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RS292 Research Methods

*Analysing and Presenting Qualitative
Data*

Lecturer: Dr Maya Krayneva

Textbook: Textbook: Gray, D. (2018). *Doing research in the real world* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage. (Chapter 15)

Qualitative Data Analysis

- the non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations,
- for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationship

Qualitative
Analysis

785.00

254.05

652.23

754.95

52.44

63.00

47.35

120.86

47.25

57.78

16.34

450.46

516.65

458.56

524.24

525.85

750.75

258.51

652.66

491.15

271.55

B''

CA



Challenges of Qualitative Data Analysis

1. **No widely accepted rules** about how qualitative data should be analysed
2. The **extent** to which data should be analysed
 - Should data 'speak for itself'?
 - Can it be objectively described?
 - How can it be interpreted?

Elements of Qualitative Data Analysis

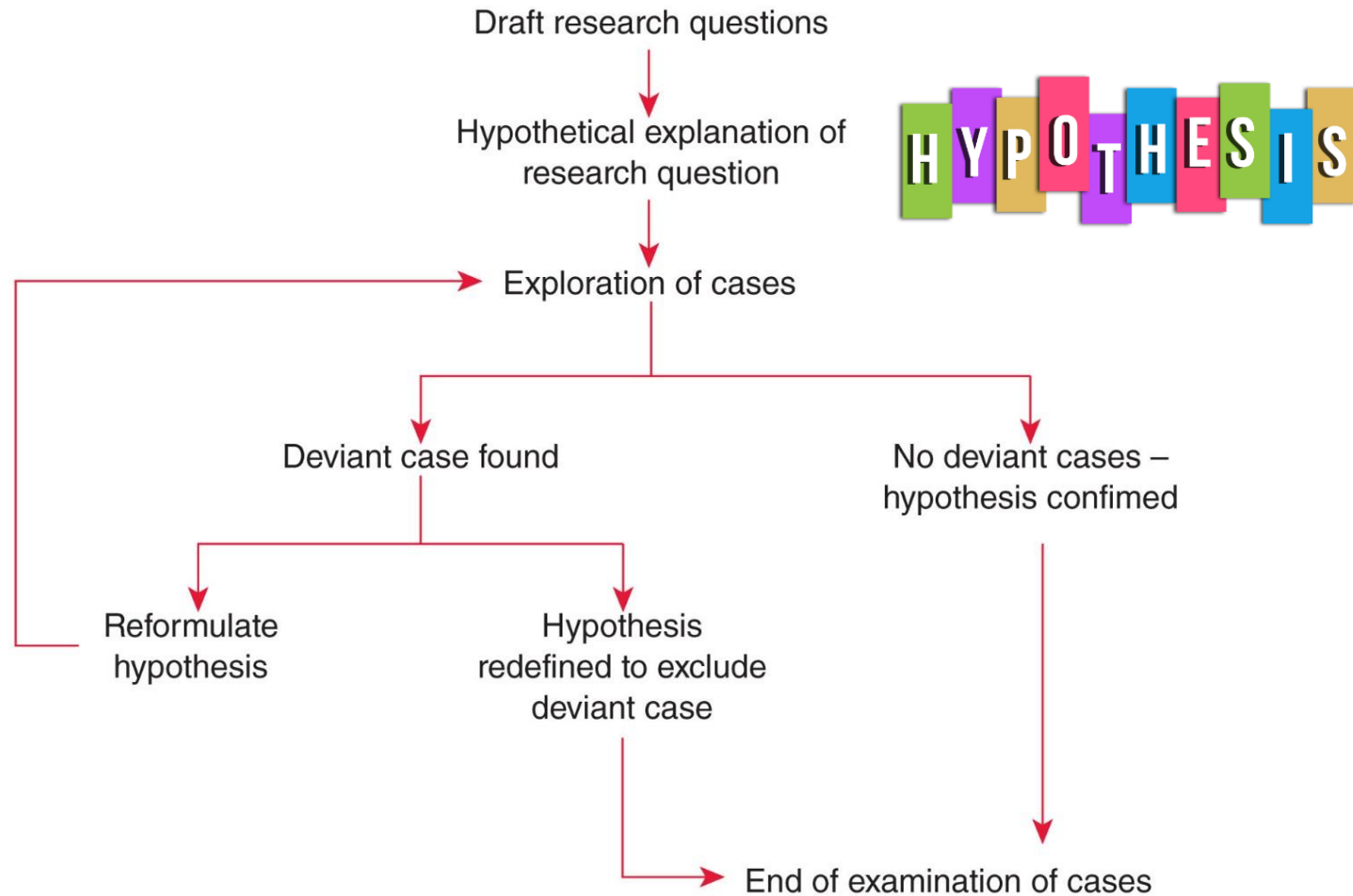
Analytic Induction

Steps in the Coding Process

Analyzing Secondary Data

Reflexivity – the Voice of the Researcher

Analytic Induction



Steps in the Coding Process

Transcribe the data

- **write up** field notes or reflective diaries into easily read format, become **familiar** with the text

Read and reflect

- read 2-3 times and identify what is **interesting**, **unusual** or perhaps **significant**

Explore and play

- Identify **themes** and sub-themes, and **connections** between them

Code and connect

- **code** for main/sub **themes**, see if a code relates to a concept in the literature

Review and refine

- modify, merge, or eliminated existing codes; see if **new code** emerge

Develop an analytical account

- **Describe** (consistencies and contrasts), **Compare** (categories), **Relate** (connections, relationships); Contend, Defend, and Extend

Analyzing Secondary Data

(1) Access to data in the form of documents or other resources, collected by others

Ask yourself . . .

- Who produced the document?
- Why was it produced?
- Is the material genuine and produced by someone who could write authoritatively and objectively on the subject?
- Can the events or accounts presented in the document be corroborated by other evidence?

(2) Re-analysis of quantitative data

(3) Perform an additional in-depth analysis of a subset of original data to apply a new perspective

Reflexivity: The Voice of the Researcher

- The realisation the researcher is not a neutral observer, and is implicated in the construction of knowledge
- Epistemological: researchers reflect on **their assumptions** about the world and about the nature of knowledge
- Personal: researcher reflects upon how their **personal values, attitudes, beliefs and aims** have served to shape the research



Reflexivity: Dangers

- Achieve reflexivity by designing research that involves multiple researchers, having a reflexive journal, and reporting research perspectives

... But can lead to:

Narcicism

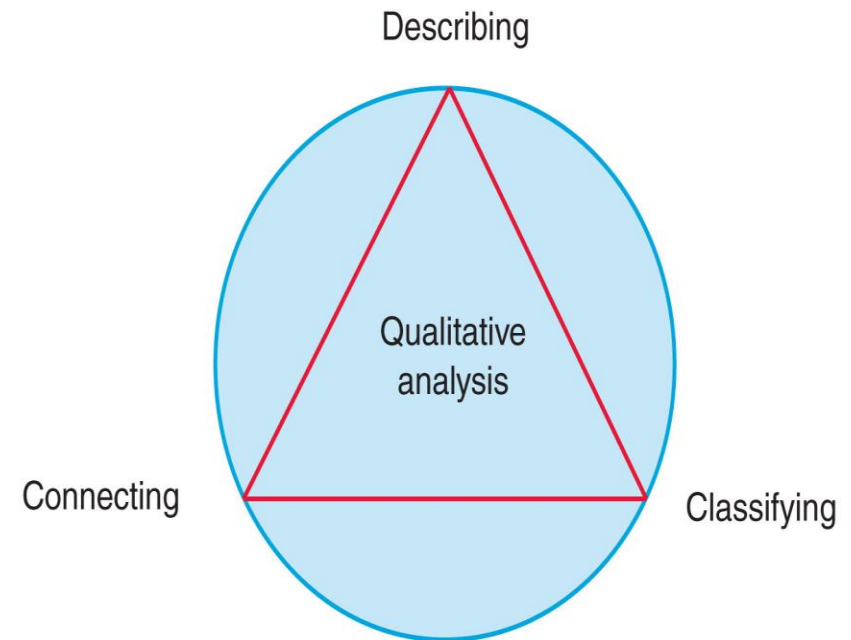
Self-righteousness

Nihilism

Arrogance

Process of Analysing Qualitative Data

- Breaking data into smaller units to reveal their characteristic elements and structure
- Go beyond description to
 - interpret
 - understand
 - explain
- Can gain new insights into the data



Process of Analysing Qualitative Data

Content Analysis

Thematic Analysis

Grounded Theory

Narrative Analysis

Conversational Analysis

Discourse Analysis



Content analysis

- making inferences about data (usually text) by systematically and objectively identifying **special characteristics (classes or categories)** within them
- 'criteria of selection' need to be established before the data can be analysed; deductive



Thematic analysis

- identifying and analysing patterns (themes) within qualitative data; a form of pattern recognition within the data
- a theme becomes important when it captures something important in relation to the overall research question

Thematic Analysis Steps

1

Familiarise
yourself with
the data

2

Generate initial
codes; use
highlighters,
notes

3

Search for
themes; visual
representation
of themes in the
form of
thematic maps

4

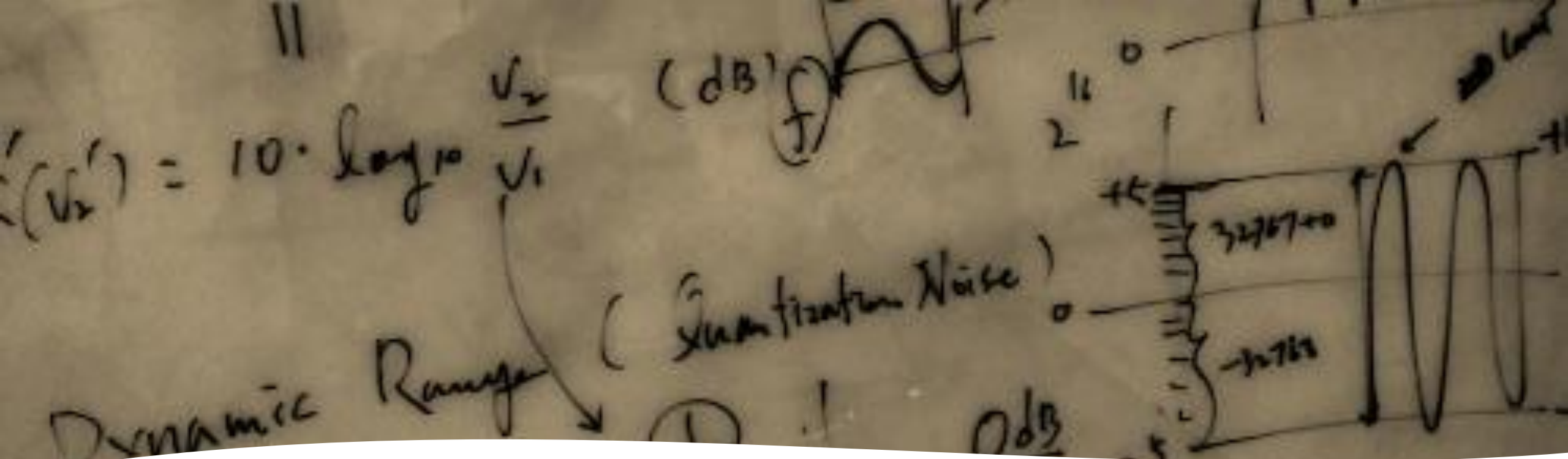
Review themes
(valid in relation
to the coded
extracts and the
entire data set)

5

Define and
name themes
(**clear and
precise**)

6

Produce the
report (relating
back to the
original research
questions and
the literature)



Grounded theory

- a theory that is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon
- research begins with a defined purpose but also with the realization that this purpose maybe modified or even radically altered

Grounded Theory: Layers of Meaning

The participant's **stated explanations** of her or his actions

The participant's **unstated assumptions** about these actions

The participant's **intentions and motivation** for engaging in the actions

The **effects** of the actions on others

The **consequences** of these actions for interpersonal relations and for further individual actions

→ Outcome: framework, **conditional matrix** – complex web of inter-related conditions, actions/interactions, and consequences

Grounded Theory: Coding Categories

Open coding: naming and categorization of phenomena, the making of **comparisons** and the asking of **questions** (p. 696)

Axial coding: making **connection** between **categories** (p. 698)

specifying a category

the context in which it arises

the actions/interactions that stem from it

its consequences

Selective coding: the integration of **(core) categories** to produce a **theory**

finding a story line

relating sub-categories to the core categories

validating these relationships (p. 701)

filling in any gaps

move from one coding category to another (see Case Study 26.1)



Narrative Analysis

- an ideal way of capturing the lived experiences of participants
- use of oral or life stories, unstructured interviews → holistic data insight



Conversational Analysis

- formal analysis of everyday conversations
- seeks to specify the formal principles and mechanisms with which participants express themselves



Discourse Analysis

- how both spoken and written language is used in social contexts
- how participant versions of events are constructed

CAQDAS Software can help you . . .

- Import transcripts or other computer-generated documents directly into the program
- Work through the data, marking words, phrases or sections of text with codes
- Collect the chunks of text associated with a code

It cannot . . .

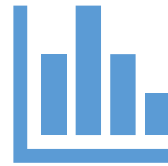
- Generate codes for you
- Interpret the data

Homework



Readings

Textbook Chapter 27



Conduct Data Analysis



Topic for next week

Writing Research Reports