

## **Appendix: Synopsis of Abductive Analysis**

Grant proposals and papers often require a short summary of methodology. Here is a general way of summarizing abductive analysis as a method of analysis. You would adapt this to the specific characteristics of your project:

We analyzed the data in this study using the principles of abductive analysis. Abductive analysis is a qualitative data analysis approach grounded in pragmatism aimed at theory construction. Abduction refers to the process of producing speculative theoretical hunches for unexpected research findings and then developing these emergent theories with a systematic analysis of variation across a study. This approach depends on iterative processes of working with empirical materials in relationship with a broad and diverse social science theoretical literature.

We sought out surprising findings in light of what would have been expected based on literature (specify literature). This search for unexpected findings was facilitated through meticulous note taking, memo writing, transcription, and coding of the empirical materials. Through this analytical process we determined that a critical ongoing concern of the study was the following phenomenon of interest (specify). Once we defined an unexpected phenomenon of interest, we systematically examined the variation of this phenomenon among the accumulated data. Specifically, we explored how the phenomenon of interest varied across the data, over time, and across situations, at each point redefining the characteristics of the phenomenon of interest in light of similarities and differences. This systematic examination of variation over time also provided us with an explanation of why the phenomenon of interest occurred.

Abductive analysis can be evaluated with three criteria: fit (are your theoretical claims supported by your empirical materials?), plausibility (are your theoretical claims stronger than competing theories?), and relevance (do the theorizations matter in the broader intellectual community?). To establish the fit of our theoretical claims, we examined variation and looked for negative cases that would require an adjustment to the theory. We enhanced plausibility by

comparing our theory with the following theories (specify and discuss the strength and weaknesses of each theory). The relevance of this study is apparent in the following contributions to scholarship: (again specify).