Triangulation

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Triangulation can help you to enhance the quality of your research. Essentially, triangulation aims to provide a variety of perspectives on the educational problem being investigated by teacher researchers (Capobianco & Feldman, 2006). It also allows for comparing and contrasting (Elliott, 1991). When you are less reliant on one method of data collection or one viewpoint, you can feel more confident about the results of your action research. Although triangulation can be seen as problematic for teachers starting out on action research because it is so time consuming (Elliott, 1978), it is seen as having many advantages. Triangulation can help to provide you with a more detailed picture and enable you to *"produce a better account by making it richer, and more robust, comprehensive and well developed."* (Feldman, Altrichter, Posch & Somekh, 2018).

Types of triangulation

Different types of triangulation have been identified in the literature. Triangulation of data collection methods is frequent in educational research.

- Methods triangulation – the use of different (or more than 1) data collection methods
- Source triangulation – the use of data from different sources
- Analyst triangulation – the use of critical friends or members of an action research group to review interpretations of data
- Theory/perspective triangulation – the use of multiple perspectives

(Patton, 1999)

Examples of methods triangulation

These are examples which you could consider as a language teacher starting out on action research.

- Observations + student questionnaires
- Teacher-researcher journal + student questionnaires
- Student interviews + teacher interviews

References

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