

Methodology

Dr. Kelsie Endicott

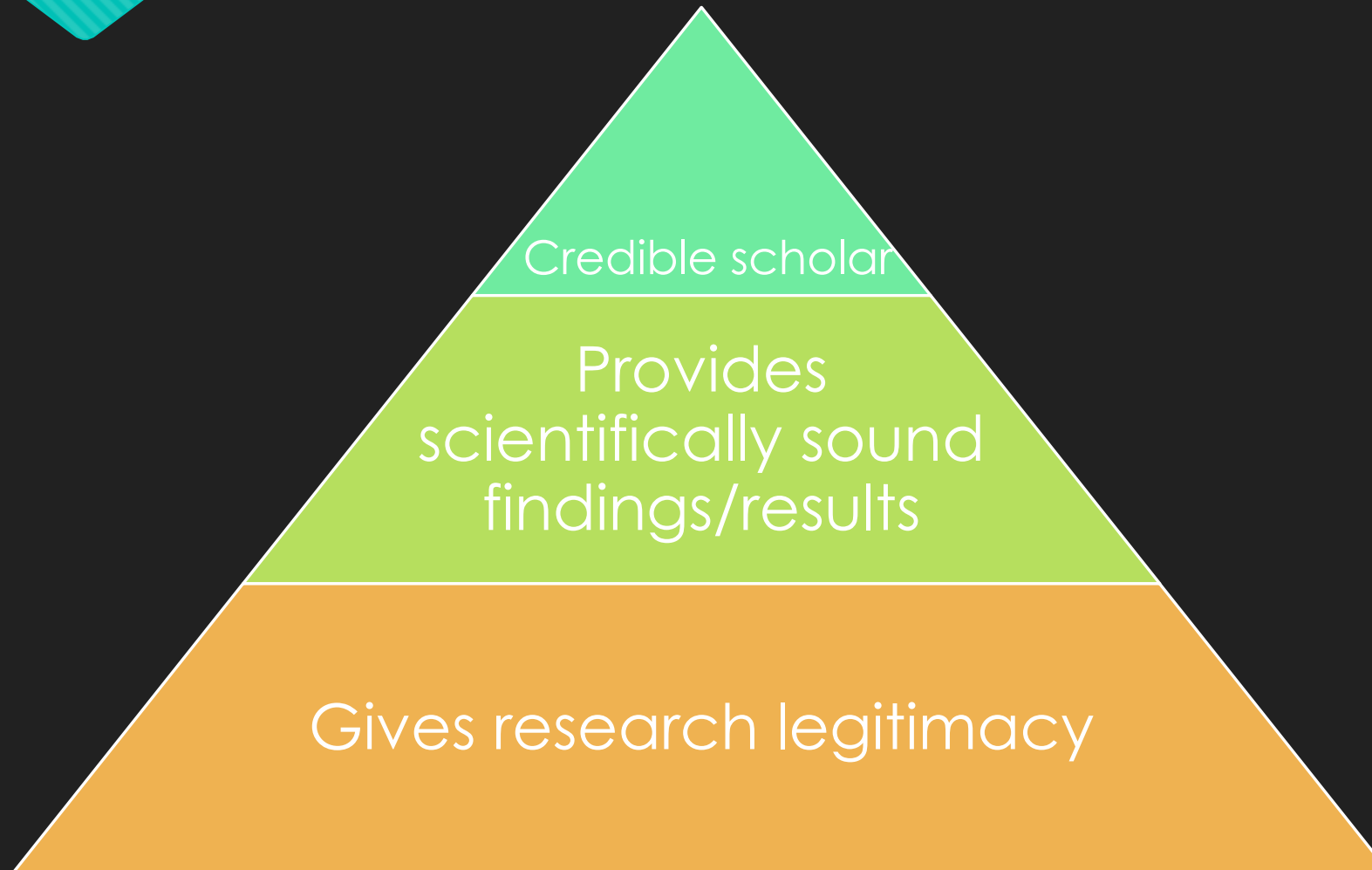
Agenda

- Frame the methodology chapter
- Discuss what components are necessary for this chapter
- Key Takeaways

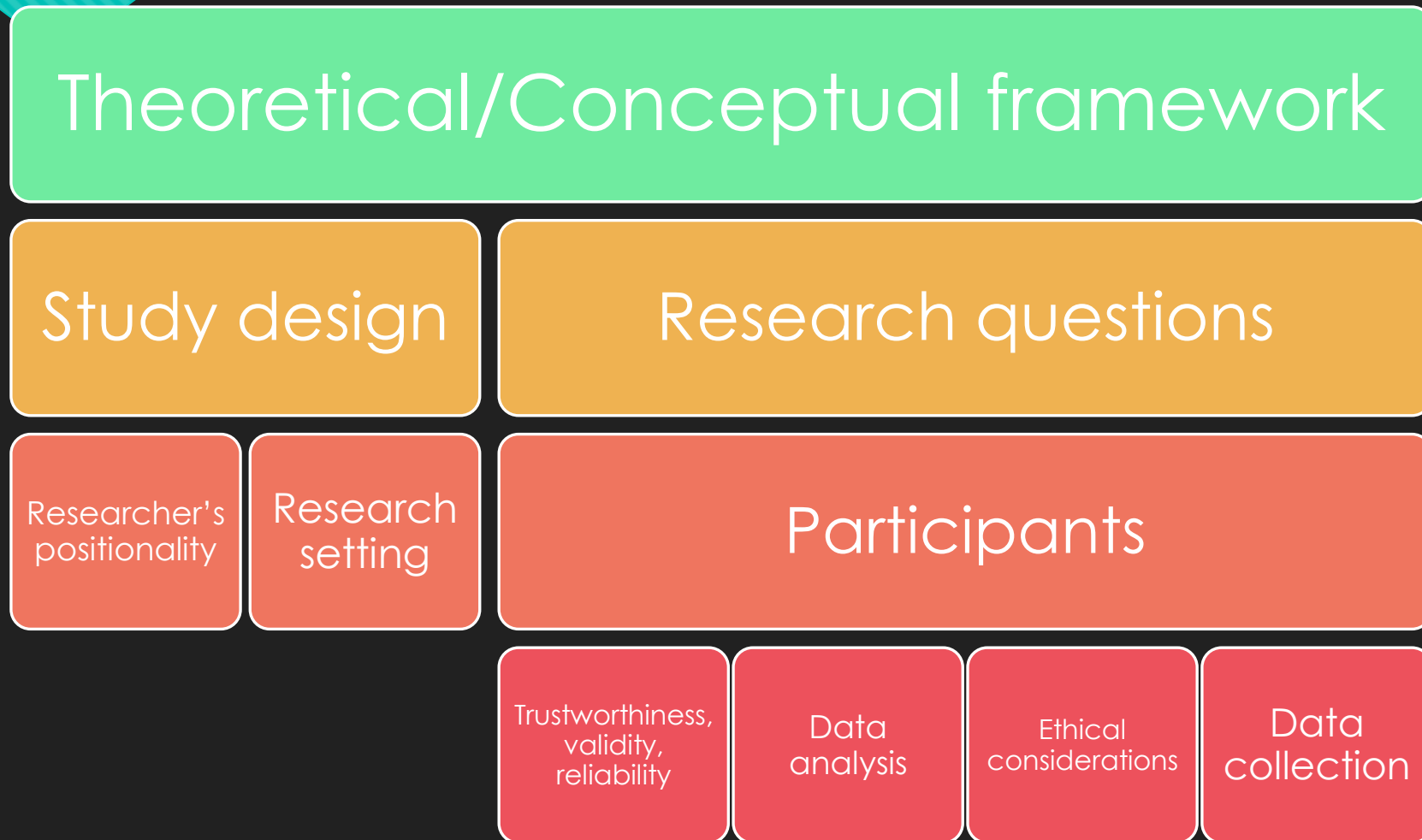
What is a Methodology?

- Quite simply, a methodology is both a rationale for and explanation of how you conducted research.

Why Do I Need a Methodology?



What Information is Usually Included in a Methodology?



Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

- **Theoretical framework:** The theory/theories that underpin or guide your research (how you conduct it and how you will analyze and interpret results/findings).
- **Conceptual framework:** The researcher's own model illustrating variables that specify the problem and gives direction to the study. It may be an adaptation of an existing model with modifications to suit the theory.

Example of Introducing the Theoretical/Conceptual Framework Section

- “The theoretical basis of this work was rooted in three key assumptions: (1) writing, feedback, and revision are socially constructed, (2) these forms of communication are best understood by taking an ecological, or holistic approach when studying them, and (3) writing and revision follow a process approach.”
- Subsequent paragraphs should reference theories and identify your rationale for using them and how they support/inform your research and analytical activities.

Study Design

- Identify the study's design:
 - What research paradigm is it?: Qualitative? Quantitative? Mixed methods?
 - Case study? Experimental? Exploratory? Etc.
 - Summary of data types
 - Rationale for choices



Example of Rationalizing/Supporting Choices

- A qualitative case study approach was ideal for my topic of study because I sought to explore phenomena that could be best understood by asking research questions beginning with “how”, “why”, and “what” (Yin, 2009 as cited in Barone, 2011, p. 21; Hesse-Biber, 2017, p. 4), indicating a desire to “understand in a meaningful and nuanced way, the view of those within the case” (Stake, 1995, 2000, 2005 as cited in Hesse-Biber, 2017, p. 226).

Research Questions

- Include your RQs and make sure that you explain why they are good questions and that align with your research goals.



Researcher's Positionality

- When situated in the Methodology section, it's less personal than it is in the introduction.
- Here, the positionality statement is strictly about *why* you are including one (how it lends credibility to you as a researcher to do so) and *how* your beliefs and experiences regarding THIS study influenced the methodological and analytical choices.

Sample Excerpt of Researcher's Positionality Statement

- "I researched writing pedagogy as it related to feedback on written assignments and revision and approached this research from a strong position of viewing writing as a social act. This is to say, that the way I viewed and interpreted all actions related to writing in this course was from a social perspective—for me, it is impossible to classify any writing-related activities as not being rooted in, or influenced by, social dimensions. Importantly, I approached this study as someone who is heavily invested in improving writing pedagogy, particularly at the college level. This desire stemmed from my myriad experiences studying writing as a student, teaching writing as a composition instructor and writing tutor, and identifying as a writer. With that said, I came to this research with experiences with and beliefs towards writing and writing instruction that, at least to a small degree, influenced not only my theoretical and methodological approach to studying writing, but also how I interpreted the data."

Research Setting

- Identify the name of the setting/location and any pertinent information that someone would need to know to get a sense of where your research took place.

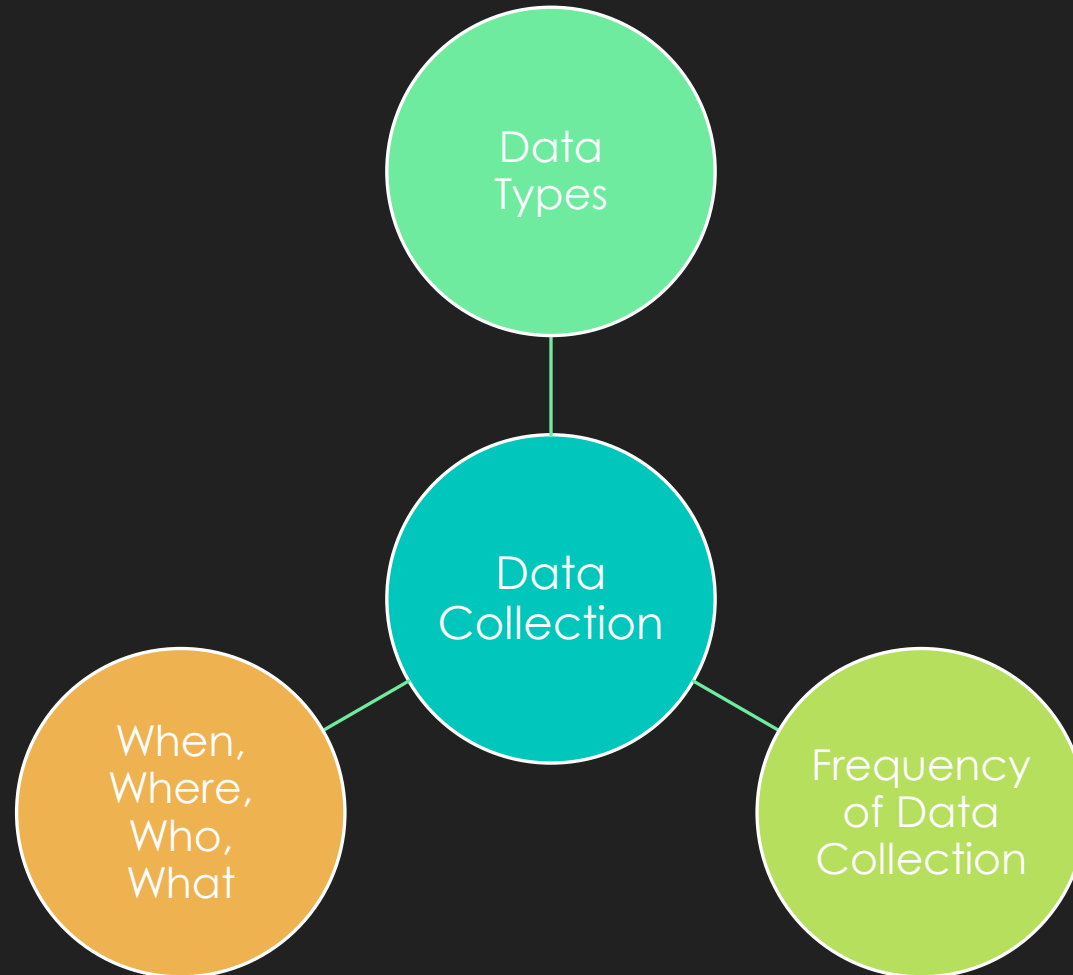


Participants

- If you are working with human subjects, provide as much information as you can about them as it relates to your findings.
- Include how you selected your participants and why.
- It may be helpful to write participant profiles.
- These profiles should be consistent.
- It will be hard not to over-write about them, but that's why we draft 😊



Data Collection

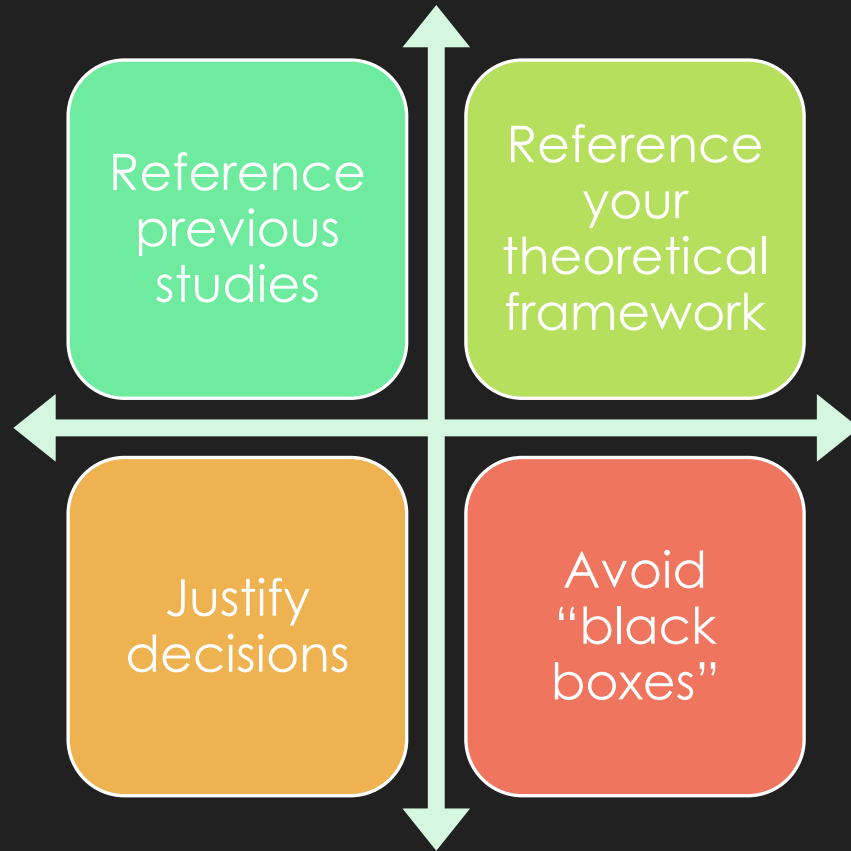


Ethical Considerations

- This is vital—especially if you are engaging in human subjects research (you would need IRB approval for this).
- You always want to conduct research ethically, especially when you are working with people and even more so with vulnerable populations.
- Privacy and/or confidentiality is necessary!



Data Analysis



Trustworthiness, Validity, Reliability

- Including an acknowledgment of these further supports the legitimacy of your research and your credibility as a researcher.
- **Trustworthiness:** One of those shared realities, albeit a subjective one, wherein readers and writers might find commonality in their constructive processes.
- **Validity:** The state that exists when statements or conclusions about empirical reality are correct.
- **Reliability:** A measurement procedure yields consistent scores when the phenomenon being measured is not changing.

Key Takeaways

- Provide justifications to support every methodological choice!
- It's OKAY for this writing to be explanatory and seem dry. You are describing a process after all.
- Have at least one person read over this section before you submit it. If they can't follow your process or feel like they can't replicate it, then you need to add this clarifying information.

Resources

- Dr. Kelsie Endicott, kjendicott@umes.edu
- <https://wwwcp.umes.edu/grad/graduate-writing-center/>
- <https://wwwcp.umes.edu/grad/writing-resources/>
- Use models from your discipline to help you write!

