

The background features a grey gradient with colorful splatters in shades of orange, purple, blue, and green. A large white circle is centered on the page, containing the main text. A solid blue circle is positioned at the bottom right edge of the white circle.

# Approaches To Coding Your Data In Qualitative Research

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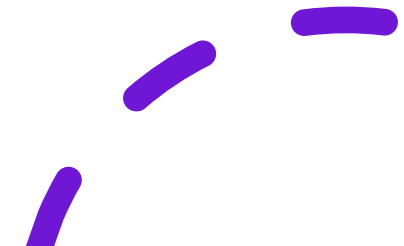
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# Overview for Today

- Coding
  - Organization & preparation
  - Iterative approach
  - Preview of other coding approaches/strategies
  - Discussion & questions
- 

# What is Coding?

- Coding
  - Process to assess and assign interpretation of data
  - *"Coding is not a precise science; it is primarily an interpretive act"* (Saldaña, 2016, p. 5)
- Codes
  - Words or phrases that are a summative attribute for data (Tracy, 2013)
  - Researcher-generated translation of data
  - Interpreted meaning
- Codifying
  - Arranging things in a systematic order
  - Making datum part of a system, classification, or category
  - Applying codes to data = codifying (Saldaña, 2016)

# Organizing & Preparing Data

- Prepare all raw materials
- Identify how best to process the data
- Consider various organizational schemes
  - Chronological
  - By source
  - By type of data
  - By attributes of participants

# Analysis Logistics

- What's your coding process and procedure?
  - Details needed; protocol; procedures
  - Team coding? Training(s)?
- Manual approaches
  - Hard copies; marking up with pen
  - Cutting and organizing or stringing them together
  - Creating "tabletop categories"
  - Whiteboards

# Analysis Logistics

- Computer-aided approaches
  - Word documents and spreadsheets
  - Highlight functions in Word documents
  - Printing a hard copy
  - Cut and paste on computer
- Qualitative software
  - [ATLAS.ti](#)
  - [Nvivo](#)
  - *Note:* software does not “do” analysis for you!

# The Iterative Approach

- Iterative analysis
  - Alternates between emergent readings of data (emic) and using extant models / theories (etic)
- Visiting and revisiting data
- A reflexive process
- Immersion in one's data
- Timeline for completion?
  - It depends!
  - Data set
  - Time needed to adequate primary- and secondary-cycle coding
  - Solo v. team coding



# Primary-Cycle Coding

- Begins by reading data
  - Assigning codes
  - Spending ample time immersed in data
- First-level codes
  - Descriptive
  - Focus on what is present in data
  - Require little interpretation
  - EX: 'using Facebook' or 'rolling eyes'



# Primary-Cycle Coding

- In-Vivo codes
  - EX: 'sup?' or 'it's gonna be tote rad'
- Emulates 'constant comparative method' (grounded theory)
  - Compare new data to codes
  - Modify codes, if necessary

# Focusing the Analysis & Creating a Codebook

- Create a list of codes and a description
- Codebook
  - Detailed description of each code with an abbreviation and an example
  - *Codebook formats vary!*
- Limit to ~25 codes (Tracy, 2013)
- Revisit research questions and *sensitizing concepts*
  - Any modification(s) needed?

# Codebook Example

(Tracy, 2013, p. 192)

Codebook excerpt

Abbreviation	Code	Definition/Explanation	Examples (Hypothetical – Unless Otherwise Indicated Through Direct Quotes)
<b>First-level [descriptive] codes</b>			
Tr-Self	Traits – set interviewee apart	Answer to question about what has set the interviewee apart from other employees, as a leader, and/or about any other characteristics the interviewee attribute to his career success.	My education; I am always working.
PolSug	organizational policy suggestions for work-life	Answer to the question: What could organizations do to make work-life balance easier or to help women in their on-ramping? Any other information interviewee offers concerning ways in which organizations could make work-life easier.	Flexibility; telecommuting; day care; giving more sick days.
WL-Fut	Future work-life balance	Descriptions of how interviewee thinks his children will manage work-life balance	I think they've seen that mom's staying home works well in our marriage, so they'll likely do the same.

<b>Second-level [analytic] codes</b>			
Private	Privatization of work-life policy	When asked about organizational policy, interviewees provide an answer about their personal beliefs, practices, experiences, and situations	When asked in general about women going to work, respondent talks about how hard it is to find good day care; interviewee is asked four times about workplace policy before he says anything (in earlier answers he spoke about private familial views and practice).
Choice	Choice – women's work	Statements suggesting that interviewees view women's work as more of a "choice" than of a necessity and therefore think that women have only themselves to blame if there are work-life problems.	"I don't think my daughter will choose to go to work." I think women should stay home with the children.
Off-OK	Off-ramping OK	Statements that suggest interviewee thinks that it is acceptable (and even praiseworthy) for women to leave the work world when they have a baby	I applaud women who leave work in order to take care of children.



Development of a codebook is *“especially critical as a set of coding standards when multiple team members work together on the same project’s data”*

(Saldaña, 2016, p. 27)



# Secondary-Cycle Coding

- Secondary-cycle coding
  - Examine existing codes
  - Organize them into interpretive concepts
- Second-level codes
  - Analytic
  - Identify patterns / categories
  - Often include interpretation

# Synthesizing & Making Meaning from Codes

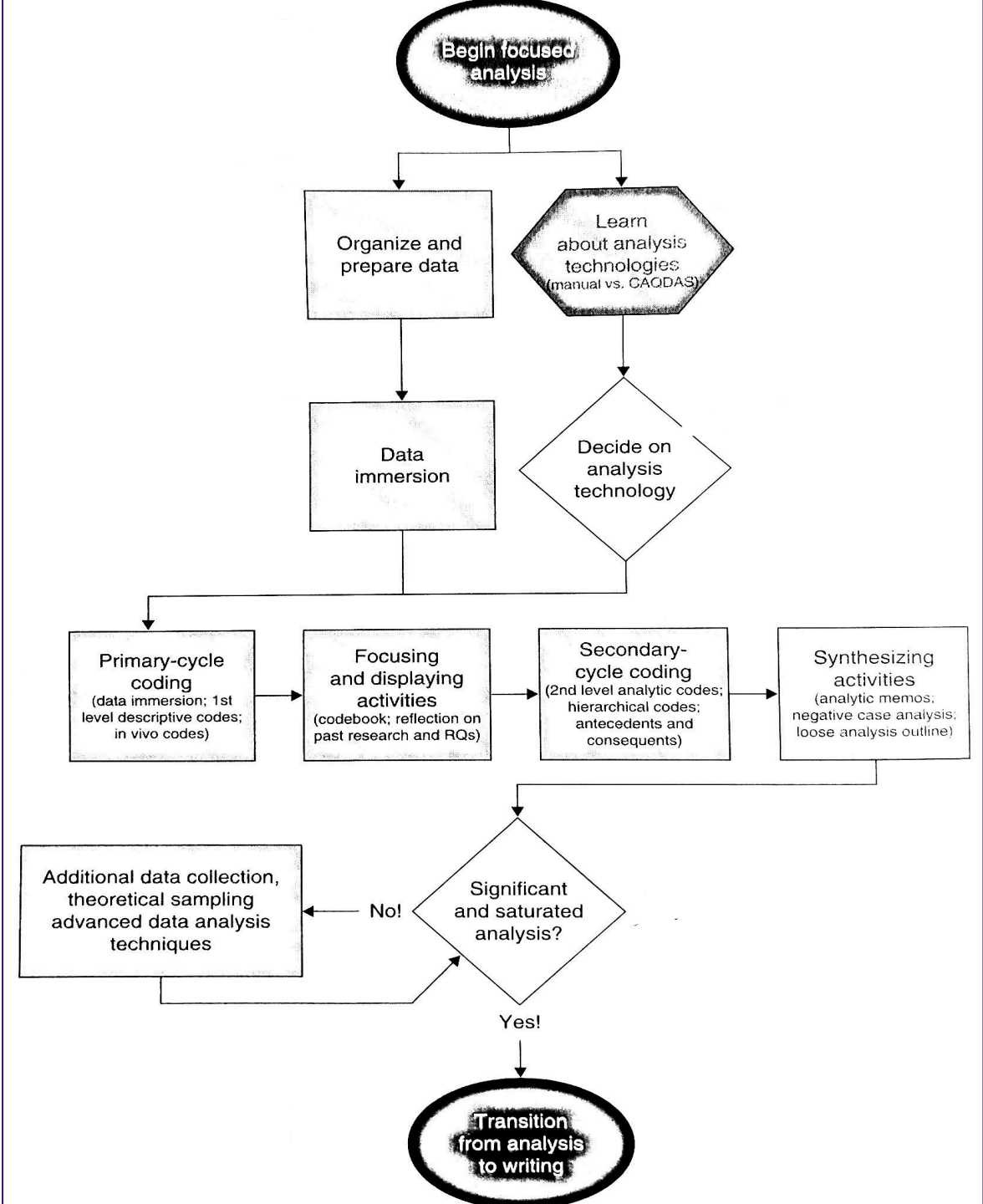
- **Record all coding & analysis activities**
  - You'll need it for your "Methods" section
  - Keep a "Methods log"
- Write analytic memos
  - Focus on code meanings and relations
  - Highlight exemplars
- Loose analysis outline
  - ½ way through secondary-cycle coding
  - Documents how RQs relate to your codes

# Secondary-Cycle Coding

- Sometimes, analysis points you towards collecting more data
- Theoretical sampling
  - Back to field to gather more data to inform an emerging theory
- How do you know when you're done coding?
- Theoretical saturation
  - New data is not adding to emergent theory or suggesting new codes

# Iterative Analysis Process

(Tracy, 2013)





# Many Other Strategies to Coding

- Grounded theory procedure(s)
  - Glaser & Strauss (1967)
  - Charmaz (2014)
- Phenomenology
  - Hermeneutic (van Manen, 1990)
  - Transcendental (see Creswell, 2013)
- Thematic analysis (see Boyatzis, 1998; Nowell et al., 2017)
- Narrative analysis (Fisher, 1984; Riessman, 1993)
- Metaphor analysis (e.g., Grant & Osrick, 1996)
- Qualitative Content Analysis process (see Davis & Lachlan, 2017)
  
- General coding information: Saldaña (2016)

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# ORS Resources



Research Design & Data Analysis Lab:

<https://www.uttyler.edu/research/ors-research-design-data-analysis-lab/>



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# Questions?

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