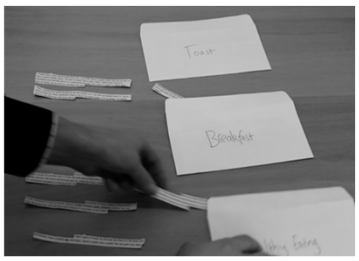
Criminology 321

Data Preparation & Content Coding



1

Content/Thematic Coding

- When you get to the end of any qualitative study, you invariably have piles of data



2

Content/Thematic Coding

- Data analysis begins with data summary
  - With more quantitative data you can summarize your data by showing graphs, talking about group means, computing statistics like correlations
  - With more qualitative data, data summary often involves content or thematic coding

3

Coding Will Reflect Data/Objectives

- Narrative analysis
  - Peoples' constructions of their experience; can focus on structure or content
- Case Study Analysis
  - Narrative analysis of a single case
- Discourse Analysis
  - Focus on the vocabularies people use and what this conveys of their understanding
- Content Analysis
  - More structured, usually deductive, finite categories

4

Content/Thematic Coding

- A standard set of analytic activities common to all forms of content analysis would include:
  1. Compiling the data;
  2. Developing a set of codes; organizing them into broader categories or themes;
  3. Interpreting and contextualizing what you have found

5

1. Compiling the data

- Step 1: transcribe your interviews
  - Manual transcription laborious but rewarding
    - Verbatim vs Corrected
    - Anonymization can start at this stage
    - Can start even after first interview
  - Selective transcription can be done when
    - resources limited and
    - you have a clear focus
  - Automated transcription: Otter.ai, Whisper.ai
  - Translation: best translator understands language *and* culture

6

2. Developing a Set of Codes

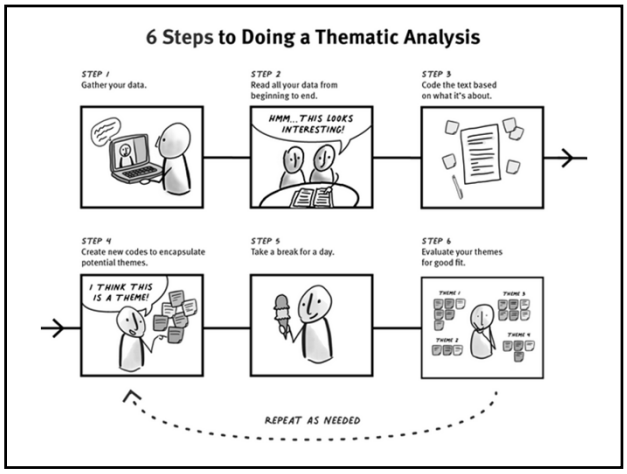
- What are codes?
  - Nothing magical; very commonsensical
  - You do them all the time when you highlight articles or textbooks or make inferences about other people's behaviour
  - In the research context, it is all about identifying and categorizing passages that will help you address your research question(s)

7

2. Developing a Set of Codes



8



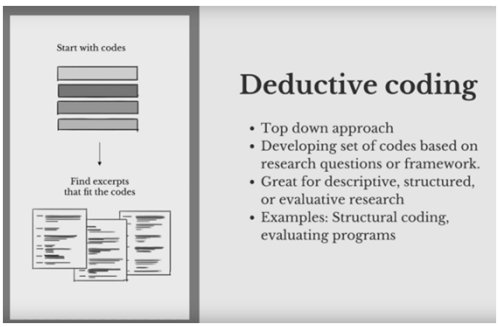
9

2. Developing a Set of Codes

- The focus may be on manifest or latent content
- Manifest = overt and obvious physical elements
  - e.g., how many words in the article; does it appear on page 1 or inside the newspaper; does anyone in the film smoke?;
- Latent = more interpretive aspects of the material; putting a conceptual label on an observation
  - e.g., examining court decisions for places where judges identify "aggravating" or "mitigating" facts; looking at media and identifying instances of Indigenous people depicted "positively" or "negatively."

10

2. Can be done Deductively



11

	Deductive strategies
Topics from interview guide	Use core topics from the interview guide as initial codes. For example, an interview guide on HIV prevention with four main topic areas including 'HIV awareness', 'HIV beliefs', 'HIV risk behaviour', and 'HIV prevention strategies' may use these topics as initial codes.
Concepts from literature and theory	Use issues from research literature or concepts from existing theory as initial codes. For example, literature on perceptions of unemployment benefits may identify concepts of 'stigma' and 'shame', which may be used as initial codes. Reading your data is needed to verify whether these issues are present in your data to justify these codes.
Professional/personal experience	Use your professional or personal experience to identify anticipated issues in data. For example, you may know that a 'bride-wealth' payment is the norm in your study context or that a 'mother-in-law' influences women's contraceptive use and use these topics as initial codes. Reading your data is needed to verify that these issues are present in the way you anticipated.
Functional codes	Consider using some functional codes, for example, 'good quotes' is a useful code to mark passages of text that exemplify an issue particularly well and may be used later when writing study results; similarly, a code called 'question 5' may be used if you simply want to search responses to this particular question.

12

2. Can be done Inductively

Inductive coding

- Ground-up approach
- Derive your codes from the data.
- Don't start with preconceived notions of what the codes should be
- Allow theory to emerge from data
- Great for discovery and exploratory methods of coding
- Examples: Grounded theory, thematic analysis, exploratory research, coming up with new research framework



13

Inductive strategies

Active reading	*Active reading* involves reading data, thinking critically and reflecting on the meaning of issues raised. It requires engaging with data to question issues, examine their context, identify the relationship with other issues, understand their relevance to the research topic, and notice how participants express the issues. Active reading highlights issues in data that may become codes.
Notice connections	Reading data analytically can lead to more conceptual codes that are important for building explanatory theory. Read data for underlying concepts, notice connections between issues that signify a broader concept, examine whether relevant concepts from the literature or existing theory are present in data.
Writing memos	Memos are notes about your data that capture your ideas, reflections and thoughts about potential codes, and facilitate a more critical, analytic reading of text.
Notice repetition	Notice if issues are repeated within or across texts that may signify, an important issue for participants and a potential code. For example, participants may describe feeling unsupported with a disease, getting no help, having no-one to turn to, feeling isolated. Although using different words, the same idea is expressed, leading to a code of 'Feeling Alone'.
Structure of text	Notice topic changes within the text to indicate different issues. For example, text on how parents select a school may describe the school's reputation, size, pupil-teacher ratios, then the issue of school fees and location. These natural topic changes may indicate different codes.
In-vivo phrases	Notice particular expressions, words, or metaphors used by participants to convey a specific meaning or concept, and use these words as the code name for that issue. This is called an in-vivo code. For example, the in-vivo code 'maya' represented the maternal bond between a mother and baby in data from Bangladesh; and 'not a death sentence' was an in-vivo code relating to being diagnosed as HIV positive in data from the USA.

14

What for you are some of the positive aspects of the "digital revolution" and new technologies? What do you like most about it/them?

No.	Statement	Code
1	The fact that I can contact old friends and family online, and that I have met new people online before who have becoming significant people in my own life. I also like the fact that regardless of where I am, I have access to important files such as my online calendar and homework assignments.	
2	The connection, as cheesy as that is. I can see the points of view of people in Britain, I can be informed when something unjust is happening in Iran, I get to know about, and talk to, people I'd never have connected with. As well, the information readily available is amazing - from how-tos, to wikipedia, to interse histories of obscure subjects, we are now incredibly informed. There's also a fantastic return to old ways of doing things: like a renaissance of knitting and sewing among younger people, thanks to the internet.	
3	It is easier to keep in touch with people.	
4	The fact that it brings us all closer and how easy it is to communicate with someone else across the globe. It makes things more efficient and you're able to have information close to your fingertips.	
5	They allow me to keep in contact with my friends and family across the world in a quick and cheap way. They also allow me to access information that I require as soon as I need it. Allows me to make friends with people with similar interests across the world that I may not have been able to contact prior to the digital revolution.	
6	- Easy to stay connected with friends or family in another country or province. - - efficient way of communicating and one click away on our cell phones or portable devices that have internet access, in between breaks or whenever there is a minute to check our emails or facebook. - - able to stay connected and talk to many people at once on text messaging rather than staying on phone with just one person. - - saves paper products by doing online banking, sending e-cards etc - Can post photos up for close people to see- that	
7	They are convenient to use. I can find out information, talk to friends, etc. while sitting in one spot. I can do it all within 10 minutes.	
8	They are a convenience and they greatly assist in communication with friends and family around the world.	
9	Positive aspects of the digital revolution is that it allows people to do virtually anything they want because they can conduct research online and technology makes it easier for people to communicate. What I like most about technology is knowing that it can make a person's life easier and more enjoyable.	
10	Easily accessible information. Faster way to writing notes, and it cuts down a lot of time with regards to writing papers.	
11	Access. In every conception of the word. Access to knowledge. Access to truth. Access to guidance. Access to help. Also, access in a variety of different ways--convenient ways. Access whenever I want. Access wherever I want. Access however I want (different mediums, devices). Access--quickly. Additionally, multi-tasking. Smartphones allow us to think to the future, write down notes, keep	

15

	track, and stay organized. Ultimately, it's all about convenience and access. This kind of thing fits perfectly with our consumer society--we are constantly working against time.	
12	Convenience to reach people and take classes from the comfort of one's home	
13	Easier to communicate with people	
14	The ease at which communication can occur now. It also feels like a safety net, I am less afraid to try things because I know if I get in trouble or get lost I can easily phone someone or use my Google maps. Research is also extremely easy, and it feels good to be able to find answers to questions in a matter of a simple search removing much unnecessary ignorance.	
15	I appreciate the convenience and efficiency provided by new technologies. In terms of school, researching and writing papers is made so much easier with access to online articles or e-books. In terms of personal use, smartphones and their many applications provide quick access to information, tools, and entertainment.	
16	-Makes things much faster and convenient -Easy to communicate with anyone around us	
17	The ability to complete multiple tasks in a limited amount of time. The instant access to knowledge and media.	
18	I like how much you can do with technology. (How accessible/resourceful it has become)ex. online banking, shopping online, surfing the net from your phone	
19	The ease of communication with others, ease of access to information, and the ease of being able to do things at home (ie. internet banking)	
20	Efficient and effective way to get things done	
21	Communication is easier, research is easier, you can create presentations online so you do not have to purchase the ridiculously expensive software.	
22	Google - the ease of searching the www - forums - informs you on things you wouldn't have known otherwise - youtube - teaches you skills and other things (makeup tutorials, how to cook, etc.) - able to connect with people around the world - picture sharing - internet stalking (know things about complete strangers)	
23	Everything can be done so quickly and at almost any time of the day where ever you are. The convenience of it is a huge aspect.	
24	Easy access and connect almost all things together when you have internet or some kind of sync function. I like how there is multiple ways for accessing one thing at anytime.	
25	Convenience and accessibility	
27	Definitely their ability to connect individuals, as well as their ability to grant access to a wealth knowledge. Also the economic benefits of new technologies creating new markets and enabling new businesses, even within themselves, e.g. Apple's app store. There are many good things, but it seems redundant to speak of them at length.	
28	Being in such convenient contact of people	
29	Technology cuts some of our work. For example, we can now use google maps to see the path to our destination, and we can phone a friend through our cell phone when we are lost or need a ride.	
30	They allow for us to communicate with people all across the globe. Technology also makes it easier for individuals to access information through search engines	

16

2. Can be done Manually



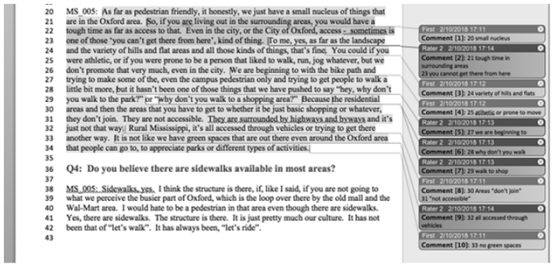
17

2. Can be done Manually



18

2. Can be done with MSWord



19

2. Can be done with Software



20