Intro to Qualitative Coding with Taguette

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Materials adapted from the Library Carpentries

- Nathaniel Porter (2025). *Open Qualitative Research with Taguette*. Version [1.0.0].
- https://librarycarpentry.github.io/lc-qualitative-taguette/index.html#software-setup

Download and install Taguette

- We will use the free Coding and Qualitative Data Analysis software Taguette throughout the workshop. When possible, Taguette should be set up to run on your computer by following the latest Windows, Mac, or Linux instructions.
- When running Taguette, initially a command line window will open. This is a window, usually with a black background. As Taguette runs, lines of text will appear in the command line window. Then the Taguette interface will open in your default web browser. You do not need to interact with the command line window. Leave it open in the background, and work on projects in your web browser.
- If you are unable to install Taguette on your own computer, a free cloud version is also available from the developers, after creating a login.
- I will demonstrate using a local version of Taguette, but the cloud interface looks and functions identically except for the addition of an "Account" menu at the top right, the lack of offline functionality, and the ability to share collaborative projects with others without self-hosting.

What is qualitative coding?

- Coding facilitates qualitative data analysis: a systematic method of analyzing and making inferences or deductions from text/transcripts/open-ended responses to survey questions or other forms of qualitative information (e.g. images, video, focus groups, etc.)
- Process involves categorizing, comparing, and contrasting a corpus of data (usually text)
- Key themes are identified by "coding" the data
  - Identifying patterns of terms, phrases, or concepts
  - Counting the frequency of terms, phrases, or concepts

Words	Concepts/themes
• E.g. “bad” “good” “data science” “data”	• E.g. negative vs. positive, references to applications of AI to data analysis, references to ideas about ethics of data visualizations

Two levels of thematic coding

Inductive Coding (exploratory)

- Familiarize self with data (read through a sample or all the text)
- Inductive reasoning:
  - Open coding: use your judgment and experience to discern underlying themes in the experiences expressed across interviews
  - Open codes can range from very specific to more general, but theoretically fruitful codes are often somewhere in the middle - general enough to apply in multiple situations but specific enough those excerpts have something more in common.
- In vivo coding: use only language provided by participants

Deductive coding (explanatory)

- Develop codebook
  - Based on overarching research questions or hypothesis
  - Code a subset of items (2 independent coders)
  - Test categories by reviewing sample of responses as a team - revise for clarity
  - Calculate inter-rater reliability
  - Repeat process as needed
  - Refine categories (produce a "final" codebook)
- Use pre-defined codebook and code (or re-code) all the data

For both approaches

- Determine if items should be coded into more than one category if applicable
- What is the unit of analysis? The concept/idea, sentence, paragraph or the full document/case?
- 2 or 1 coders? More vs. less rigorous and depends on purpose of the project
- Use most specific code
- Analyze results

Example: Oral Histories of Women in Mississippi

MISSISSIPPI SEMESTER

- Class began as project between Barnard College and the Mississippi Low Income Child Care Initiative
- Two class trips to Mississippi, 2018 and 2019
- First class conducted pilot interviews with 7 participants
- Second class conducted oral histories with 15 participants
- Research question: How do low-income mothers experience economic insecurity in Mississippi?

Example: Categories

1. Interpersonal Relationships
2. Employment
3. Structural Issues
4. Motherhood
5. Care
6. Transportation
7. Education
8. Financial Situation

Example: Subcategories

3. Structural Issues

- 3.1 Race relations
- 3.2 Gender discrimination
- 3.3 Migration to Mississippi
- 3.4 Generational poverty
- 3.5 Perceptions of structural impact on individual
- 3.6 Economic systems

3	Understanding stuctural issues	3.1	Impact of race relations	Response to encounters with racial conflict, if any
		3.2	Encounters with gender bias	Difficulties of gender-based discrimination, if any
		3.3	Migration to Mississippi	Domestic and international migration and difficulties
		3.4	Generational poverty	Personal anecdotes about prior experiences with poverty, growing up in poverty
		3.5	Perceptions of structural impact on individual	How individuals perceive personal accountability among larger structural systems involving race, gender, class, citizenship status, etc.
		3.6	Understanding of economic systems	Indvidual's personal understanding of economics, specifically
4	Motherhood	4.1	Children's opportunities	Considering children's future employment and economic stability, including reflections about motherhood and children's general well-being
		4.2	Children's education	Training, quality, and level of education
		4.3	Affordable childcare	Cost of childcare to individual, whether it is subsidized or if assistance is being provided
		4.4	Access to childcare	Availability of formal or informal childcare providers

4.2 Children's education

Subcategory of Motherhood

Code

My 18 year old, she graduates this year and she's a really awesome kid too you know and I'm proud of her, I am.

Automated coding: tools and approaches

What software like Taguette does and doesn't do:

- Does:
  - Facilitate the coding of qualitative data
  - Allow you to create a database of textual data that can be queried or computed on
  - Help you identify themes
  - Allow you to slice and dice your data
- Doesn’t
  - Do the data analysis for you
  - Make you a qualitative research expert
  - Transcribe interviews for you

Let's practice?

- I'll demonstrate how to code in Taguette using a text (word) document with descriptions of Love Data Week events around the world (ICPSR, 2026)!
- If you want to follow along, download the following document: https://github.com/Digital-Scholarship-Hub/QualitativeCoding/blob/main/LDW2026_Taguette_Data_EventDescriptions.docx