INTRODUCTION –
COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

- Interpersonal communication significantly impacts our relationships (Berger, 2014) and our psychological wellbeing (Hartley, 2002)

- The expectations we have for this communication shape our interpretation of the conversation and how we respond (Burgoon, 1993)

- As a result, our communication expectations may subsequently impact our relationships and psychological wellbeing

COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS ONLINE

- Studies show that online communication is just as meaningful as face to face communication (Walther et al, 2005; Doring & Poschl, 2017; Liebman & Gergle, 2016).

- Factors such as response time are interpreted as indicators of closeness within interpersonal relationships (Doring & Poschl, 2017)

- This suggests that online communication expectations could have just as an important impact on relationships and wellbeing as they do face to face

- These expectations and their impacts have been well documented in studies of Facebook and Twitter

SNAPCHAT

There is very little research investigating communication expectations on newer, rapidly growing apps like Snapchat which are especially popular with younger age groups

Research that has finds that networking on apps like Snapchat can have real life impacts on relationships and individual wellbeing (Dunn & Langlais, 2020)

A small number of findings also suggest that there are several implicit norms and expectations operating on Snapchat that could have real life consequences (Kissinger, 2019)

This study aims to build upon this research by exploring perceptions of these communication expectations, and by looking at the role that Snapchat's features (Snap Maps, Stories etc) play in this

METHOD

- Assumptions - Critical realist/constructionist - reality is subjective and only accessible through understanding individual experiences

- Participants - 12 female Psychology students from the University of Chichester aged between 18 and 20.

- Data collection -

    - 2 Focus groups - Easy to manage and sufficient to yield a good amount of data (Tynan & Drayton, 1988).

    - Approx 45 minutes each

    - Recorded audibly using Panopto

    - Took place in the main room of the Psychology labs - provided adequate room whilst also maintaining privacy. The room and location should also have been familiar to the participants

DATA ANALYSIS

- Recordings were transcribed verbatim with the help of Panopto

- An inductive, reflexive thematic analysis was conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2021) – the analysis was driven by the content of the data rather than existing ideas or theory (Braun & Clarke, 2012), and the themes were driven by the codes (Braun & Clarke, 2021)

- However, it is impossible to be purely inductive, as researchers naturally bring their own ideas into the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012)
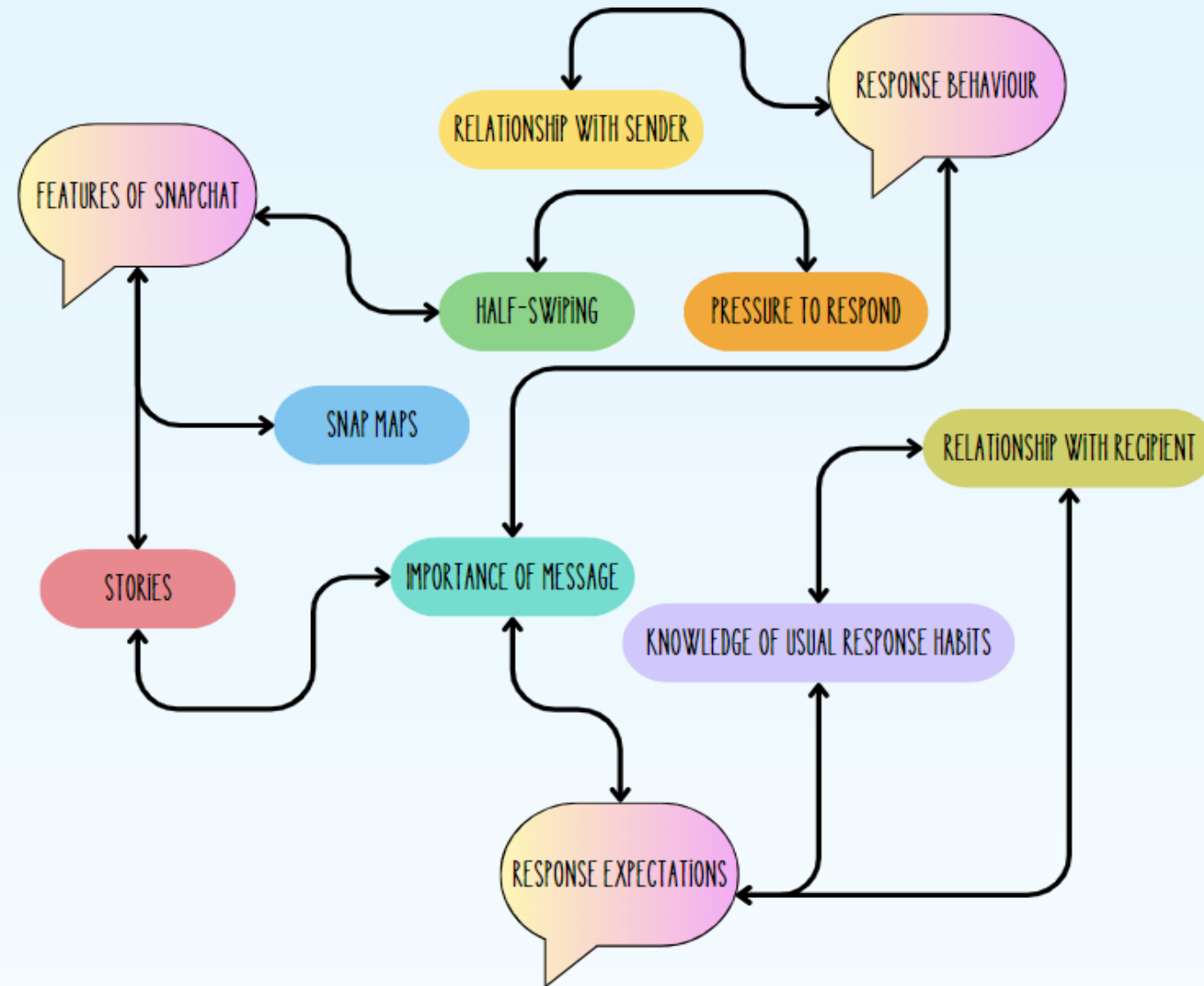
Therefore...

- Continued adjustment of codes and themes throughout the analysis to ensure that the codes and themes accurately represented the data
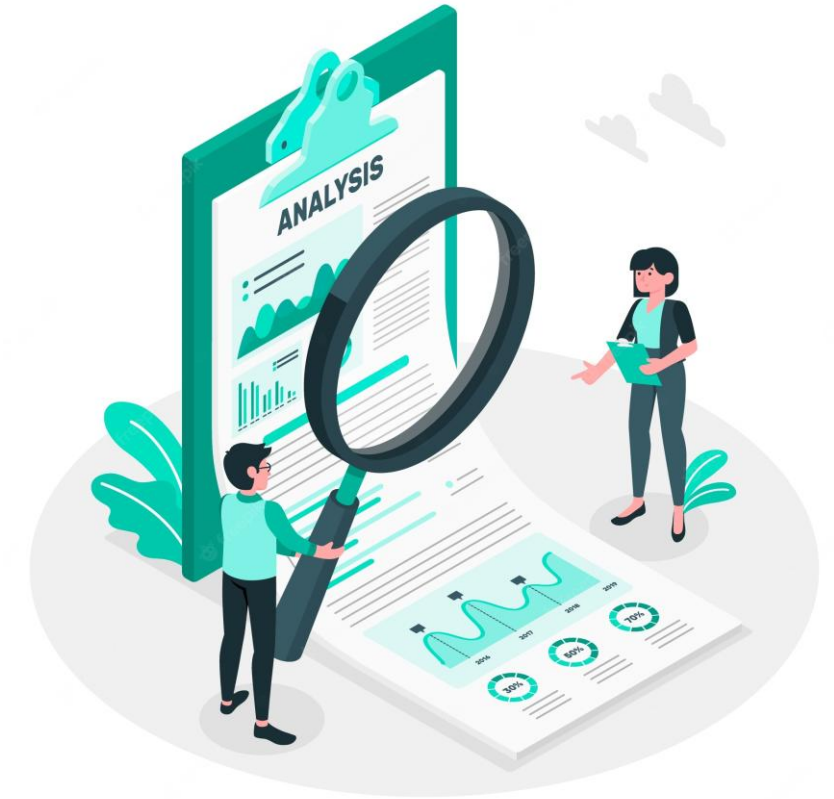
THEMATIC ANALYSIS
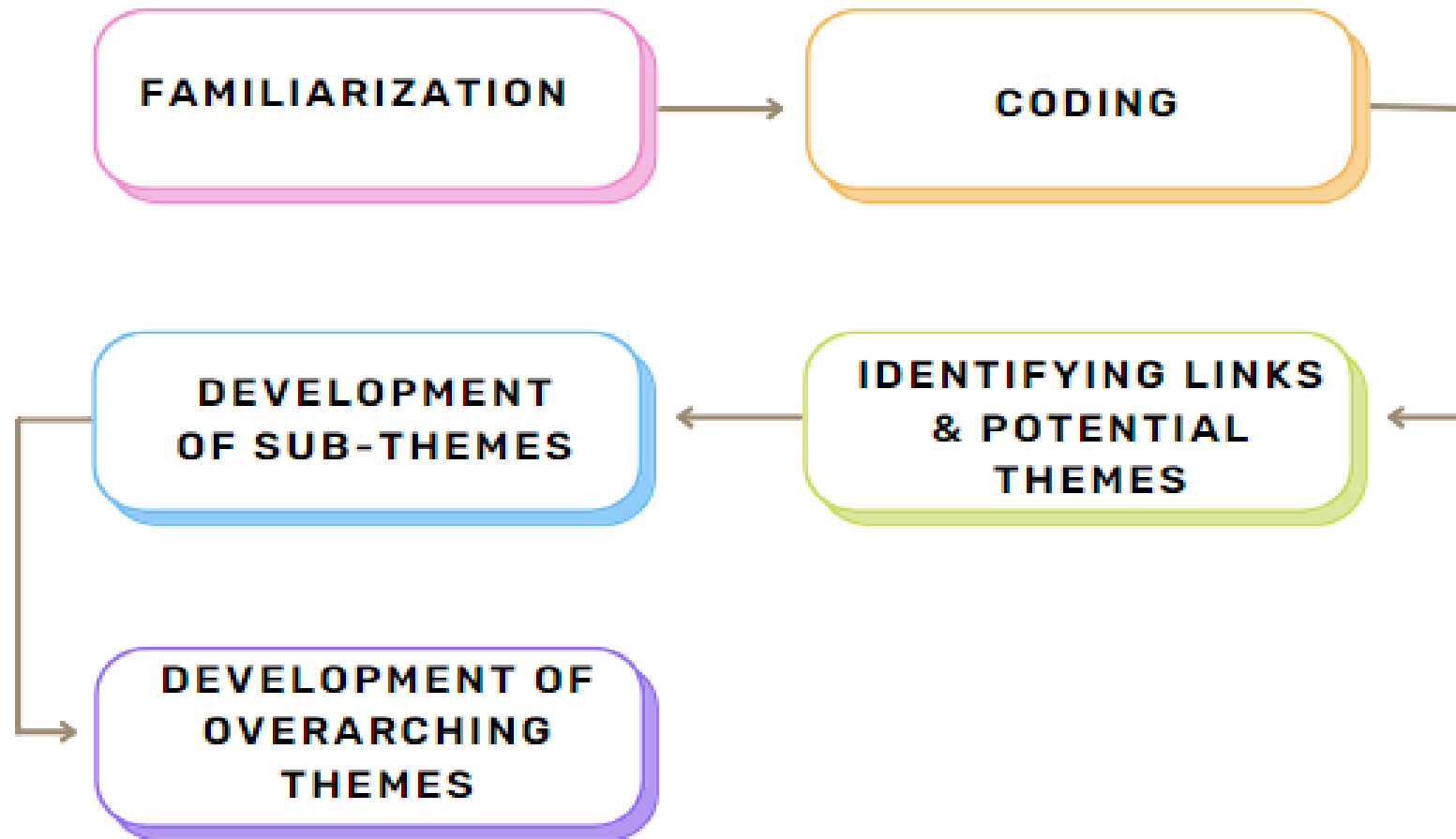
RESPONSE EXPECTATIONS

STORIES

IMPORTANCE OF MESSAGE

KNOWLEDGE OF USUAL RESPONSE HABITS

RELATIONSHIP WITH RECIPIENT

- Represented what the users expected from the people they sent messages to
- The perceived importance of the message to the sender increased the expectation for a quicker response (Murphy, 2018). A violation of this created annoyance, especially if the recipient had posted on their Snap story (Doring & Poschl, 2017)
- The relationship with the recipient, and having a knowledge of their usual habits influenced this expectation
- Not receiving a response from a close tie when expected led to negative feelings and uncertainty about the closeness of the relationship (Lynden & Rasmussen, 2017).

PRESSURE TO RESPOND

HALF-SWIPING

RESPONSE BEHAVIOUR

RELATIONSHIP WITH SENDER

IMPORTANCE OF MESSAGE

- Represents participants' response behaviour and what influences these decisions.
- Users generally respond quicker to a close tie unless they perceive the message to be emotionally important, in which case they take longer to respond - contradicts the response expectation (Kissinger, 2019)
- The half swiping feature is used as a method to screen messages from distant ties. (Lynden & Rasmussen, 2017)
- There is a significant pressure to respond to messages once they have been opened, causing stress and anxiety that could have implications for individual wellbeing. (Lynden & Rasmussen, 2017; Hoyle et al., 2017)

FEATURES OF SNAPCHAT

SNAP MAPS

Represented features of Snapchat that influence response expectations and communication

Snap maps created conflict as they allowed users to see when their response expectations had been violated (Dunn & Langlais, 2020)

This suggests that snap maps increase the negative impacts of a response expectation being violated

This could have important impacts on real-life relationships and individual wellbeing if users believe that they are being deliberately ignored