

This could apply to unstructured or parts of semi-structured interviews, written text, think aloud studies, or open question that are part of a questionnaire.

1. Concept-Driven (top-down or deductive analysis)

2. Data-Driven (bottom up or inductive analysis)

Of course, you can mix these approaches.

- “Qualitative researchers soon realize that there are no universally agreed right answers to questions such as the style of interviewing they should use to collect their data or which approach to data analysis they should adopt or how they can identify a theme in their analysis or the exact criteria they should use to evaluate their research” (Lyons, 2007, p. 3).

So, the first thing you need to do is to listen to the interviews or read the texts and identify themes/categories/groups of similar ideas.

Compleat Lexical Tutor (<http://www.lextutor.ca>) can help you to look at word frequencies and identify keywords. If words are used frequently, it will probably be the case that they are considered important to the speaker/writer and can help you to identify themes.

A more sophisticated program (that needs installing) that can do this is NVivo (<https://www.qsrinternational.com/>). It is more sophisticated in that it understands synonyms.



And



The generic name for these kinds of programs is CAQDAS (Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software) and they can be helpful. However:

Ultimately you have to do the thinking yourself; you need to decide what the texts are about, you need to look for the main and subsidiary themes in the texts. This is what is called coding in qualitative data analysis. Coding is the organisation of raw data into conceptual categories. Each code is effectively a category or 'bin' into which a piece of data is placed.

“Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes are usually attached to ‘chunks’ of varying size – words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs” (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 56).

There are many methods for coding, although Thomas believes that “some of these [techniques] are useful; others, in my opinion, make things appear to be more difficult than they really are”.

Although, there are many different techniques of coding, the most useful is the Constant Comparative Method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, ch. 5) and Gary Thomas (Thomas, 2013, p. 235-238 – I like this book. There is now a third edition) argues that “it stands behind every technique in this paradigm.

The constant comparative method involves:

- going through your data again and again (this is the constant bit),
- comparing each element - phrase, sentence or paragraph - with all of the other elements (this is the comparative bit).

There's nothing more complicated than that.

Thomas's method is:

1. Read all of your data. interview transcripts, diaries, notes from unstructured observations etc.
2. Make an electronic copy of all of your raw data. Mark it 'RAW' You now have two copies: your raw data and your working data files. Keep them separate and keep the 'RAW' one somewhere safe.
3. Now read through your working files. As you are reading, underline, mark, label or highlight parts that you think are important. (This is the process of coding.) As you proceed, you will get an impression of important ideas or subjects that are recurring. We can call these your temporary constructs. Make a list of these.
4. Read through the data again, using the list of temporary constructs from your first reading to check against. Draw up a grid with the temporary construct on the left, and page references to where the construct is evidenced on the right. Make notes and observations on the grid as you do this. You will get quite a long list.
5. Eliminate any temporary constructs that do not seem to have been reinforced in the rest of the data. Don't delete that actual data itself, though - it may form an important counter-example against the general themes that are emerging. Highlight these counter-examples in a different colour on your working data records, and keep a separate list of them.
6. From the second reading, come up with second-order constructs that seem to be making a good “fit” with your data. These second-order constructs should make a good job of summarising the important themes in your data.
7. Look through once more refining these second-order constructs now as marker-posts for the organisation of your data. Once you are satisfied that these capture the essence of your data, label these as your themes.

8. Think about the themes. How do they seem to be connecting together? What matches with what? Are there any unanimous areas of agreement? Are there any contradictions or paradoxes?
9. Find ways of mapping your themes (see below under network analysis and construct mapping).
10. Select good quotations or sections from your work to illustrate the themes.

(Thomas, 2013, p. 236)

Point 9 suggests that you might want to draw diagrams and charts:

- Network analysis
- Construct mapping and theme mapping

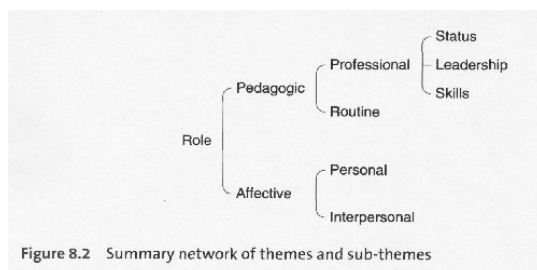
(Thomas, 2013, p. 235-238)

- Matrices

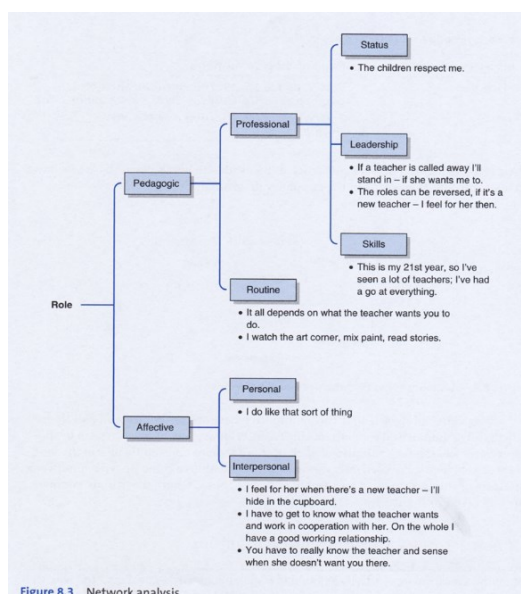
(Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 95-121).

Network analysis

In network analysis you aim to show how one idea is related to another using a network, which is a bit like a tree, with a trunk that forms the basic idea and branches coming off the trunk representing constituent ideas:

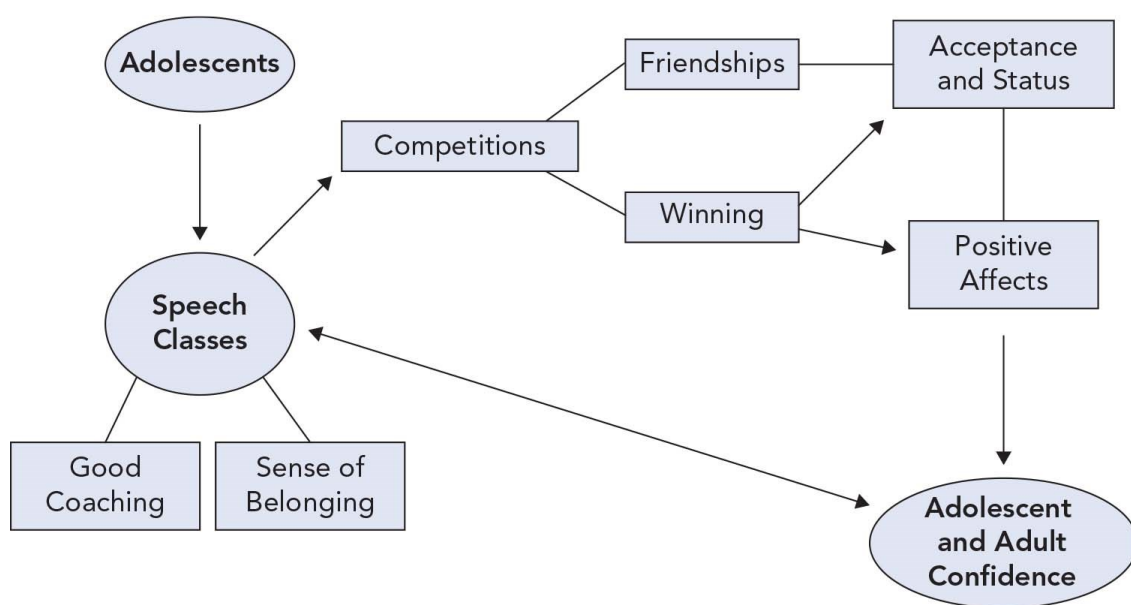


Including quotations:

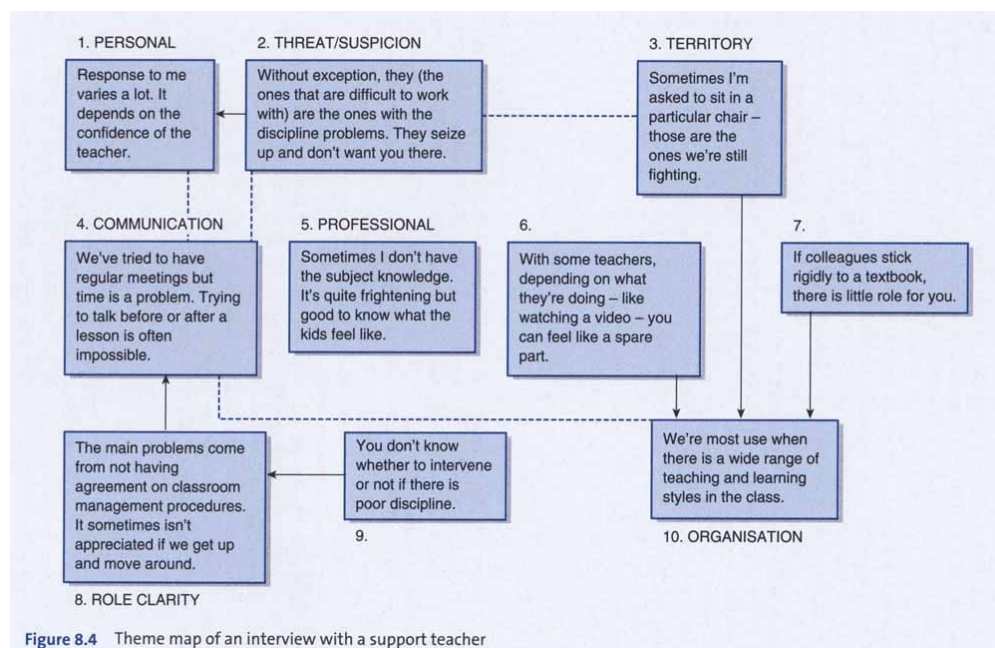


While network analysis provides a hierarchical arrangement, mapping puts those themes in sequential order from the interview and uses **lines** and arrows to make the connections between the ideas and themes

A Network Model of "Lifelong Impact" From High School Speech Participation



And with quotations:



Matrices

Display 5.1

Effects Matrix: Assistance Location and Types (Masepa Case)

Location	User's Assessment	Types Provided	Short-Run Effects (User's 'State')	Longer-Run Consequences	Researcher Explanations
Building Administration	++ ++ – +	1. authorizes changes 2. eases schedules 3. controls fidelity 4. consults, offers solutions	1. relieves pressure, encourages 2. helps early implementation 3. feeling policed 4. feeling backed-up, substantially helped	users are helped administratively and substantively, feel obliged to do ECRI with minor adaptations	administration, authority, servicing, availability and flexibility lead to sustained, faithful implementation model
Central Office Administration	+ ++	1. promotes ECRI 2. answers building administration, trainers' requests	1. pressures non-users 2. building administrators have material, administrative support	program is perceived as supported, assisted, 'protected' by central office	central office able to push program and answer requests, yet not perceived as main actor by users
Helping Teacher	++ + ++ ++ ±	1. provides materials 2. demonstrates, models 3. answers requests 4. encourages 5. circulates, controls	1. reduces effort, increases repertoire 2. trains, facilitates use 3. problems solved rapidly 4. maintains level of effort 5. ambivalent: helped yet coerced	new, experienced users receive systematic instruction, follow-up, materials; stay with program and are careful about making changes in it	personalized in-service mechanism, with both training and assistance allows for mastery and spread of ECRI in 'faithful' format
User-Helping Teacher Meetings	++ + + +	1. comparing practices with others 2. debugging, complaining 3. learning about new parts 4. encouragement	1. encourages, regulates 2. cathartic, solves short-run problems 3. expands repertoire 4. gets through rough moments	creates reference group, gives users a voice, solves ongoing problems and lowers anxiety	multi-purpose forum which consolidates use and users, defuses opposition
Teacher-Users in Other Schools: Target Schools	+ + + +	1. sharing materials 2. exchanging tips, solutions 3. comparing, encouraging	1. increases stock 2. new ideas, practices; problems solved 3. motivates, stimulates	increases commitment, regulates use (decreases deviance)	additional source of assistance, which increases as number of users grows
Trainers in Target School, Other School	++ ++ + +	1. tips for presentations 2. solution to short-term problems 3. encourages 4. serves as successful model	1. facilitates practice 2. helps expand beyond core format 3. maintains effort 4. stimulates	reliable, unthreatening backup provided in school	elaborate and effective lateral network: trainers seen as peers

Legend

++ = very effective
+ = effective
± = mixed effective
– = ineffective

Source: Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Once you have your diagram, you can include it and write about it.

For examples of writing this up, see:

<http://www.uefap.net/writing/writing-functions/writing-functions-26-int>

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