. Various predetermined observation schemes are used to code classroom interactions.
- Ethnographic studies attempt to get insights into the classroom as a cultural system, and they largely consider the participants' perspectives through naturalistic, uncontrolled observations and descriptions.

Nunan (1991b) argues that discourse and interactional analysis are not traditions but data collection methods. Thus, he argues that the four traditions become just two: psychometric and ethnographic “and this [binary distinction] mirrors the commonly observed distinction ...between quantitative and qualitative methods” (p.251). ‘Simplified’ as Qualitative and Quantitative approaches (see Grotjahn, 1987 for combinations of mixed paradigms).

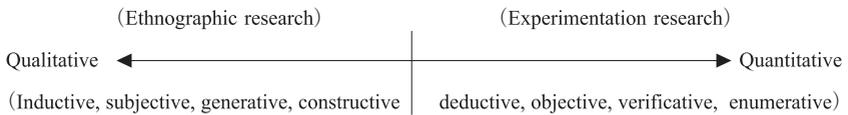
2.1 Qualitative and quantitative approaches

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) posit that qualitative research is difficult to define.

“It has no theory, or paradigm, that is distinctly its own” (p.3). Grotjahn (1987) refrains from categorizing both qualitative and quantitative research as paradigms. Instead, he defines them according to scaling or measurement applications. In its purest form, qualitative approach is non-experimental, focuses on qualitative data and uses interpretive analysis. On the other side of the spectrum, a quantitative approach is experimental or quasi-experimental, focuses on quantitative data and uses statistical analysis. (Grotjahn goes on to include six other hybrid versions of possible forms that integrate scaling and measurements attributed to qualitative and quantitative approaches.)

The following lists several distinctive differences between the two research approaches and their relationship to ethnographic and experimental research.

Table 1 : A qualitative and quantitative research spectrum



In the above, qualitative research often aims at collecting data to gain the participants' perspective. The data come from the participants' views or perceptions. It is therefore subjective. The researcher does not analyze or interpret the data mainly from his 'outsider' perspective. Instead, the aim is to induce an insider 'perspective', from observed actions of the participants in natural settings, and descriptions of those actions by the participants. The data is often textual or verbal. Understanding comes from the data in a generative, bottom-up process. The qualitative researcher does not start with a hypothesis although some posit that a hypothesis can be formed later on in the study (see Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The researcher looks for recurring information or patterns from the data and then constructs categories to form a meaning of what occurs. In this way the data is supported or substantiated. Gaining an insiders perspective, and looking at the data

as they emerge in naturalistic settings are also features of an ethnographic approach. This will be further explained later.

On the other hand, in a quantitative approach, an objective stance is taken. Insider or inductive data collection and analysis are subjective and cannot be verified. Objectivity must be maintained so that the data can be validated. Hypotheses are formed at the outset of the study and must be tested. Statistical data are used to verify the results. Objectivity and the reliance of statistical data to verify the results are elements of an experimental positivist approach. In a positivist approach, researchers investigate facts and causes of phenomena. Objective data is sought “by controlling human and other extraneous variables to gain what they [researchers] consider to be reliable, hard data and replicable findings” (Davis, 1995, p.428).

The following further delineate the distinctions between a qualitative and quantitative approach.

Table 2 : Attributes of qualitative and quantitative research approaches

Qualitative	Quantitative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concerned with understanding human behavior from the actor's own frame of reference ● Naturalistic and uncontrolled observations ● Subjective ● Close to the data: the 'insider' perspective ● Grounded, discovery-oriented, exploratory, expansionists, descriptive, and inductive ● Process-oriented ● Valid: 'real' 'rich' and 'deep' data ● Ungeneralizable: single case studies ● Assumes a dynamic reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seeks facts or causes of social phenomena without regard to the subject states of the individuals ● Obtrusive and controlled measurement ● Objective ● Removed from the data: the 'outsider' perspective ● Ungrounded, verification-oriented, confirmatory, reductionist, inferential, and hypothetical-deductive ● Outcome-oriented ● Reliable: 'hard' and replicable data ● Generalizable: multiple case studies. ● Assumes a stable reality.

Traditionally, a majority of CR researchers as mentioned above have often opted for a quantitative experimental approach. The first three research traditions cited previously are aligned with this approach. For example, in second language

acquisition (SLA) studies, applied linguists conducted experimental studies that focused on individual learners and teacher interactions. They were able to identify linguistic behaviours relative to pedagogy by looking at causal relations between L2 learning and classroom processes. SLA studies have shown us the type of interactions that take place in the classroom, such as question strategies (Long & Sato, 1983). Additionally, interactional analysis studies in first-language classrooms (Flanders, 1970) and second language classrooms (e.g., Faneslow, 1977; Moskowitz, 1967) through the use of observation instruments, have also given us descriptive samples of classroom behaviours. However, Burns (1992) writes,

At the same time these studies have tended to focus on *what* occurs in the language classroom while the further, and even more interesting question of *why* it occurs has been less researched...(p. 56).

Understanding why teachers do what they do requires a research approach that does not avoid significant data because it is murky and subjective. Consequently, an approach is needed that can delve into the messy realities of teaching that occur in the natural setting of the classroom. This approach is qualitative, and an ethnographic orientation (discussed later) in the research design is often the most appropriate.

Next, we will address the claim made in this study that there is an over-reliance on scientific-positivist approaches to CR that use a quantitative methodology.

3. An imbalance in CR

First, a definition of CR is necessary in order to make the claim that qualitative research has been lacking in S/FL classrooms. Nunan (1991b) writes,

I take classroom-oriented research as that research that either derives its data from genuine language classrooms (i.e., classrooms that are specifically

constituted for the purposes of language learning and teaching) or that has been carried out in order to address issues of direct relevance to the language classroom (p. 250).

Two main features of CR come out of the above definition. CR should get its data from real or 'genuine' classrooms, and the aim of a CR study is to gather results that can be linked to the realities of the classroom. These features are often not the aims of scientific-experimental studies. For example, in SLA or discourse analysis studies the aim is to learn how learners either acquire or interact in the target language. In the latter case, units of discourse produced by the learners are analyzed. The studies set out to control or order the data so that it is manageable. In order to manage the data, they use experimental control groups detached from a natural classroom setting or they may look at the discourse of learners and teachers in microanalyses approaches that isolate the data from the broader classroom context. In these laboratory-type, outside-the-classroom-studies, the messy, but nonetheless significant data that emerge from the complexities of genuine classrooms (e.g., social/cultural contextual influences and participants' beliefs or perceptions that influence their behaviors) are overlooked because they cannot be adequately analyzed to fit neatly into a predetermined traditional, scientific research framework.

The avoidance of qualitative studies in S/FL CR can be seen in Nunan (1991b). He viewed 50 widely cited studies from the classroom research literature and found that only 15 (33%) were carried out in genuine classrooms. The great majority of studies adopted a quantitative approach and collected their data outside of genuine classrooms in laboratory or stimulated controlled settings. In order to see if Nunan's study conducted in the last decade is still applicable, an Asian-based TEFL (Teaching English as Foreign Language) journal was analyzed. The journal offered 13 articles. The aim was to determine whether or not the CR of each article was actually classroom oriented using Nunan's criteria. To be classified as classroom-oriented, the design and method of each study needed to have a direct relationship

to classroom learning and it had to be carried out in an actual classroom. The results of the research orientations of articles selected for the ASIA TEFL Journal (2004) are presented as follows:

Table 3 : ASIA TEFL Journal Article Analysis

Classroom-oriented		Laboratory, simulated, outside the classroom	
<i>Design</i>		<i>Design</i>	
Experiment	3	Experiment	5
Non-Experiment	2	Non-Experiment	3
(Total)	(5)	(Total)	(8)
<hr/>		<hr/>	
<i>Method</i>		<i>Method</i>	
Observation	3	Elicitation	5
Interview	2	Questionnaire	1
Introspective	2	Introspective	1
Case study	1	Case study	
Transcripts	1		
Elicitation	2		
Questionnaire	2		

The survey shows that 5 (38%) of 13 studies were done in genuine classrooms and 8 studies (61%) were conducted outside the classroom. The results of the study are similar to Nunan's study mentioned above. Remarkably, in comparison to the above journal there has not been much of a change in the quantitative-qualitative ratio of CR studies in the past two decades.

3.1 Why is there an over-reliance on CR that that use quantitative approaches?

There may be a perceived higher status attached to CR studies that use complex statistical scientific inquiries among the academic community. For example, Somekeh (1993) writes,

On the whole...the more abstract and theoretical your work, the higher your status in the academic hierarchy; and the more useful and applicable to practice, the lower your status in the academic hierarchy (pp.30-31).

The view that the more abstract and theoretical CR is, the better it is received among academics has created a divide between teachers and researchers. In short, the results of these studies often do not match the realities the teachers face every day. Woods (1996) writes that although dominant directions (based on quantitative approaches) of mainstream CR have made contributions to our understandings of foreign language learning and what goes on in the classroom, they have also left gaps in current knowledge. One reason for the divide is that teachers' mental thought processes that can offer significant insights into why they do what they do have been ignored in abstract, laboratory type studies that are conducted outside the naturalistic setting of classroom. Consequently Freeman (1996) writes,

More practical research rooted in classrooms is needed because teaching is still an 'unstudied problem'. We need to know more about language teachers : what they do, how they think, what they know and how they learn (p.351).

To learn what teachers think require approaches and methods that can allow the teachers' voices to emerge in CR. In addition, what they say needs to be understood and observed within the context of genuine classrooms that are embedded in the teachers' culture in which they work. A qualitative methodology using ethnographic orientations are most suitable to gain the insiders' (i.e. teachers and learners) perspectives about their actions, and to understand what they do within the local school context or culture of the classroom.

3.2 The importance of research on teacher thinking and culture

In the field of general education, researchers began to call for more studies on teacher thinking to redress past research that ignored the teacher factor. For example, Cohen and Ball (1990) observed the role of teachers in curriculum change. They write, "When teachers changed in response to policy, they did so in terms of their pre-existing inherited beliefs, knowledge and practices. They reformed the policy in terms of what they already knew, believed and did in classroom"

(p.253). As considerations for teacher thinking became important in teacher change, researchers began to acknowledge the saliency of cultural influences on teacher thinking. Shimahara & Sakai (1992) write,

A reform program that does not take into account teachers' perspectives is bound to undergo significant alteration or fail entirely. Thus, all policy must go through the medium of the teacher's culture which filters in what is realistically possible and filters out what teachers see as unrealistic demands (p.148).

Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) further stated the importance for classroom research to focus on the influences of teaching cultures to better understand instructional practices. They maintain that teaching cultures are manifested in the work-related beliefs teachers share, and that their shared experiences in the various roles they perform on the job influence what they do in the classroom.

To summarize the above views, first, teacher thinking must be considered if we are to get more accurate depictions of teaching. Second, understanding the cultures of teaching at the local school context and how they impact on teachers' beliefs and actions need to be considered in research designs.

Next, we will look at reasons why an ethnographic approach to CR is an appropriate methodology to explore teacher's beliefs and culture that underpin why teachers do what they do in their teaching practices.

4. An ethnographic CR research design: theoretical assumption

If you want to understand the way people think about their world and how those definitions are formed, you need to get close to them, to hear them talk and observe them in their daily lives.

(Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p.32)

In educational ethnography the natives are those in the schools. Thus, in CR the

emic or insider view comes from teachers and learners, and the social setting is the classroom. In turn, the researcher spends considerable time collecting data at the school with the participants by watching. Ethnography is based on the view that natives' or insiders' perspectives presented in their own voices are necessary in order to understand the behaviors of the inhabitants of the cultural environment that is being explored. The anthropologist, Malinowski laid the traditional foundation for fieldwork in ethnography while he was stranded on the Trobiand Islands for several years during the war until 1918. What came out of that experience are the theoretical underpinnings for ethnographic research. In particular,

- the need for the ethnographic researcher to spend long periods of time in a setting to observe what is going on, and:
- that the data should reflect the natives' point of view, i.e., how they define, interpret and experience their daily lives and the cultures they live in.

(In Bogdan & Biklen, 1998)

Moreover, Malinowski emphasized the importance of field notes to depict key incidents supported by insiders' (informants) comments and actions, and then to look for patterns in the data by linking them to other incidents. Erickson (1977) suggests that for an ethnographic researcher,

...[The] ability to pull out from field notes a key incident, link it to other incidents, phenomena, and theoretical constructs, and write it up so that others can see the generic in the particular, the universal in the concrete, the relation between part and whole...may be the most important thing he does. Such selection, description and interpretation is very *emic* (p.61).

Ethnographic research involves watching and asking. In turn, the data is linked to other data as recurring patterns emerge. The researcher then begins to understand the data from his or her professional perspective (etic view) and is now a sensitized outsider.

4.1 Principles of ethnography

Watson-Gegeo (1988) provides one of the best descriptions of ethnography for ESL researchers and practitioners (e.g., see Davis, 1995, and Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999 for a review of Watson-Gegeo's principles of ethnography). She suggests that the ethnographic researcher include several principles of ethnography in the research design.

The first principle is that ethnographic research must focus on people's behavior and the way cultural patterns influence it. In collecting data through interviews and observations the researcher develops closer personal relationships with the subjects.

The second principle is that ethnographic research is holistic. Paying close attention to context enriches understandings of why people do what they do. Geertz's (1973) notion of 'thick description' is analogous to the importance of context. He points out that depending on the context, a wink of an eye can mean anything from a mild flirtation to a start of a *coup d'etat*. Thus, Geertz's example addresses the holistic principle of not detaching the data from their setting. In turn, it also stresses the importance of contextual analysis in ethnography.

The third principle is that an ethnographic study should be informed by theory. In educational ethnography according to Erickson (1973, p.10) the "school ethnographer is not entirely a stranger". "Ethnographers do not claim that they come to a situation like a 'blank state', with no preconceptions or guides for observations" (Watson-Gegeo, 1988 p.578). Theory is important to help researchers decide which evidence is significant in order to answer the research questions posed at the beginning of the study and developed while doing fieldwork (see Erickson, 1973; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1998).

Etic-emic analysis is the fourth principle in ethnography discussed by Watson-Gegeo. It forms an important link between theory and reality or between an

outsider's view and an insider's view, respectively. An *etic* view represents the researcher's *ontology* or view of the nature of existence and how he or she perceives the relations between things. To insure validity, the *emic* perspective or the native's (participants in the study) view, neutralizes the researchers' subjective presentations of the data. "Concern with the understandings the participants themselves have of the situations in which they are observed has led ethnographers to emphasize emic analysis" (Watson-Gegeo, p. 580). Emic analysis is the most important element of ethnography, and therefore, great care must be taken to find suitable methods to carry it out in the research design. Grounded theory is one such method.

4.2 Grounded Theory as a suitable method for an ethnographic approach

Never theorize unless you have the facts—Sherlock Holmes

Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is based on a system of generating theory from the data. The aim of grounded theory is to free researchers from biasing the data by imposing their own expectations, preconceived categories or hypotheses. Bogdan and Bicklen (1998, p.41) write, "In good research, methods are consistent with the logic embodied in the methodology". The methods used in grounded theory are harmonious with studies that take an ethnographic approach. For example, Spradley writes, "Ethnography offers an excellent strategy for discovering grounded theory" (1979, p. 10). In short, the data collection and analysis methods used in grounded theory are consistent with the logic embodied in an ethnographic approach. Conducting fieldwork by spending a considerable amount of time with participants; the use of data collection techniques such as interviews, observations and field notes; the generation of data through the reiterative process of data collection and analysis, and the discovery of recurring patterns that later emerge as themes or theories to conceptualize the data through emic and etic analysis are examples of why an ethnographic approach and methods of grounded theory are logically connected. The methods of grounded theory are briefly explained in the following:

- *The data collection and analysis are part of a reiterative process.*

“Data collection procedures involve interviews and observations as well as such other sources as government documents, video tapes, newspapers...anything that may shed light on questions under study” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p.5). The analysis begins as soon as the data first begin to emerge. “Here, analysis is necessary from the start because it is used to direct the next interview and observations” (p.5).

- *The ‘raw data’ are then labeled and conceptualized into categories.*

The data is then further elicited to confirm whether or not a category is applicable. Glaser and Strauss (1967) stress that in grounded theory application the data must be constantly compared so that each conceptualization earns its way into a theory. For example, Glaser and Strauss maintain that a theory generated from the data will:

fit the situation being researched, and work when put into use. By “fit” we mean that the categories must be readily (not forcibly) applicable to and indicated by the data under study; by “work” we mean that they must be meaningfully relevant to and be able to explain the behavior under study (1967, p.3).

- *The use of Memos to help generate ideas to form a grounded theory*

Bogdan and Biklen state, “Rather than allowing the recording of detailed description dominate your activities to the exclusion of formulation hunches, record important insights that come to you during the data collection before you lose them” (1998, p.161). Glaser (1978, p. 83) refers to this type of note taking as *memoing* and suggests that writing memos leads to the formation of ideas. “...a constant process that begins when first coding the data...and continue to the very end”. He adds (p.83),

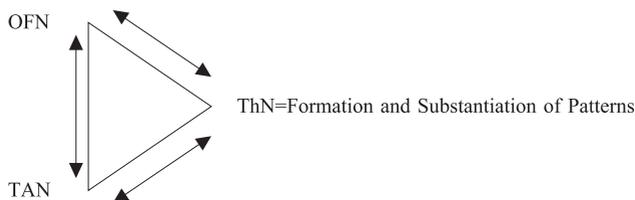
Memo-writing continually captures the “frontier of the analyst's thinking” as he goes through his data, codes, sorts or writes...If the analysts skips this stage by

going directly from coding to sorting or to writing--he *is not* doing grounded theory.

4.3 Memoing analytic process (MAP)

In my research on three Japanese junior high school English teachers (JTEs), I developed a three-layered embedded memoing analytic process (MAP). The MAP of the JTEs teaching was based on techniques and methods found in grounded theory and ethnographic research. The first layer involved observations of classrooms. Observation field notes (OFN) were conducted in order to describe classroom events and interactions. Interviews were carried out and immediately written down. The second layer focused on the text of interviews, which were influenced by what the teachers had done in the observations. Text analysis notes (TAN) of the interviews provided opportunities for me to analyze and reflect on what the teachers had said. Informative data in the interviews was selected, and my reflections about the selected text were written down. Thus, my reflective comments had to be linked to actual comments of the JTEs. The final layer employed theoretical notes (ThN). The purpose of ThNs was to free the researcher from limitations of only thinking within the confines of the collected data. Maxwell (1996, p.11) suggests that ThNs act like a “A common thread. They provide...ways of getting ideas down on paper and using this as a way to facilitate reflection and analytic insight” (pp. 11-12). The MAP allows for a triangulation approach of cross-checking the data and analysis. In the following is an illustration of a triangulation approach to data collection and analysis:

Table 4 : The dynamics of the MAP in data collection and analysis.



In the MAP, the etic (outsider) and emic (insider) analyses are intersected. The emergence of theoretical assumptions made by the researcher (an outsider) in a ThN are substantiated by both the actions described in the OFN and verbal remarks taken from the participants' (the insiders) interviews, which are scrutinized in the TAN. In this way, conceptualisations were grounded in the data through a back and forth data collection and comparative analysis process.

5. Discussion

The methods and techniques presented above represent ethnographic orientations to CR that are supported by a qualitative research framework. A qualitative approach provides a research approach that enables the CR researcher to explore and interpret classroom issues in situations where scientific research methods are not adequate. For example, if a researcher wants to learn about the impact on teacher instruction in regard to a new curriculum policy that asks teachers to develop students' practical abilities to communicate in English, then the researcher needs to elicit data from the direct source, the teacher. Moreover, interpreting how a policy impacts on teachers will require data that elicit teacher thinking. Explorations into the teachers' thought processes require data that delve into teachers' beliefs and perceptions. The data from these areas are part of the teachers' mental construct, which are hidden and therefore unobservable. However, as it was pointed out earlier, traditional scientific research studies have a tendency to avoid 'messy' (i.e. uncontrollable) --but nonetheless important-- data that cannot fit into their predetermined research frameworks.

This paper has emphasized that a scientific approach to CR should be conducted only if it fits the research issue under investigation. Nunan suggests that what the researcher sets out to discover should influence the research approach he or she takes. He writes,

I take the view that in carrying out research, the issue or question one wants to

address should form the point of departure, and the research method or methods one chooses should be consonant with what it is that one wishes to discover (Nunan, 1991b p.250).

For example, CR that recognizes the importance of uncovering teachers' beliefs requires a different approach to data collection and analysis. In short, scientific approaches are suitable for CR in situations where observable or micro-analytic approaches to data collection and analysis can be obtained from experiments or controlled environments. On the other hand, qualitative approaches using ethnographic orientations and grounded theory methods are equally appropriate for studies that focus systematically on the gaining the participants' perspectives, such as teacher thinking to better understand classroom practices.

The MAP described above offers a way to deal with messy data, to make the unobservable, observable. It provides a rigorous and systematic approach to managing and understanding the large amount of complex data that usually emerge when the researcher observes teachers' actions in the classroom and then explores teachers' thinking to uncover why they did what they did in their instruction. Finally, it should be noted that in CR both quantitative and qualitative approaches can be integrated within a study. This again depends on the issues the researcher wants to discover in his or her study.

6. Conclusion

This paper has emphasized the need for more qualitative approaches to explore issues concerned with understanding S/FL teaching practices. The paper explained *why* there is a need for more CR using qualitative approaches grounded in ethnography, *what* a qualitative approach using ethnographic orientations involves, and *how* qualitative techniques can be used in CR. There has been an over-reliance on the use of traditional, positivist oriented research approaches in CR. Classroom research issues investigated with a scientific experimental approach have offered

limited understandings of teaching practices. Teacher beliefs, which are salient indicators of teachers' actions, have been somewhat ignored because the data is subjective and difficult to control. However, a qualitative approach using ethnographic orientations is quite useful to manage so-called 'messy' data. For example, the MAP suggested in this paper is built on rigorous and systematic procedures that are supported by principles of ethnography and grounded theory. Thus, a qualitative approach, supported by an ethnographic orientation using grounded theory procedures and MAP techniques are now considered to be quite appropriate for observing the unobservable. In other words, they can be directly applied to uncovering teacher beliefs, which lead to better understandings of the more intriguing question of why teachers do what they do in their instruction. Finally, a goal of this paper is to speak to those in academia who are still inclined to believe that a quantitative, scientific approach to CR is somehow more superior to a qualitative approach using ethnographic orientations. The issue is not which approach is superior, but which approach is more suitable for the issues one sets out to investigate or explore.

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