EL7035 Dissertation Lectures: Session 3 - The Methodology Chapter

**TASK 1**
Consider which tenses are used and why?

Due to the nature of the topic, a qualitative method of research was preferred. It was important to gain an in-depth understanding of how mixed race people navigate their identity, and in-depth interviewing was the ideal method to facilitate that process. In-depth interviewing utilises one-to-one interviews with a small-to-medium sized group of participants. The method allows respondents to use “their own words [to] describe their activities, experiences and opinions” (Kvale, 2007, p. 22). This method allowed the participants to feel comfortable to share their thoughts on race and identity which can, at times, be a difficult and challenging topic to address.

Adapted from the Research Objectives section of the Methodology chapter of an MA in Mass Communications, Media & Public Relations dissertation.

**TASK 2**
Identify the use of passive voice and consider the reasons for using it here.

Although this approach meant that numerous initial codes were generated since the respondents did not have uniform ways of addressing the questions asked bearing in mind that it was not a strict interview style. However, the approach paid off as all the textual materials were scrutinised to ensure nothing is left out. The initial coding was actively conducted (Howitt and Cramer, 2010) by going through the data, noting and condensing key issues from text chunks. Each interview transcript and questionnaires were coded using different coloured highlighters to mark off codes. Thereafter, the same colours were used to differentiate the different text chunks that formed the codes for the electronic copies in Microsoft Word. The initial codes were then copied and pasted into a tabulated format.

Adapted from the data analysis section of the Methodology chapter of an MSc in Terrorism, Security and Policing dissertation.
**TASK 3**

**Look at the two short extracts.**

Do the students

- use caution (hedging language) to write about what they did?
- tell us anything about their role in conducting their research?

*In total, 18 participants were interviewed. In terms of geographical locations, 11 participants were from the U.S., two from Canada, four from the U.K. and one interviewee was located in South Africa.*

* [...] As social media is a global phenomenon, I felt that it was still necessary to include voices from other parts of the world, as they are producers and consumers of content targeted at mixed race communities as well.*

Adapted from the **Data Collection** section of the **Methodology chapter** of an MA in Mass Communications, Media & Public Relations dissertation.

*One way of enhancing the validity of qualitative studies is to return to the participants with the findings with a view to authenticate them (Leedy and Ormrod, 2013 and Bryman, 2012). Consequently, the researcher returned to the participants for validation.*

Adapted from the **data analysis** section of the **Methodology chapter** of an MSc in Terrorism, Security and Policing dissertation.