SMR | LEC 6 | DONE BY: OLA ALAHDAB

Thematic Analysis (TA) of Qualitative Data:

Transcribing interview data

• Qualitative researchers generally allocate time to transcribing the data in preparation for further analysis, because audio or video data are commonly collected.
• For thematic analysis, **verbatim transcripts are quite common**; that is, transcripts that aim to capture every utterance from the participant and serve as an accurate record of the conversation.
• Transcribing is often delegated to a junior researcher, but this can be a mistake if the transcriber is inadequately trained or briefed.
• Transcription involves close observation of data through repeated careful listening (and/or watching), and this is an important first step in data analysis.
• This familiarity with data & attention to what is actually there rather than what is expected can facilitate realizations or ideas which emerge during analysis.
• Transcribing takes a long time (at least 3 hrs per hour of talk) & this should be allowed for in project time plans, budgeting for researchers' time if they will be doing the transcribing.

Tips for Transcribing Interview Data:

• Comments or questions by the Interviewer or Facilitator should be labelled with by typing **I: at the left margin and then indenting the question or comment**.
• Any comments or responses from participants should be labelled with **P: at the left margin with the response indented**.

• Example:
• I: OK, before we begin the interview itself, I'd like to confirm that you have read and signed the informed consent form, that you understand that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, that you may refuse to answer any questions, and that you may withdraw from the study at anytime.
• P: Yes, I had read it and understand this.
• P: I also understand it, thank you.
• I: Do you have questions before we proceed?

• The transcriber shall indicate when the interview session has reached completion by typing END OF INTERVIEW in uppercase letters on the last line of the transcript.
• **Audiotapes shall be transcribed verbatim (i.e., recorded word for word, exactly as said), including any nonverbal or background sounds (e.g., laughter, sighs).**
• **Nonverbal sounds shall be typed in parentheses, for example, (short sharp laugh).**

Thematic Analysis (TA):

• Procedures for using TA as a qualitative technique only began to be published in the 1990s (e.g. Aronson, 1994), but qualitative researchers have described their approach to analysis as 'thematic', without an explicit reference to a developed method.
• In 2006, **Virginia Braun & Victoria Clarke** described TA as 'a poorly demarcated and rarely acknowledged, yet widely used qualitative analytic method'.
• Since the publication of what became a landmark paper, TA as has gained popularity and

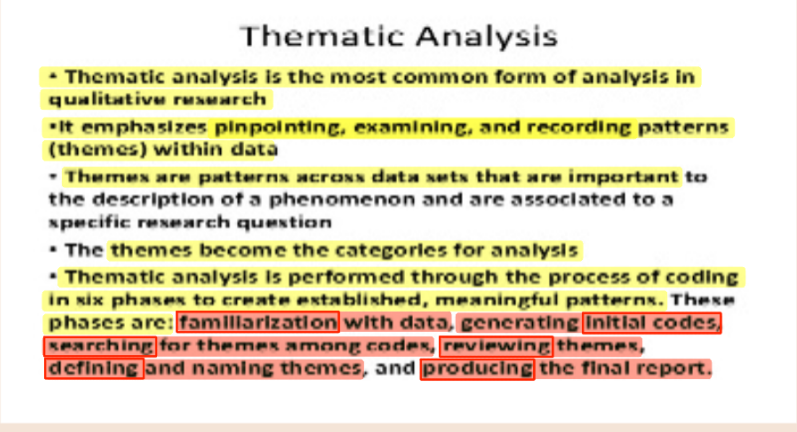
has entered the qualitative canon as a recognisable and reputable method of analysis.

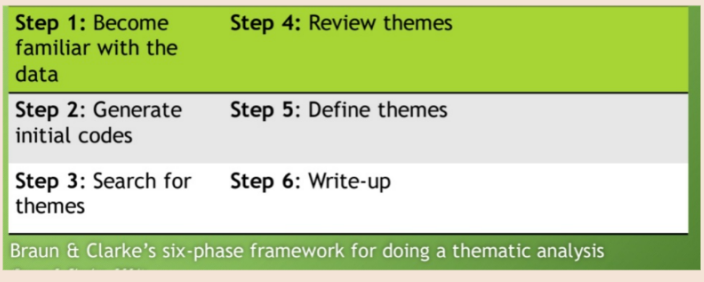
What is Thematic analysis?

• The process of **identifying patterns or themes** within qualitative data.
• The goal of a thematic analysis: **to identify themes**, i.e. patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research.
• Thematic analysis is more than simply summarising the data.
• "TA is a method of "**identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes)** within data".
• It is described as a descriptive method that **reduces the data in a flexible way**.
• It is used commonly because of the wide variety of research questions and topics that can be addressed with this method of data analysis.

What is the definition of theme?

• According to Speziale, Streubert: theme is a **structural meaningful unit of data** which is necessary for providing qualitative findings.
• Based on a study by DeSantis and Ugarriza conducted on qualitative papers between 1979 and 1998, **40% of the papers had used the word "theme" in their studies**.
• No specific definition of theme was found in the aforementioned papers.
However, several definitions of "theme" which exist in different sources are as follows:
• Brink, Wood (1997):The term "**theme**" is used for describing the fact that the **data are grouped around a main issue**.
• Polit, Hungler (1999): a **recurrent & systematic occurrence** which appears in qualitative data analysis.

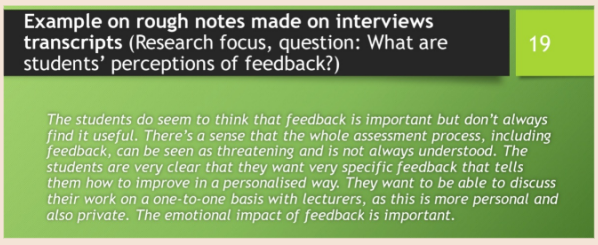




Step 1: Become familiar with the data:

• The first step in any qualitative analysis is reading, and re-reading the transcripts.
• Conduct an initial read through the transcripts and/or notes from participant observation, documents and so on.
• You should be very familiar with your entire body of data or data corpus (i.e. all the interviews).
• Familiarisation provides the researcher with an entry point into analysis – it's a way of engaging with, and gaining insight into, what can sometimes appear to be an overwhelming mass of data.
• When done poorly, or not at all, the rest of the analysis often suffers.
So as tempting may it be, skipping over familiarisation, or only doing it once over lightly, does not provide the best launching pad for a high quality TA.
• Researchers must immerse themselves with the data to familiarize themselves with the

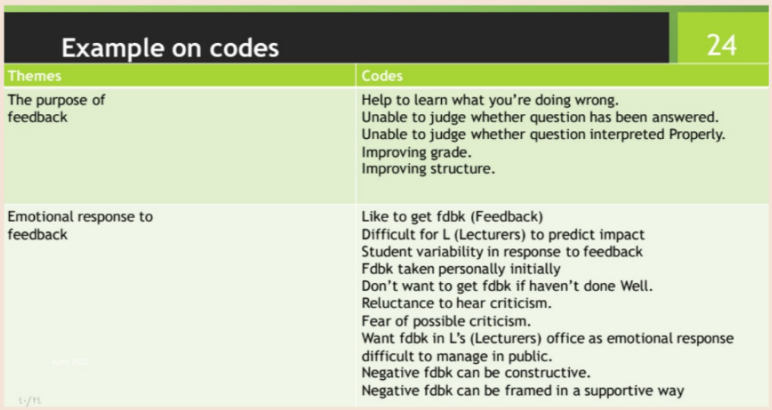
depth and breadth of the content.
• **At this stage, it is useful to make notes & jot down early impressions ((memoing)**.
• Once transcribed, interview transcripts should have **margins** on the left and right sides of the text **for coding**, particularly when using hand-coding techniques.
• You should remember that **all parts of the data are important** and if you study some parts selectively, you may ignore other parts.
• In fact, it is through examining the data that specific patterns & meanings in the writings gradually emerge.



Step 2: Generate initial codes:
• Codes and coding are sometimes called **labels** and labelling.
• Codes are labels that **assign symbolic meaning** to the descriptive information compiled during a study.
• We coded each segment of data that was **relevant** to or captured something **interesting** about our research question.
• A code is simply a **short, descriptive word** or phrase that **assigns meaning** to the data related to the researcher's analytic interests.
• When applicable, **in vivo codes** are assigned.
❑ In vivo codes are phrases **taken from the participants** to capture the meaning of the line or text passage.
• Coding allows the researcher **to simplify and focus on specific characteristics of the data**.
• Researchers will move from **unstructured** data to the development of **ideas** about what is going on in the data
• Labels can be about actions, activities, concepts, differences, opinions, processes or whatever you think it is relevant.

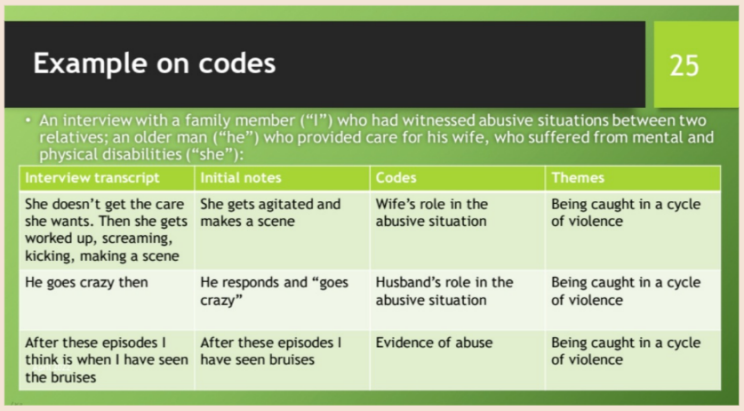
• You might decide that something is relevant because:
❑ It is **repeated** in several places;
❑ It **surprises** you;
❑ The interviewee **explicitly states that it is important**;
❑ **You have read** about something similar in previous published research;
❑ **It reminds you** of a theory or concept.

• Structural coding (or index coding): Coding based on **questions** (research questions, interview guide questions) and/or topics of inquiry.
• Descriptive coding: Coding of the **basic** topics of chunks of data (often a **noun**).
• Process coding: Using **gerunds** ("-ing" words) to code action in the data (Frequently used in grounded theory).



Example on codes 24

Themes	Codes
The purpose of feedback	Help to learn what you're doing wrong. Unable to judge whether question has been answered. Unable to judge whether question interpreted Properly. Improving grade. Improving structure.
Emotional response to feedback	Like to get fdbk (Feedback) Difficult for L (Lecturers) to predict impact Student variability in response to feedback Fdbk taken personally initially Don't want to get fdbk if haven't done Well. Reluctance to hear criticism. Fear of possible criticism. Want fdbk in L's (Lecturers) office as emotional response difficult to manage in public. Negative fdbk can be constructive. Negative fdbk can be framed in a supportive way



Example on codes 25

- An interview with a family member ("I") who had witnessed abusive situations between two relatives; an older man ("he") who provided care for his wife, who suffered from mental and physical disabilities ("she"):

Interview transcript	Initial notes	Codes	Themes
She doesn't get the care she wants. Then she gets worked up, screaming, kicking, making a scene	She gets agitated and makes a scene	Wife's role in the abusive situation	Being caught in a cycle of violence
He goes crazy then	He responds and "goes crazy"	Husband's role in the abusive situation	Being caught in a cycle of violence
After these episodes I think is when I have seen the bruises	After these episodes I have seen bruises	Evidence of abuse	Being caught in a cycle of violence

Step 3: Search for themes:

• Theme is a red thread of underlying meanings, within which similar pieces of data can be tied together and within which the researcher may answer the question "why?".

• Theme development first involves examining codes (and associated data), and combining, or collapsing codes together into bigger or more meaningful patterns.

• We examine the codes, some of them clearly fitted together into an initial theme.

• The themes produced at this stage are considered preliminary تمهيدي.

• The themes are sought from the codes whenever the initial codes are formed.

• For this purpose, you should know the codes. You have a long list of different codes. You can gradually **bring** similar codes under a set. You can **give** a name to each set and **write** a concise explanation for that name separately.

• Then try to **organize** the code sets meaningfully. **Some codes form theme, some others are subthemes and some are codes that do not belong to a theme yet and they are necessary to be written temporarily to later determining the themes they belong to; or it may be necessary to extract a theme from them**.

Step 4: Review themes:

• Themes should be coherent and they should be distinct from each other.

• At this step, we may delete themes, collapse themes together, and identify subthemes.

• Things to think about include:

❑ Do the themes make sense? ❑Does the data support the themes?

❑ Are there themes within themes (subthemes)? ❑ Are there other themes within the data?

• In the previous example (slide #24), upon reviewing the themes, it has been found that **subtheme can be established under emotional response to feedback theme**.

• Therefore, (**Feedback as potentially threatening)** was generated as a **subtheme within the broader theme (Emotional Response to feedback)**.

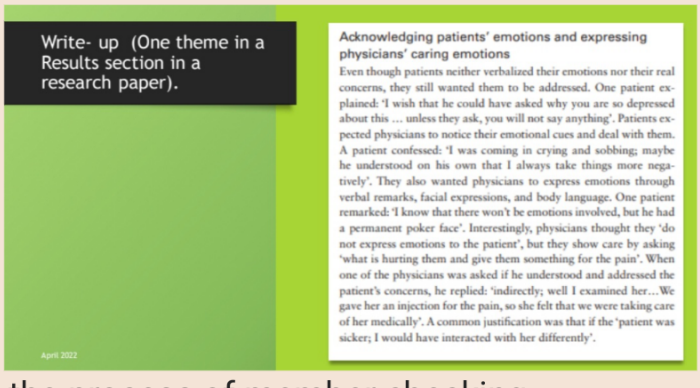
Theme: Emotional response to feedback
Like to get fdbk,
Difficult for L to predict impact
Student variability in response to feedback
Subtheme: Feedback as potentially threatening
Don't want to get fdbk if haven't done well.
Reluctance to hear criticism,
Fear of possible criticism,

Fdbk taken personally initially
Fdbk has an emotional impact
Want fdbk in L's office as emotional response difficult to manage in the public.
Negative fdbk can be framed in a supportive way

• At the end of this phase, researchers have a good idea of the different themes, how they fit together, and the overall story they tell about the data.

Step 5: Define Themes:
• This is the final refinement of the themes
the aim is to '..identify the 'essence خلاصة' of what each theme is about.'.
• During this phase, we wrote detailed analysis for each individual theme, identifying the story that each theme told while considering how each theme fit into the overall story about the entire data set in relation to the research questions.
• In this stage, we may do renaming for the themes.
• Theme names need to be punchy and immediately give the reader a sense of what the theme is about.
• A solo researcher may consult outside experts to determine whether the themes are sufficiently clear and comprehensive.
• The process of **peer debriefing**, with someone who knows a great deal about the area of the inquiry and the method of thematic analysis, will help **expose** the researcher to aspects of the research that might otherwise remain unspoken.

Step 6: Write-up:
• Usually the end-point of research is some kind of report, often a journal article or dissertation.
• Direct quotes from participants are an essential component of the final report.
• Literature can be used to confirm the research findings as well as provide an opportunity to challenge and add to the literature.
• Many authors recommend submitting the analyses to participants for their feedback through the process of member checking.



Papers using TA:
• The Physicians' empathy levels in a primary care setting: perceptions of patients and their physicians, a qualitative study work process.
• Physicians' understanding & practices of Pharmacovigilance: qualitative experience from A lower middle-income country.