



THEMATIC ANALYSIS

A QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

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A systematic method of organizing, analyzing, and making meaning out of qualitative data



Useful for understanding participants' experiences, thoughts and behaviours



Beyond a summative process – involves active interpretation and analysis

WHAT IS
THEMATIC
ANALYSIS?

“A theme is an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole” (p. 362). (DeSantis and Ugarriza, 2000)

DEFINITIONS

Codes: observations, basic units of analysis

Themes: actively constructed patterns, meanings

Deductive themes: derived from an external theoretical framework

Inductive themes: derived from the raw data

On reflexivity: critically reflect on your background and its impact on your work

EPISTEMIC UNDERPINNINGS

Key here: be upfront about your theoretical assumptions



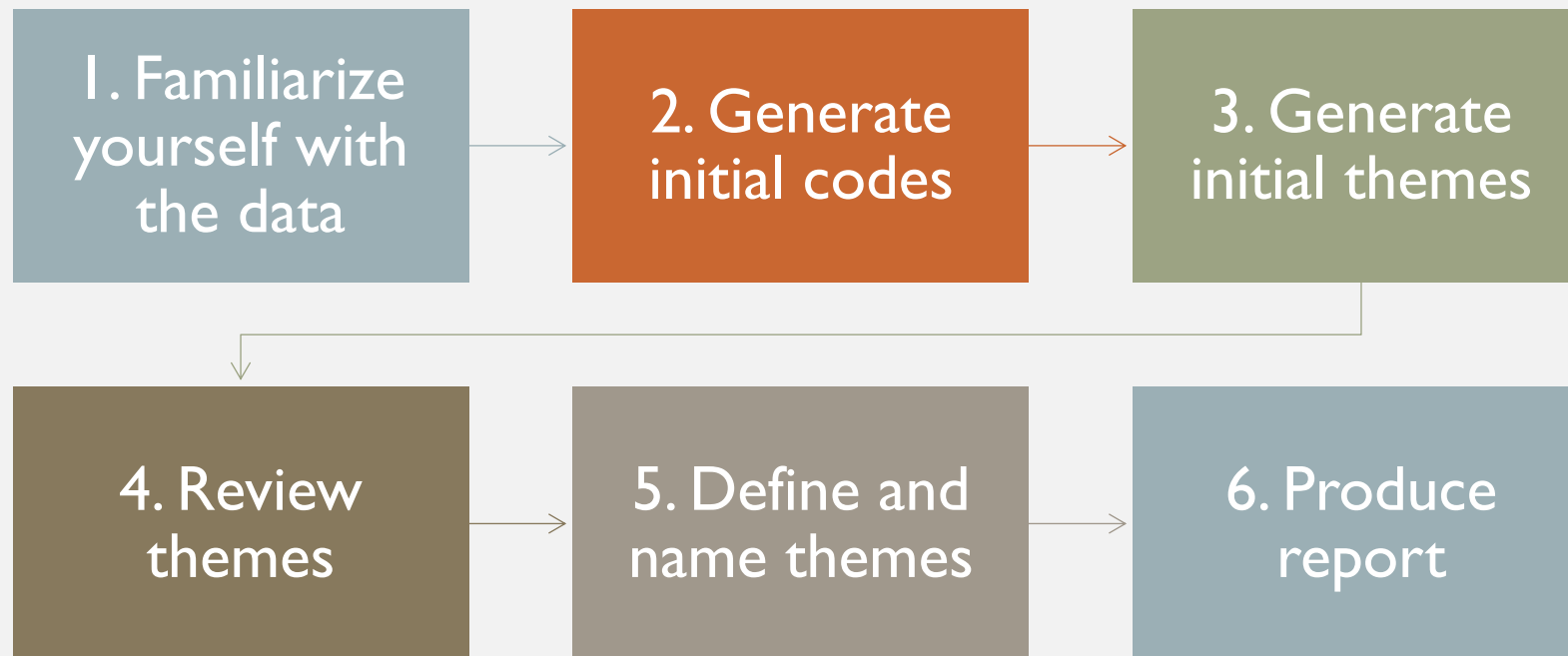
Common paradigms

Positivism

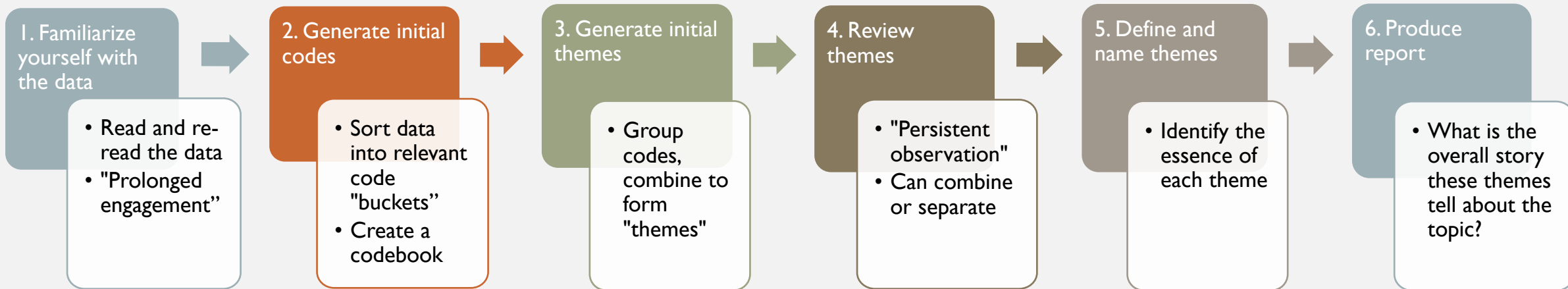
Constructivism

Pragmatic approach

THEMATIC ANALYSIS IN 6 STEPS



THEMATIC ANALYSIS IN 6 STEPS





WHEN REVIEWING THEMES:

- Is this a theme?
- What is the quality of this theme?
- What are the boundaries of this theme?
- Is there enough meaningful data to support this theme?
- Is the data too diverse and wide ranging?

“It is this very knowledge that makes us doctors’: an applied thematic analysis of how medical students perceive the relevance of biomedical science knowledge to clinical medicine”

Table 2 Codes and code definitions

Codes	Code definitions
1.a. Diagnosis	Conduct physical exam, interview patient and collect history of present illness, recognize signs and symptoms, link symptoms to disease processes, assess risk factors for disease, form initial impressions, formulate a testable hypothesis, create a differential diagnosis, select diagnostic studies and labs, interpret diagnostic data, identify likely etiology
1.b. Patient management	Select treatment/therapy, understand treatment mechanism of action, understand treatment limitations, identify treatment contraindications, plan for short and long term clinical management, patient follow-
1.c. Tolerance of ambiguity	
1.d. Patient safety	

Themes	Theme definitions	Codes
1. Knowledge to practice medicine	Use biomedical science knowledge to support clinical reasoning and justify clinical decisions	1.a. Diagnosis 1.b. Patient management 1.c. Tolerance of ambiguity 1.d. Patient safety
2. Lifelong learning	Acquire new biomedical science knowledge to understand and apply new, improved, and emerging therapies/treatments, diagnostics, interventions, and understanding of disease mechanisms that are advanced through biomedical science research (i.e., evidence-based medicine)	2.a. Continue learning throughout practice
3. Physician-patient relationship	Educate and empower patients by engaging them in shared decision making, providing compassionate care, and developing patient trust	3.a. Educate patients 3.b. Empower patients 3.c. Develop patient trust
4. Learner perception of self	Biomedical science knowledge contributes to the emergence of professional identity	4.a. Develop confidence and competence as a physician 4.b. Transition from layperson to physician

(Dickinson, B., et al. 2020)

“WHAT CAN BE DONE TO REDUCE BURNOUT AMONG PHYSICIANS?”

Burnout solutions: Engaging in exercising

Burnout solutions: Engaging in meditation

Burnout solutions: Engaging in meditation

Burnout solutions: Engaging in religious activities

Burnout solutions: Engaging in volunteering

Burnout solutions: Flexibility in working hours

Burnout solutions: Gaining work experience

Burnout solutions: Having control over working hours

Burnout solutions: Having time with family

Burnout solutions: Learning more

Burnout solutions: Spending time with family

Burnout solutions: Taking family vacation

Table 4

Burnout Solutions

Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
Engaging in meditation (2)	Flexibility in working hours (1)	Having time with family (1)	Learning more (1)	Engaging in volunteering (1)
Engaging in exercising (1)	Having control over working hours (1)	Spending time with family (1)	Gaining work experience (1)	
Engaging in religious activities (1)		Taking family vacation (1)		

Cluster 1: Engaging in physical and spiritual activities (4)	Cluster 2: Having preferred working hours (2)	Cluster 3: Having time with family (3)	Cluster 4: Having adequate work experience (2)	Cluster 5: Engaging in volunteering (1)
Engaging in meditation (2)	Flexibility in working hours (1)	Having time with family (1)	Learning more (1)	Engaging in volunteering (1)
Engaging in exercising (1)	Having control over working hours (1)	Spending time with family (1)	Gaining work experience (1)	
Engaging in religious activities (1)		Taking family vacation (1)		

“Improving Validity of Informed Consent for Biomedical Research in Zambia Using a Laboratory Exposure Intervention”

Codes	Category	Themes
-Living healthy lives -Early detection of disease	Having a health body	Motivation for participation in invasive biomedical research
-Free medical screening -Free medical support	Accessing free medical services	
-Good research relationships -Duration of involvement in studies	Trust between the study participants and researchers	
-Fears about of size of biopsy	What do they remove from my body?	Factors which might inhibit participation in invasive biomedical research
- Limited awareness on use biopsy - Involvement of non-African in the study	What do they do with my biopsy?	
-Effect of intestinal endoscopy -Misinterpretation of compensation	What happens to the body once the biopsy is removed?	
-Rumours about the specimens - Misunderstanding of free medical services -Concerns about quantity of blood	Blood used for satanic activities	
-HIV status and repeated health care consultation	Fear of being stigmatised as being HIV positive	
-Women more willing to participate -Interference from husbands -Men think research is time-wasting	Gender inequality and perceptual differences	
-Better understanding of quantity blood required -Improved understanding of blood storage -Seeing old samples increasing confidence and trust	Enhanced understanding of use of specimens	Changes in perspective after the laboratory exposure intervention
- Satisfaction with the security of storage –and processing environment - Reduction in fears and insecurities -Commitment to sensitise the community	Increased willingness and confidence to participate	

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TIPS

Track your steps (methods)

Keep a reflexivity log

Intentional move between
descriptive and interpretive
stages

Outline any paradigmatic
orientations or assumptions

Significant quotes



TRUSTWORTHINESS CRITERIA

01

Credibility:

“the ‘fit’ between respondents’ views and the researchers’ representations of them”

02

Dependability:

is the process “logical traceable, and clearly documented”?

03

Confirmability:

interpretation must be rooted in the data rather than your subjective viewpoints

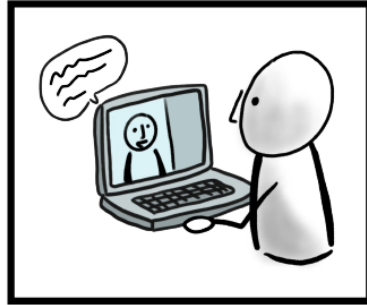
04

Transferability:

related to applicability of the findings to other contexts

6 Steps to Doing a Thematic Analysis

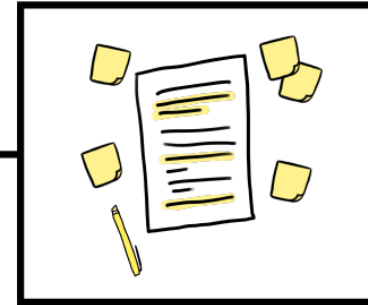
STEP 1
Gather your data.



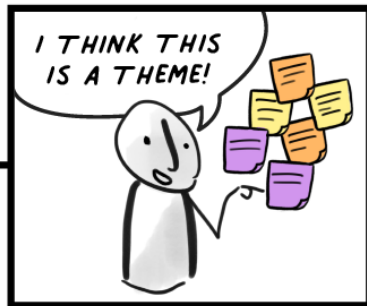
STEP 2
Read all your data from beginning to end.



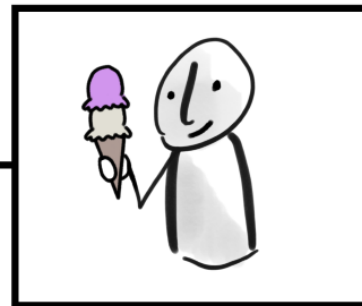
STEP 3
Code the text based on what it's about.



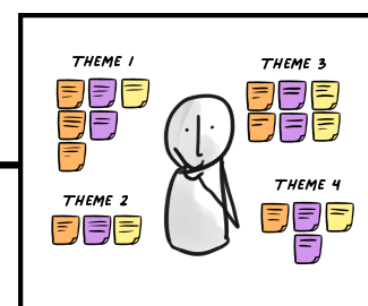
STEP 4
Create new codes to encapsulate potential themes.



STEP 5
Take a break for a day.



STEP 6
Evaluate your themes for good fit.



REPEAT AS NEEDED

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