

SOC2069

Researching

Social Life 1

Analysing qualitative data

Dr. Chris Moreh

Outline

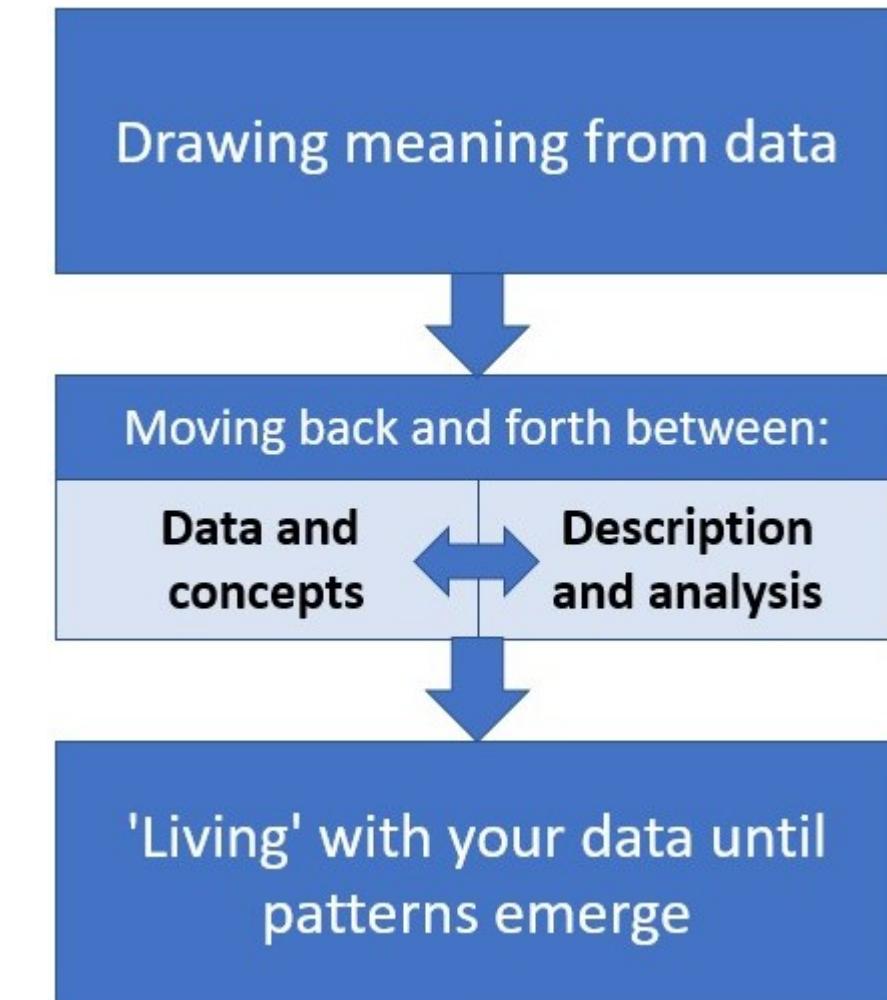
1. What is qualitative data analysis?
2. Themes and coding
3. Arguing from qualitative data

Qualitative data analysis

We have two tasks after we have gathered our data, namely to reduce our data to something we can manage, and to analyze our data in meaningful ways (Luker 2008:198–99)

Analysis involves a constant moving back and forward between the entire data set, the coded extracts of data that you are analysing, and the analysis of the data that you are producing (Braun and Clarke 2013)

As we contemplate that first interview, or set of field notes, or focus group experience, or day in the archives, we need to remind ourselves that our most important job today (and all subsequent days) is *pattern recognition* (Luker 2008:199)

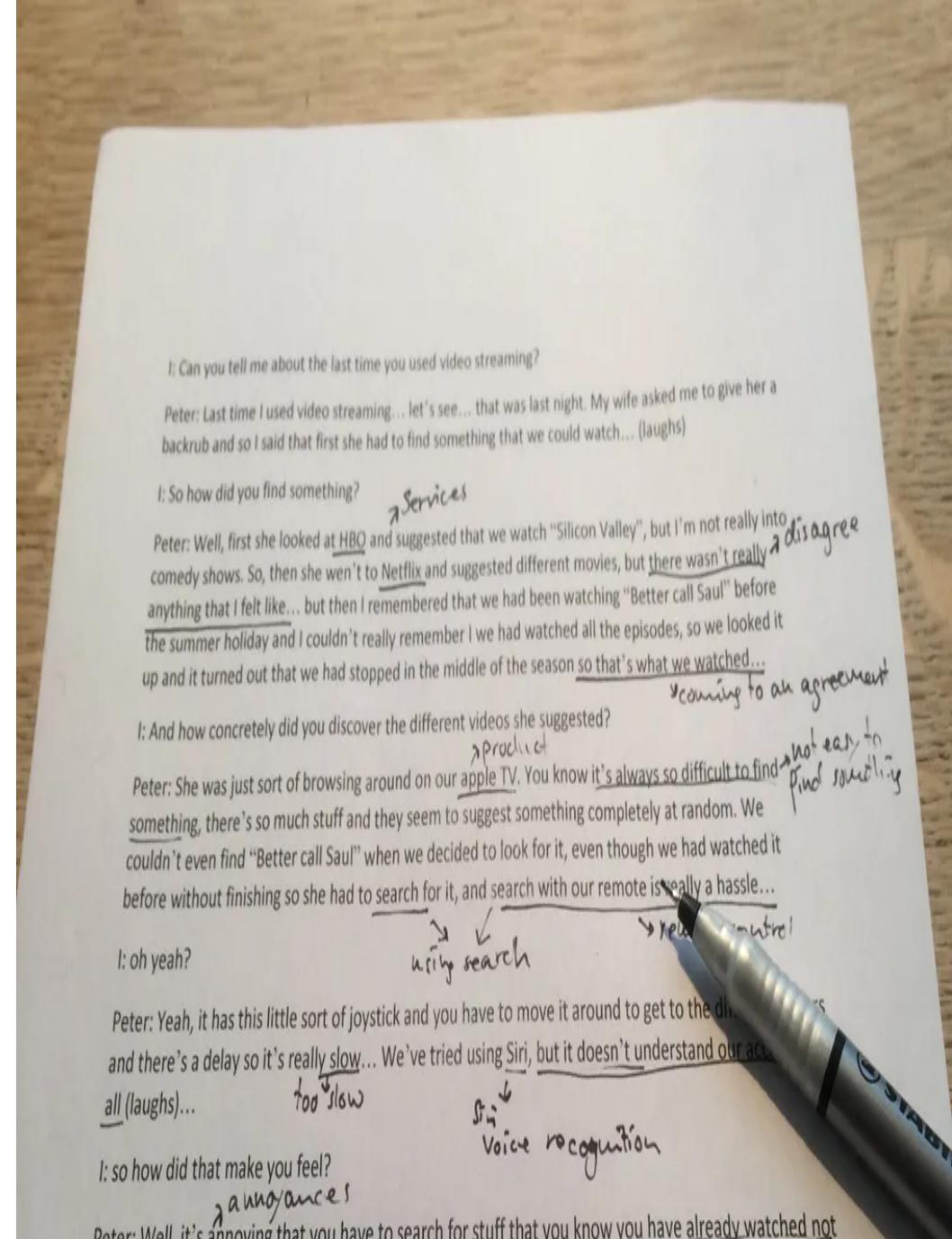


Thematic analysis

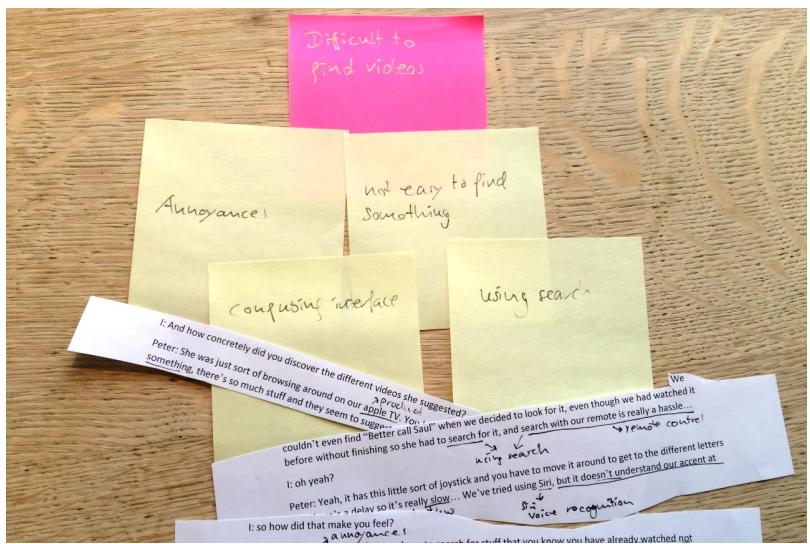
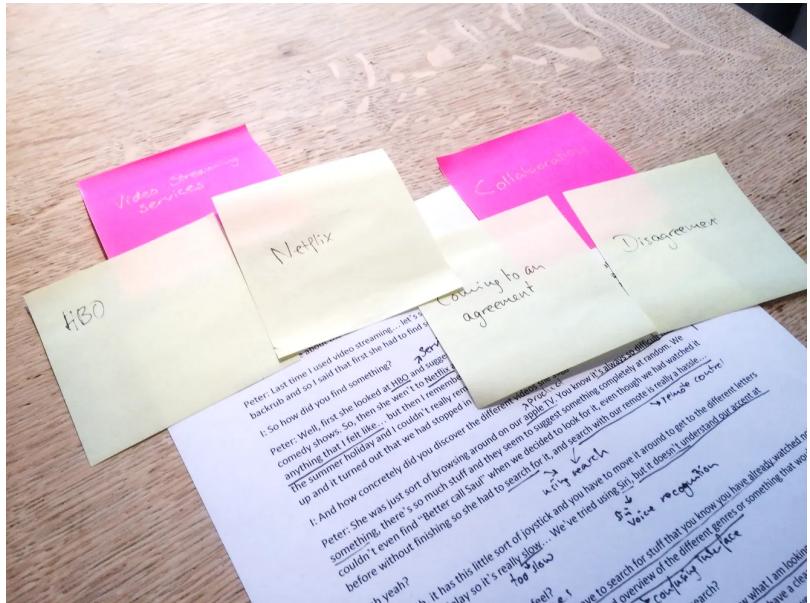
1. Familiarize yourself with your **data**
2. Assign preliminary **codes** to your data in order to **describe** the content
3. Search for **patterns** or **themes** in your codes across the different interviews
4. Review themes
5. Define and name themes
6. Interpretation

Thematic coding

- Categorising and labelling – nothing more complicated than that!
- Deductive, inductive, or (more commonly) a mixture
- You can code as you go along, or start at the end of data collection
- Keep your coding scheme/frame under review
- Start descriptive but aim to be analytical
- Record your thoughts and ideas during the process
- Listen to your gut!



Coding in practice



I: Can you tell me about the last time you used video streaming?

Peter: Last time I used video streaming... let's see... that was last night. My wife asked me to give her a backrub and so I said that first she had to find something that we could watch... (laughs)

I: So how did you find something?

Peter: Well, first she looked at HBO and suggested that we watch "Silicon Valley", but I'm not really into comedy shows. So, then she went to Netflix and suggested different movies, but there wasn't really anything that I felt like... but then I remembered that we had been watching "Better call Saul" before the summer holiday and I couldn't really remember we had watched all the episodes, so we looked it up and it turned out that we had stopped in the middle of the season so that's what we watched...

I: And how concretely did you discover the different videos she suggested?

Peter: She was just sort of browsing around on our apple TV. You know it's always so difficult to find something, there's so much stuff and they seem to suggest something completely at random. We couldn't even find "Better call Saul" when we decided to look for it, even though we had watched it before without finishing so she had to search for it, and search with our remote is really a hassle... it has this little sort of joystick and you have to move it around to get to the different letters and there's a delay so it's really slow... We've tried using Siri, but it doesn't understand our accent at all (laughs)...

I: oh yeah?

Peter: Yeah, it has this little sort of joystick and you have to move it around to get to the different letters and there's a delay so it's really slow... We've tried using Siri, but it doesn't understand our accent at all (laughs)... it's too slow

I: so how did that make you feel?

Peter: Well, it's annoying that you have to search for stuff that you know you have already watched not

Coding in practice

The screenshot illustrates a workflow for document analysis and extraction, likely using a macro or add-in.

Microsoft Word: The top window shows the 'Review' tab selected. A comment is being inserted at the top of the document, which begins with: "One morning, when Gregor Samsa woke from troubled dreams, he found himself transformed in his bed into a horrible vermin. He lay on his armour-like back, and if he lifted h...". The 'Developer' tab is also visible in the ribbon.

Microsoft Excel: The bottom window shows a spreadsheet with the following data:

	Name of original Word document
1	Kafka - Metamorphosis.docx
2	work
3	environment
4	emotions
5	physical discomfort
6	physical discomfort
7	physical discomfort
8	work
9	work
10	environment
11	environment
12	work
13	environment
14	on work
15	
16	
17	
18	

Annotations with red arrows point to specific elements:

- An arrow points to the first row (Kafka - Metamorphosis.docx) with the label "Name of original Word document".
- An arrow points to the second column (text snippets) with the label "Extracted text snippets".
- An arrow points to the last row (empty) with the label "Codes".

Bottom Left: A pink box highlights a portion of the text: "Oh, God", he thought, "what a strenuous career it is that I've chosen! Travelling out. Doing business like this takes much more effort than doing your own busin...".

Bottom Right: A sidebar on the right lists users: Carsten Knoch (work) and Carsten Knoch (work).

Page Footer: RESEARCHING SOCIAL LIFE 1 SOC 2069

Coding in practice

A section of a semi-structured interview (initial coding)

	Code	
I	So, thinking about what you eat during a typical week, what sorts of things influence you in deciding what you eat?	
R	Well, I guess we all get into a bit of a rut with our eat know, pretty much the same every week, one night it fish and of course a roast at the weekend – my mother on Sundays and she was a really good cook so I try to though she never did things like curry or pasta of course people just didn't eat that sort of thing then. In fact I now are different from what I ate as a child – things are using vegetable oils that are healthier than animal fat we don't have big breakfasts like bacon and eggs etc. But one thing I did learn from my mother was how to I almost always cook from scratch rather than by rea	
I	Anything else that influences what you eat?	
R	I suppose time is a big thing. When both partners work then there's not much time to do things like roasts at the weekend. And no time to do pies or cakes – those I don't eat much but if we do we would buy them. I'd like time to really get into cooking – there's so many ideas on TV now – I just wish I had the time and energy to try some new things.	
	Code name	Definition
	<i>Childhood family influence (ICF)</i>	Mention of childhood family as influencing positively or negatively the choice of food to buy and/or prepare
	<i>Media – negative (IMN)</i>	Mention of media influencing the choice of food that is not regarded as healthy
	<i>Media – positive (IMP)</i>	Mention of media influencing the choice of food that is regarded as healthy
	<i>Time – buying food (ITB)</i>	Mention of time or lack of time influencing the choice of food to buy
	<i>Time – preparing food (ITP)</i>	Mention of time or lack of time influencing the choice of food to prepare

Coding in practice

The screenshot shows the NVivo 12 Pro interface. On the left, the 'Nodes' panel lists various concepts with their file counts and reference counts. A red arrow points from the 'Infrastructure' node in this list to a text excerpt in the main document view. Another red arrow points from the 'Coding Density' bar for the 'Infrastructure' node to the same text excerpt. The main document view displays a transcript with several quotes from interviewees like Barbara, Henry, and William. The right side of the interface shows a vertical bar chart titled 'Coding Density' for different nodes, with 'Infrastructure' having the highest value. The bottom right corner features the text 'SOCIAL LIFE ING SOC 2069'.

Sample Project (2).nvp - NVivo 12 Pro

File Home Import Create Explore Share Document Tools Document

Memo See Also Link Links Annotations Quick Coding Layout Relationships Coding Stripes Coding Range Code Auto Code Uncode

Nodes

Search Project

Name	Files	References
Attitude	0	0
Balance	6	16
Community change	18	62
Economy	25	486
Infrastructure	11	43
Memorable quotes	5	16
Natural environment	24	324
Policy, management	14	38
Real estate development	27	313
Sense of community Down East	3	4

Drag selection here to code to a new node

Q.1. Conn

Henry
Tell me about your life in Down East.

Barbara
My family moved down in Global and middle life although

Henry
And you've

Click to edit

William

Within two to three hours of home, those kinds of course in my opinion are a because they already have a vested interest. This is home and they take ownership of maintaining the coastal areas in Down East North Carolina.

Q.6. Barriers to and opportunities for achieving your vision

Henry

What are the opportunities for achieving the kind of vision that you're describing? What are the obstacles associated? I mean, what kinds of things give you hope that that could happen? What kinds of things make you feel like it's gonna be hard for it to happen?

William

I'm hopeful that it'll happen because planning and zoning is still in the hands of County. There are battles royal and that's good. Anytime anything is changed, there's argument and discussion about how it's gonna be changed.

But, anytime you have a whole lot new people moving into an area, they kind of redevelop and rethink the area in ways that suit them, you know, that's a struggle in Raleigh-Durham, in Cary, in Chapel Hill, so I see that as an obstacle.

Another obstacle I think is the obvious need for well paying jobs; and how do we maintain the customary character of an area and the need for gainful employment so that local dream, and send their children to good schools, and have opportunities, you know, they want the opportunities for their kids on one hand, but they don't want to leave the area on the other hand. And it's very painful when they do.

Local connection
Q.1. Connection to Down East
Economy
William

Coding Density

Jobs and cost of living

0.4. Community and Environmental Change
0.5. Vision for the future of Down East

Developing themes

- Initial coding
- Generating themes – coded data is reviewed and analysed as to how different codes may be combined according to shared meanings so that they may form themes or sub-themes
- Reviewing themes – some candidate themes may not function well as meaningful interpretations of the data, or may not provide information that addresses the research question(s).
- Select extracts for writing up the analysis – *illustrative* or *analytical*

"I remember a P.E. teacher who used to be in the army! [laughs] So, he'd have the poor kids run ragged! [laughs]. So that was good in one sense, you know, it whipped them into shape. But...the emphasis was on fitness and not wellness. There were lots of drills, and exercises, and laps of the field! But...how hard they were pushed could upset some pupils. You know, you'd hear them complain about how hard it was. And he'd – that teacher would be complaining about the amount of pupils coming in with notes (from parents) saying they can't do P.E. today, and you're thinking 'are you surprised!?' [laughs] So, you definitely need the right person for the job! [P11]".

This participant identified that, even when an educator is highly trained in an area relative to the wellbeing curriculum, they still may not have a personality appropriate for attending to the wellbeing of young people. The physical educators' prioritisation of physical fitness over holistic wellness was likely influenced by a military background, and evidently had a negative effect upon the overall wellbeing of many students. This negative effect was so pervasive that it ultimately resulted in subject refusal among some students. In this case, the physical educator seemed to be unaware of the inherent issue as communicated by the respondent in that they were unable to deliver a fitness/wellness regime at an appropriate level for many of the students.

Writing it up

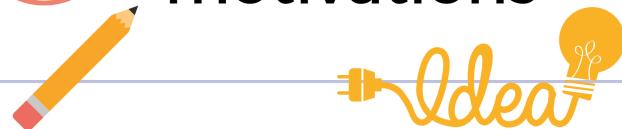
- Coding is only one part of the analysis – you must interpret your data
- Interconnections, similarities, and differences
- Selecting quotes – why and how the selected quotes illustrate a noteworthy pattern
- Craft a persuasive conclusion – “What do I know now that I didn’t know before the research began, and what is surprising and important about these findings?” (**Gerson and Damaske 2020:186**)
- A strong conclusion also addresses the limitations of your research and clarifies when and how your arguments do and do not apply



Arguing from qualitative data

ARGUING FROM QUALITATIVE DATA

1 Examine your motivations



2 Go back to your rationale and research questions

3 Go back to the literature



3 Go back to the literature

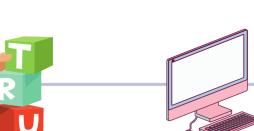
4 (Re)examine your concepts



5 Be honest about what your data actually support



6 Know the difference between novelty and significance



7 Ask the 'why' questions



8 Ask yourself: 'so what?'



9 Write an abstract



References and further readings

- Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. 2013. *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Byrne, David. 2022. "A Worked Example of Braun and Clarke's Approach to Reflexive Thematic Analysis." *Quality & Quantity* 56(3):1391–1412. doi: [10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y).
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- Luker, Kristin. 2008. *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-glut*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
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