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# **Mini-course in Implementation Science for HIV/STIs:**

## **Qualitative Methods**

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- Qualitative data is information that is difficult to measure, count, or express in numerical terms. This type of data is used in research involving detailed, verbal descriptions of characteristics, cases, and settings.

- Data which can be categorized in some way but which cannot be reduced to numerical measurements

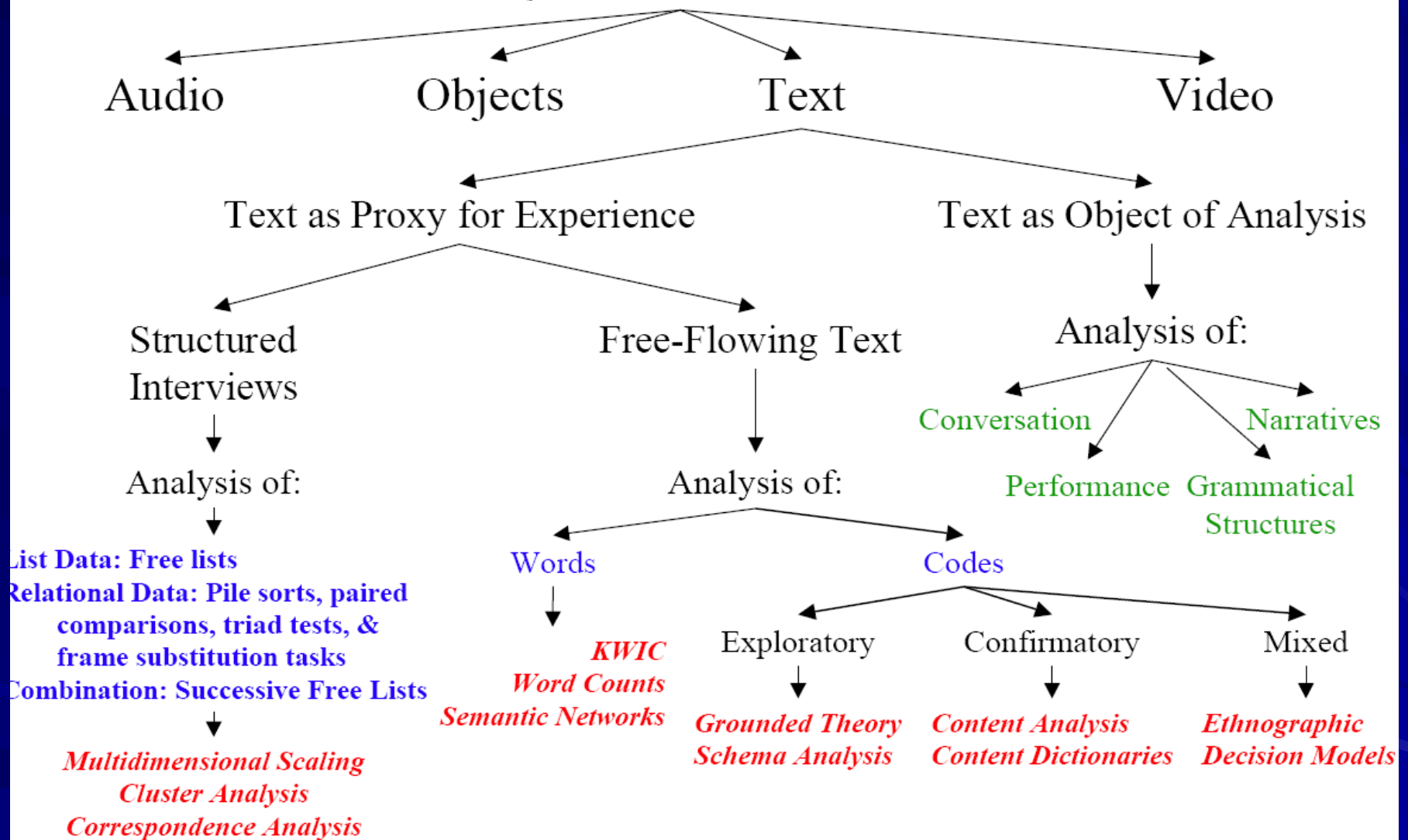
■ Data that is not quantitative

The question is not whether to use qualitative methods in IS, since they are always used in some way. The question is how systematic should their application be.

# Qualitative Research

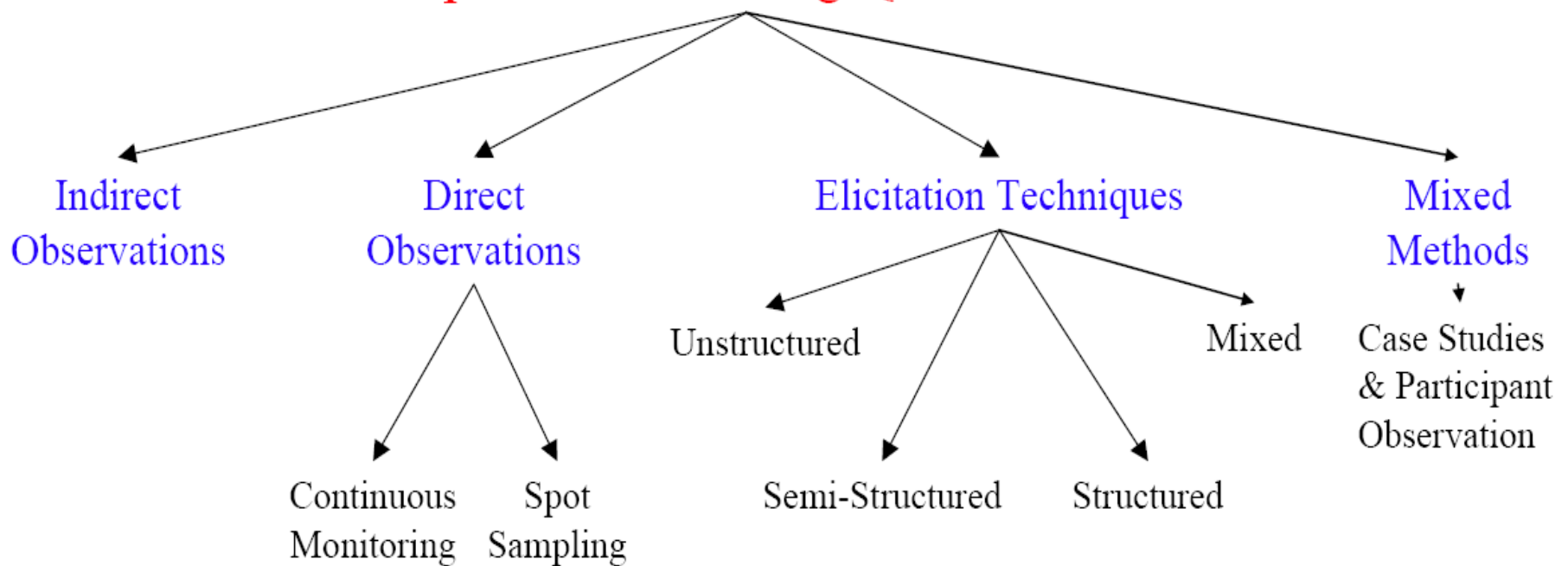
- What are qualitative data?
- Where do we get them and how? How do we analyze them?
- Why should they be used in IS and how?
- Qualitative IS design issues.

# Qualitative Data



# Where Do Qualitative Data Come From?

## Techniques for Producing Qualitative Data





# Basic Methods

- Individual Interviews
- Focus groups
- Direct Observation
- Participant-Observation

# Individual Interviewing

- Informal – “hanging out”, participant-observation, unstructured conversation with respondents.
- Unstructured – ethnographic interviewing
- Semi-structured (most common) – interview guides
- Structured – Interview schedules, questionnaires, domain elicitation, freelists, pile sorts, triads, frame substitution
- When to Use: assess individual experience



# Focus Groups

- Semi-structured (most common) – interview guides
- Structured – Interview schedules, questionnaires, domain elicitation, freelists, pile sorts, triads, frame substitution.
- When to use: Broad strokes, identify consensus or lack of consensus on key issues, identify community discourse on key concerns.



# Observation

- Continuous Monitoring: Observe people or processes as they unfold in real time, take detailed notes, code the notes.
- Spot sampling: Time allocation studies, listing activities
- When to use: Identify and describe what people actually do in real time in contrast to what they say they do.





# Participant- Observation

- Longer-term “hanging out” both observing and participating in the activities of the community being explored.
- When to use: When you are a highly trained cultural anthropologist with lots of time on your hands.

