**Source: Mackenzie, N. & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues In Educational Research*, 16(2), 193-205. http://www.iier.org.au/iier16/mackenzie.html**

**Table 1:** Paradigms: Language commonly associated with major research paradigms

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Positivist/ Postpositivist | Interpretivist/ Constructivist | Transformative | Pragmatic |
| Experimental Quasi-experimental Correlational Reductionism Theory verification Causal comparative Determination Normative | Naturalistic Phenomenological Hermeneutic Interpretivist Ethnographic Multiple participant meanings Social and historical construction Theory generation Symbolic interaction | Critical theory Neo-marxist Feminist Critical Race Theory Freirean Participatory Emancipatory Advocacy Grand Narrative Empowerment issue oriented Change-oriented Interventionist Queer theory Race specific Political | Consequences of actions Problem-centred Pluralistic Real-world practice oriented Mixed models |
| Adapted from Mertens (2005) and Creswell (2003) | | | |

**Table 2:** Paradigms, methods and tools

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Paradigm | Methods (primarily) | Data collection tools (examples) |
| Positivist/ Postpositivist | Quantitative. "Although qualitative methods can be used within this paradigm, quantitative methods tend to be predominant . . ." (Mertens, 2005, p. 12) | Experiments Quasi-experiments Tests Scales |
| Interpretivist/ Constructivist | Qualitative methods predominate although quantitative methods may also be utilised. | Interviews Observations Document reviews Visual data analysis |
| Transformative | Qualitative methods with quantitative and mixed methods. *Contextual and historical factors described, especially as they relate to oppression* (Mertens, 2005, p. 9) | Diverse range of tools - particular need to avoid discrimination. Eg: sexism, racism, and homophobia. |
| Pragmatic | Qualitative and/or quantitative methods may be employed. Methods are matched to the specific questions and purpose of the research. | May include tools from both positivist and interpretivist paradigms. Eg Interviews, observations and testing and experiments. |