

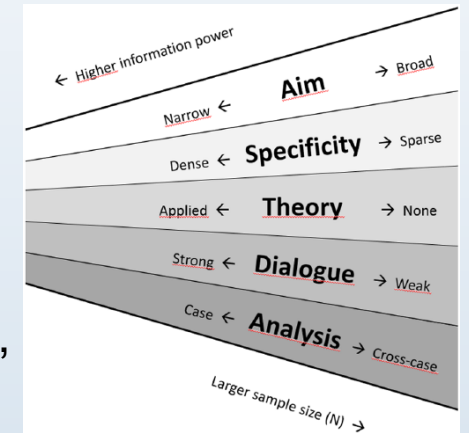
# “Did you reach saturation?”

- Saturation is a nebulous concept
  - Originally coined by Glaser & Strauss as element of constant comparison in GT: saturation occurs when the researcher no longer receives information that adds to the theory that has been developed
  - Non-specifically applied to sampling, analysis
- “Saturation is the building of rich data within the process of inquiry, by attending to scope and replication, hence, in turn, building the theoretical aspects of inquiry.” (Morse 2015)
- “...we saturate characteristics within categories that emerge as significant in the process of analysis, and the more abstract the characteristics, the more diverse the examples may be...as the phenomenon become stronger, more evident, more consistent, more cohesive, and more mature, research becomes saturated, and the researcher becomes certain.” (Morse 2015)

Morse, J. M. (2015). “Data were saturated...” *Qualitative Health Research*, 25(5), 587-588.

# “Did you reach saturation?”

- Other, related concepts
  - Code saturation & meaning saturation (Hennink et al., 2017)
  - Sampling: “information power” (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016): the more information the sample holds, relevant for the actual study, the lower amount of participants is needed
    - Did the actual sample hold adequate information power to develop new knowledge, referring to the aim of the study at hand?
  - Analysis: “Conceptual depth criteria” (Nelson, 2017) and “theoretical sufficiency” (Dey, 1999): *sufficient depth* of understanding that can allow the researcher to theorize
    - Range of evidence can be drawn from the data to illustrate the concepts
    - Complex connections between concepts and themes
    - Concepts have subtlety and richness of meaning
    - Concepts have resonance with existing literature
    - Concepts stand up to testing for external validity



Dey, I. (1999). *Grounding Grounded Theory*. San Francisco, CA: Academic Press.

Hennink, M. M., Kaiser, B. N., & Marconi, V. C. (2017). Code saturation versus meaning saturation: how many interviews are enough?. *Qualitative Health Research*, 27(4), 591-608.

Malterud, K., Siersma, V. D., & Guassora, A. D. (2016). Sample size in qualitative interview studies: guided by information power. *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1753-1760.

Nelson J. Using conceptual depth criteria: addressing the challenge of reaching saturation in qualitative research. *Qualitative research*. 2017 Oct;17(5):554-70.