

Session 4: Introduction to Qualitative Data Analysis

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Peer Research Study
Research Training Programme (2024)

mspeerresearch.co.uk



2 Before we get started...



- Allow everyone to speak, one at a time.
- Respect everyone's comments and suggestions. This is a safe space for everyone to share their ideas.
- There are no wrong answers. All comments and suggestions are welcome.
- Raise your hand to let us know you would like to speak or ask any questions.
- If you need to take a break at any point let us know. You do not need to state the reason.
- We will be **recording** the meeting to help us keep track of comments. We will only use the audio.

3 Welcome to Session 4 of the MS Peer Research training program!

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1. Learn about qualitative data analysis.
2. Understand the basics of a qualitative data analysis approach called 'thematic analysis'.



4 Discussion activity

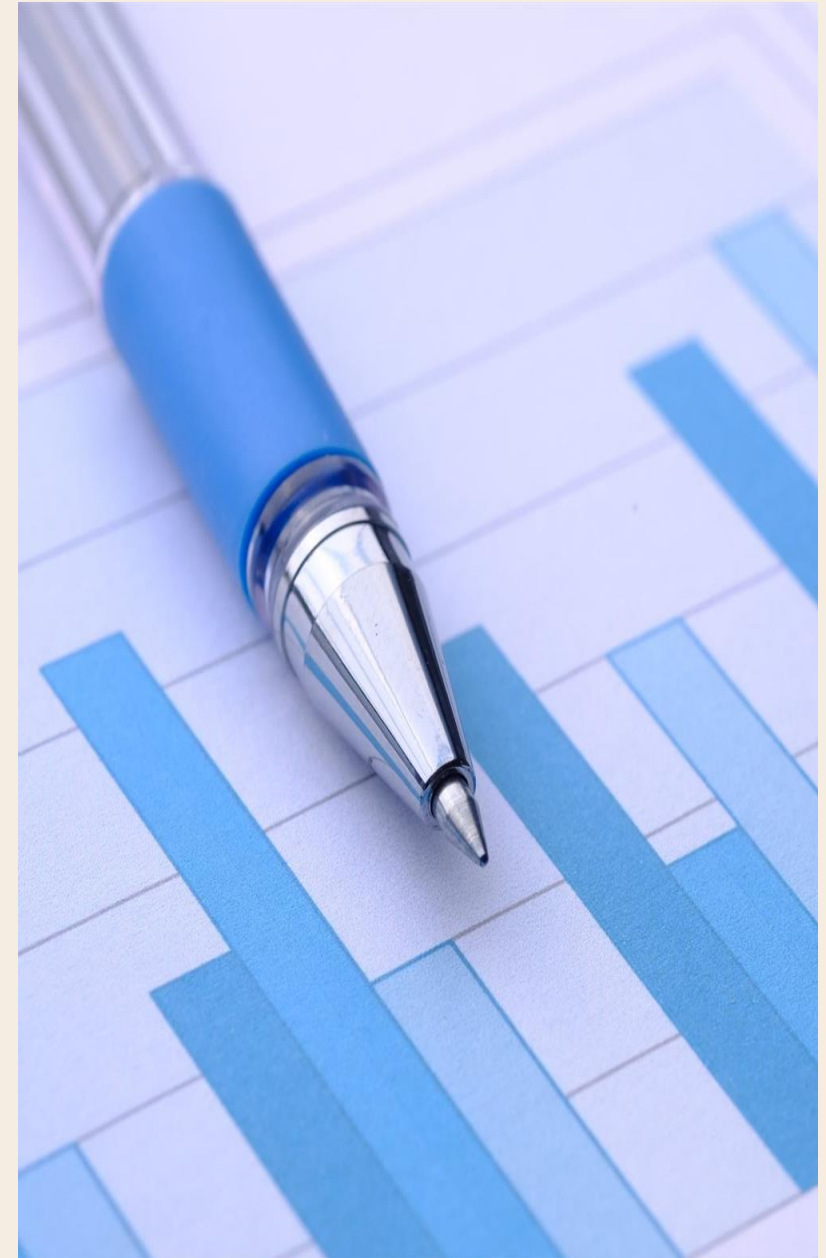
- Have you interpreted research data before?

Yes - Qualitative

Yes - Quantitative

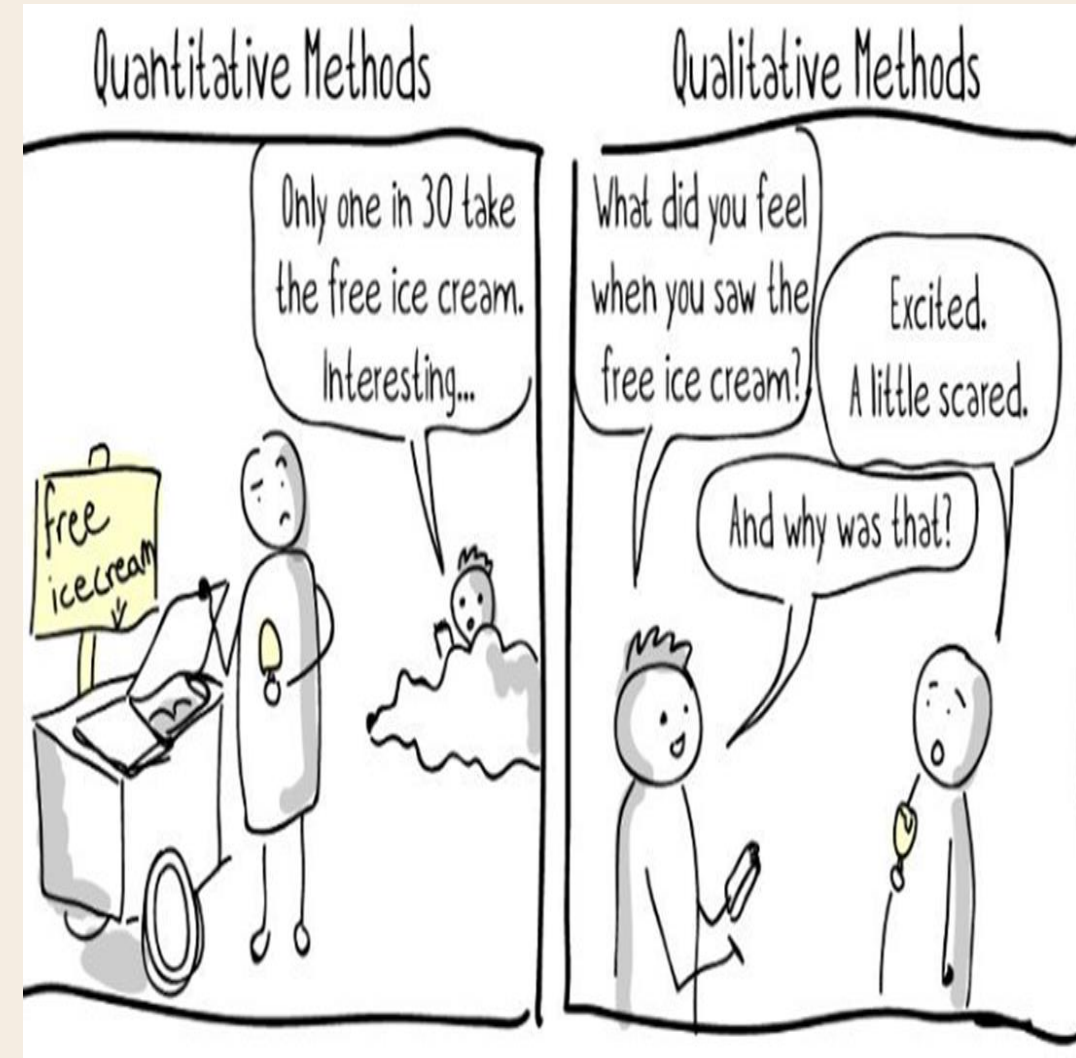
Yes - Both

No – Neither



5 Fundamentals of qualitative research

- Qualitative research is primarily concerned with the '**how**' and '**why**'.
- It generates **subjective**, **rich**, and **context-specific** data about a particular topic.
- In qualitative research the collected data is mainly **text-based** such as interview transcripts, observation notes, diary entries, and fieldnotes.
- Qualitative data can also include pictures, audio and video clips.



6 Introducing qualitative data analysis

- Qualitative data analysis is the process of organizing, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative data to capture themes and patterns and answer research questions.
- Qualitative data analysis uses something called an inductive approach.
- An **inductive approach** looks for themes, patterns, and ideas from the data itself, instead of ‘testing’ a pre-specified theory or ‘hypothesis’ against the data.



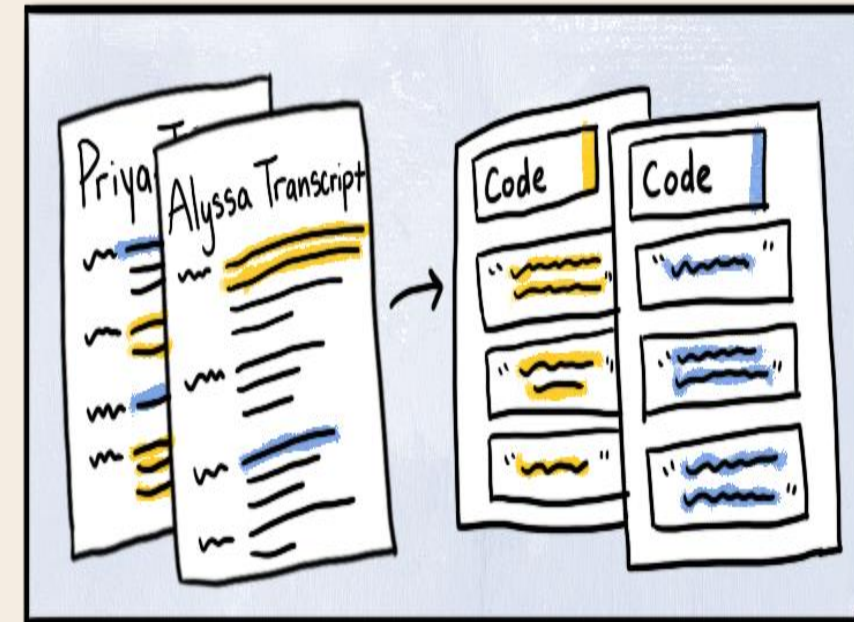
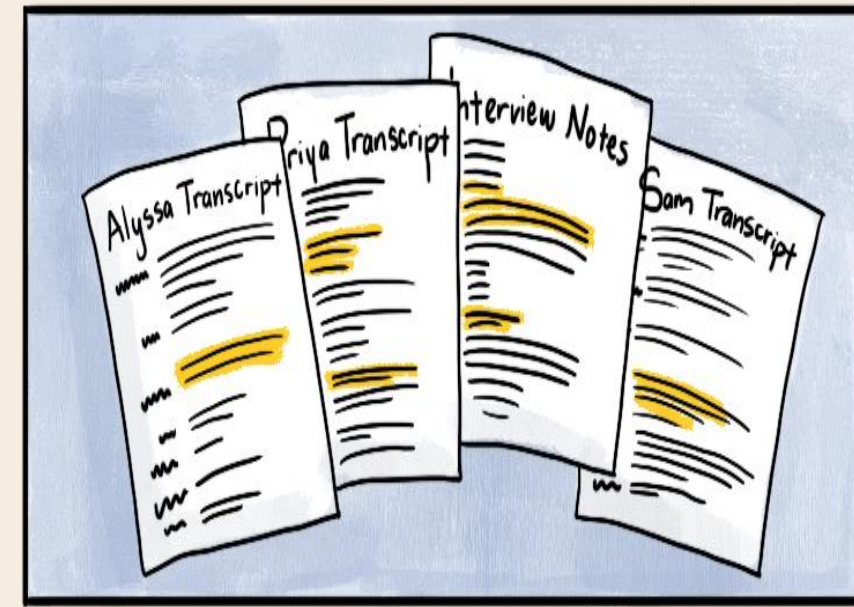
7 Introducing qualitative data analysis

- For example, if we wanted to know how employees experienced workplace discrimination, we could ask them about it using interviews. Once the interviews are completed, we could look at what people said, and see if any patterns emerged.
- Did employees experience similar types of discrimination? Why was this the case? Are there any processes of discrimination that stood out?
- The ideas emerge directly from the data that we analysed.
- This type of approach is helpful to understand processes, experiences, or other things that can't be quantified in numbers.



8 Thematic Analysis

- Thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyse, and report patterns within data.
- It is a process of discovering, interpreting and reporting patterns and clusters of meaning within the data – into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
- Thematic analysis focuses on what is said and how it is said; the idea is to move from data to meaning.



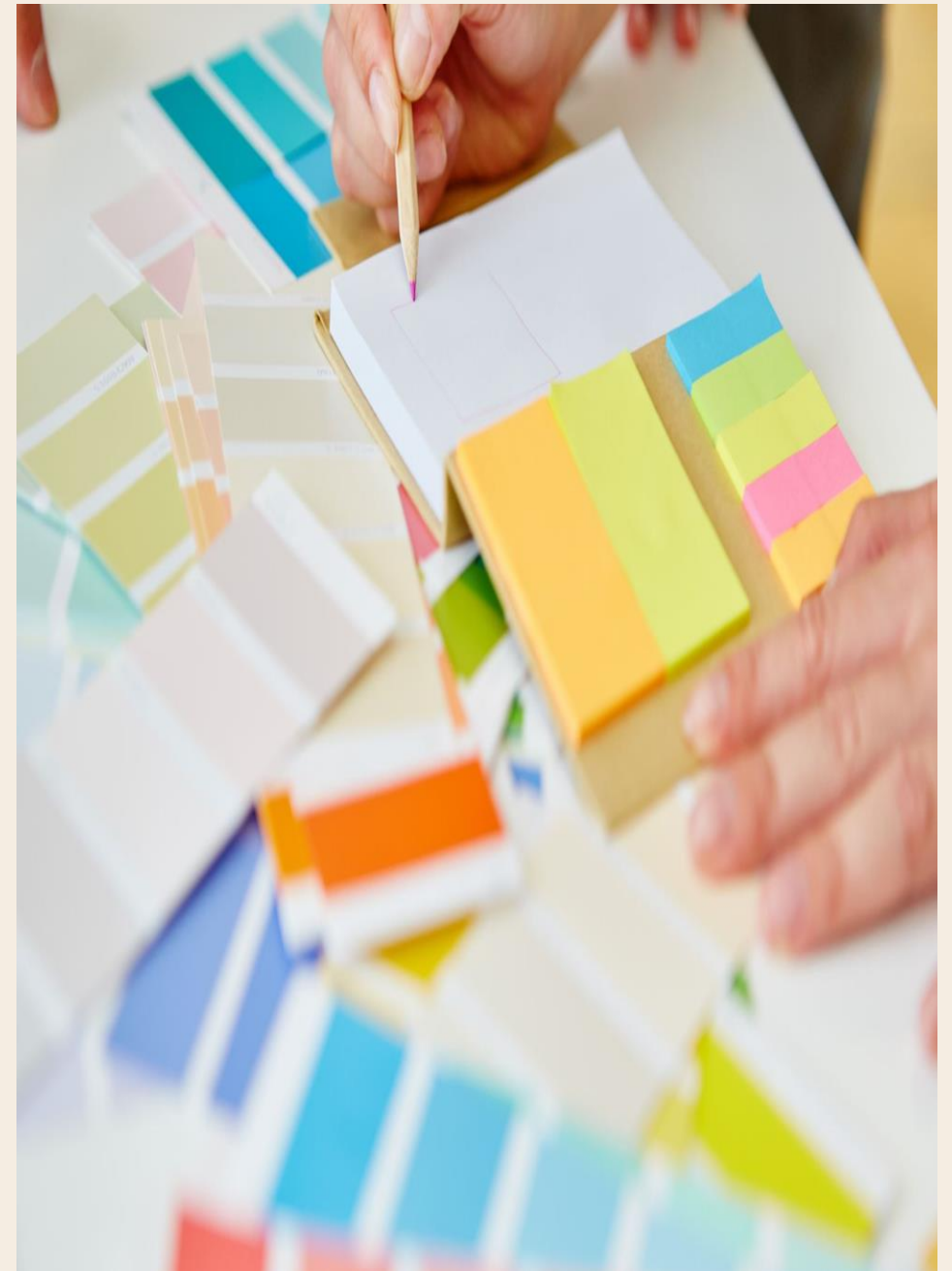
9 How we will meet in data analysis sessions

- The analysis of the interviews will be done over 8 rounds. This means we will meet as a group for data analysis once a week over 8 weeks.
- We will split into two groups (Group 1: 2 people) and (Group 2: 3 people).
- Each group will work on analysing 2 transcripts for two hours.

10 Steps of Thematic Analysis

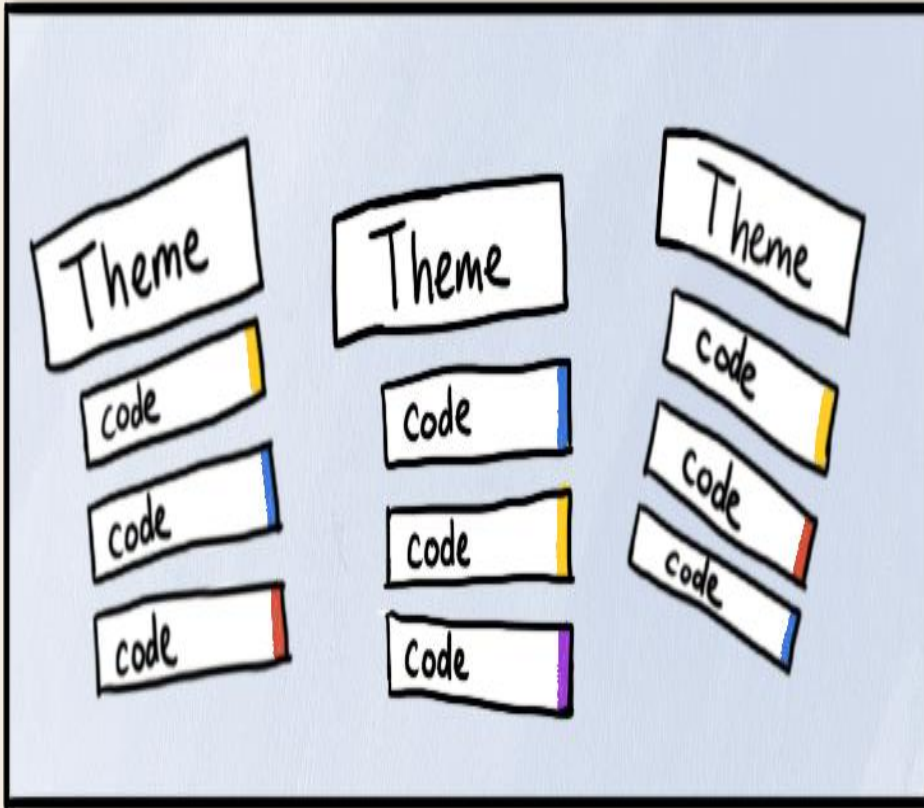
1. Dynamic Reading

- You will read the typed-up interview (transcript) multiple times (1-2 each) a few times.
- You will make notes on important ideas – draw on your experience.
- You may wish to use highlighters to highlight statements you find interesting and relevant to the research questions.
- We will meet as a group to talk about the transcripts.



11 Steps of Thematic Analysis

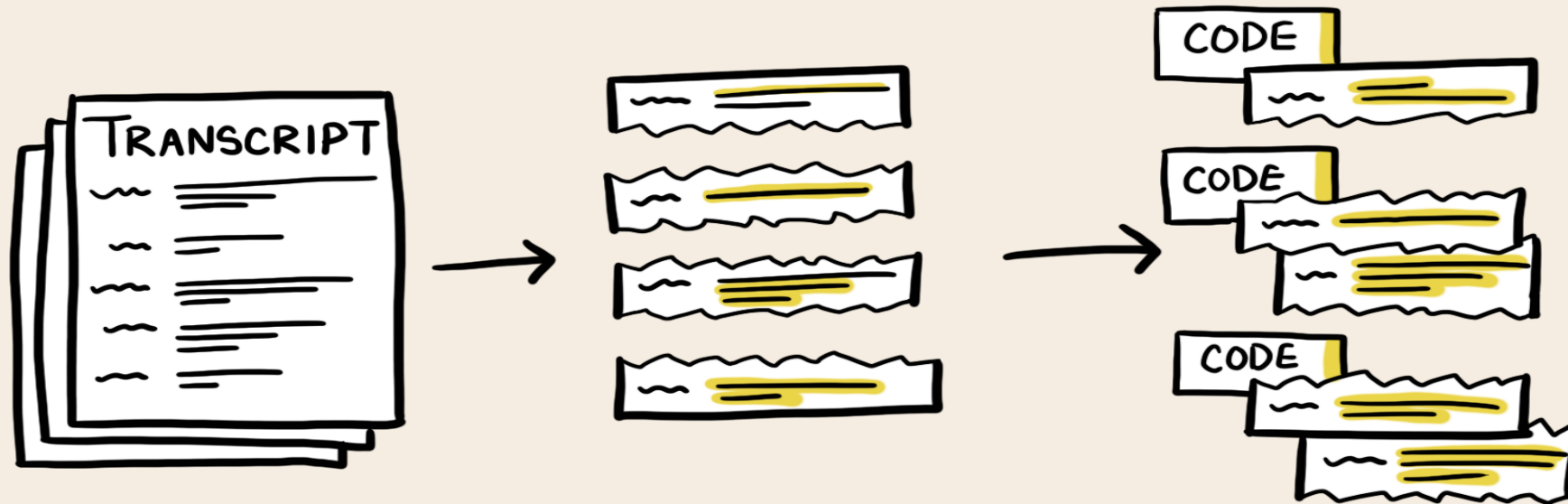
2. Grouping the data and identifying themes



- Use sticky notes to note specific ideas and cluster them into categories or general ideas (codes).
- We will meet as a group to add codes to our code book. It would be useful to ask:
- “What is our agreed list of categories & sub-categories?”
- “Are there any missing?”
- “Do we understand what they mean and how to apply them?”

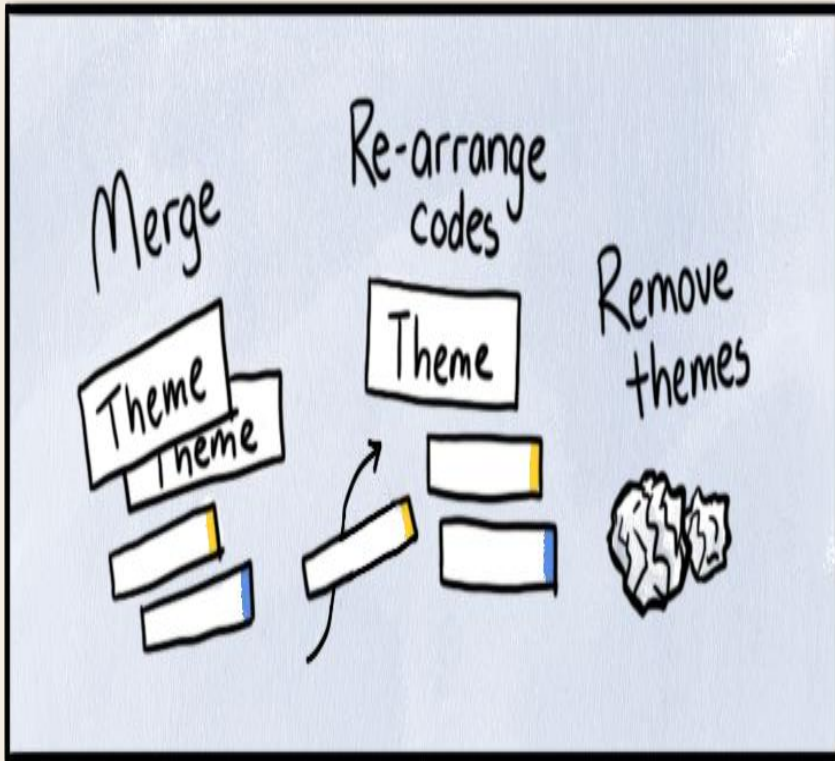
12 How to code

- You need to highlight anything of relevance in the transcript – usually words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs.
- Generate categories by noting **patterns**
- The meaning of each code develops into a concept or a general idea.



13 Steps of Thematic Analysis

3. Participatory Coding



- Using the final codebook you will code your transcripts
- Each transcript will be coded by another team member.
- Return coding work to your partner, meet and send final codes to the research team.

14 Steps of Thematic Analysis

4. Inclusive reviewing and making sense

- Re-review each category to see how everyone has coded similarly/differently. Arrange and re-arrange codes and try to make connections.
- You will meet with your transcript partner separately to determine codes.
- You will develop a category summary for each code together.

“What are the main ideas?”

“Where is there disagreement?”

“What are some key quotes?”

“Are there silences worth noting?”

“What else is important to note that might help in the analysis of the larger project?”



15 Steps of Thematic Analysis

5. Collaborative analysing

- Review summaries before meeting
 - Team reconvenes to discuss objectives and make sense of data – reflection on the project & determine key findings.
- “What does it all mean?”
- “What were our most important findings?”
- “What do we need to share and with whom?”
- “What questions do we still have?”
- “For critical analyses, what structural factors may help us understand why people chose to tell us the stories they shared?”



16 Activity: Try coding for yourself!

- We have two sample transcripts that you can choose from. You can pick one.
 - First, read through the data to familiarise yourself
 - Then, try to assign some codes. Once you have assigned codes, read through them again.
 - Are there any codes that are similar, or that you could group together?
 - Think about your experience: How did you find this exercise?
- * [Transcript 1](#) and [Transcript 2](#)

17 Key points from Session 4



Qualitative data analysis will usually analyse text information, such as transcripts from interviews and focus groups, or fieldnotes. It can also analyse things like videos and photographs.



Qualitative data analysis uses an inductive approach and this looks for patterns and theory from the data itself, instead of “testing” a theory against the data.



Thematic analysis is one type of qualitative data analysis and involves identifying common themes or patterns of meaning within data.

18 Time for reflection



What went well?

What did you like?

What surprised you?

Did we achieve our objectives?



What could have been done better?

How will you apply today's learning?



How did the session meet your expectations?

What about all of the sessions?