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OPEN CODING

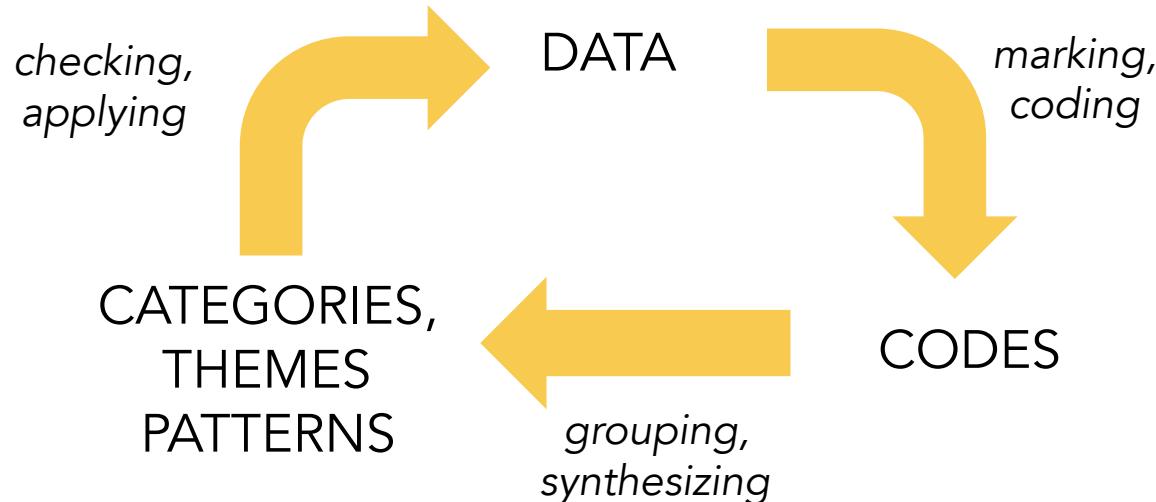
Analyzing Qualitative Data



OPEN CODING

- part of many qualitative analysis methods, e.g.
Grounded Theory
- labeling concepts & developing categories from data
- bottom up approach
- open-ended, without pre-defined outcome

ITERATION



PROCESS

Specific

- 
- Stage 1: **reading:** familiarize yourself with the data
take notes at the end (themes, unusual things)
 - Stage 2: **close reading:** highlight, annotate, label
note analytic ideas
 - Stage 3: **coding:** systematically mark passages
review codes, remove redundancies, group
 - Stage 4: **theorizing:** interpret, relate to RQs and literature

Abstract /
General

CLOSE READING

When you move into your own home, you're alone. There is no bustle of people around the house. I miss having someone to chat to when I get home. I put the TV or some music so there's some background noise. The silence makes me feel so alone. Sometimes I will be sat watching trash TV and thinking I should be out doing something rather than watching this rubbish. I read a lot but sometimes I am too tired and just want to veg out. But it's been good to move out of mum and dads as it's not healthy to rely on them as they won't last forever. I become independent and made my own decisions. It's good they still there when I need them. It's good to have some distance as when I was at home I was arguing a lot with my dad and that was made me decide it was time to go.

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feelings
Living alone
New relationship with parents
Independence
Old relationship with parents
Argument with Dad
Relation with father

Example

Participant talking about her personal visualization on display in the home:

"Having it in the house and visible for people to see, people would ask: 'what is that you have over there?' And my husband was following it and looking at it and I think he was interested in it. We could just talk about it without actually thinking about talking about it. It's just something that happened because it was there. It triggered the conversations."

CLOSE READING / LINE-BY-LINE CODING

"Having it in the house and visible for people to see, people would ask:
curiosity awareness for husband
'what is that you have over there?' And my husband was following it and
interest by husband enabling conversation
looking at it and I think he was interested in it. We could just talk about it
serendipity
without actually thinking about talking about it. It's just something that
presence triggering conversation
happened because it was there. It triggered the conversations."

LINE-BY-LINE CODING TIPS

- label small excerpts
- stay close to the data and summarize what it is about
- be specific
- don't worry about making the codes general yet
- try not to lose too much richness in this step
- develop ideas

CODING CONCEPTS

- **descriptive codes**
summarize the topic of the excerpt
- **in vivo codes**
use participants' own language
- **analytic (or theoretical) codes**
contain analytic interpretation
- ...

Example

Participant talking about her personal visualization on display in the home:

visibility evokes curiosity
following
serendipitous conversation
triggers

"Having it in the house and visible for people to see, people would ask: 'what is that you have over there?' And my husband was following it and looking at it and I think he was interested in it. We could just talk about it without actually thinking about talking about it. It's just something that happened because it was there. It triggered the conversations."

CODE BIG OR SMALL DATA CHUNKS?

big chunks (-> fewer codes)

- + avoids de-contextualization
- often vague, includes less relevant data

small chunks (-> more codes)

- + greater differentiation, clearer definition
- loss of meaning/context, too many codes to remember

Example

triggering conversation

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CODING TIPS

- think about precise words for your codes
 - use a dictionary & thesaurus
- write down brief definitions
- collaborate and discuss coding, if possible
 - helps to make codes and definitions more exact
 - helps to discover more nuances in the data
- use memos to capture analytic ideas and questions

MEMOS

'(A memo is) the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding... it can be a sentence, a paragraph or a few pages... it exhausts the analyst's momentary ideation based on data with perhaps a little conceptual elaboration'

- Glaser, 1978: 83

WHEN TO WRITE A MEMO?

- to record **analytic ideas** during coding, e.g.:
 - relationships between codes
 - commonalities or differences between pieces of data
 - hunches that need to be more thoroughly checked
 - reflective remarks
- to record **uncertainty**, e.g. when:
 - struggling to clarify a concept or code
 - questioning a previous code or concept
 - identifying surprising cases in the data

Memo Examples

Hunch:

"There seems to be a difference between regular conversations with the husband and sporadic interest or curiosity by visitors to the home. For the husband, the visualizations seems to enable a shared awareness of the data through conversations and being able to 'follow' the visualization continuously."

Question:

"I wonder if the husband was already interested in the data or if seeing the visualization inspired this interest?"

DEVELOPING A CODING SCHEMA

showing vis to others

sharing pictures of vis online

sharing vis on social networks

sharing in person

vis evokes curiosity

vis triggers conversations

provides opportunities for others to ask

sharing

sharing online

sharing in person

triggering conversations

DEVELOPING A CODING SCHEMA

sharing

sharing online

sharing in person

triggering conversations

A deliberate act of showing or discussing the visualization with others, initiated by the owner of the visualization

Instances where the visualization inspired interest that led to conversations.
Initiated by other people seeing the visualization.