

# TRANSCRIBING AND CODING P.A.R.T. SESSION SESSION 1: TRANSCRIBING

May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 10 to 12

Library Classroom

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# Topics for the Two Sessions

- What Is transcription?
  - ▣ Best Practices: Approaches, Accuracy and Transcription Rules
- Take Home Transcription Exercise: rules, transcribing, checking
- What Is Thematic Coding
  - ▣ Best Practices: Approaches, Workflow
- In-class Coding Exercise

# Session Webpage

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<http://sites.utm.utoronto.ca/conway/content/part-transcription>

# What is Transcribing?

- A manual task: conversion of sound or video into written words (a transcript).
- Intermediate step between data collection and data analysis

# The Transcript Is:

- Data

- Objective
- An exact replica of speech (interview, focus group)

- Translation

- A representation of the original
- A theoretical construct
- A political act

# Why do researchers require transcripts?

- ▣ Focus on language (i.e. conversation analysis)
- ▣ Focus on content
  - Conventional: coding categories are derived directly from the text data.
  - Directed approach: analysis starts with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes.
  - Summative approach involves counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content.
- ▣ Supplementary data: bring in quotes, added depth

# Alternatives to Transcribing

- Code voice/ video directly
  - ▣ Up to 13 times faster; lose up to 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of data
- 'Live' pen and paper coding (no recording)
  - ▣ Lost between 1/2 to 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of data
- Voice recognition software
  - ▣ Took 2/3<sup>rd</sup> less time, but....

# Work Flow

1. Gather data, e.g. record interviews or focus groups
2. Develop rules for transcription
3. Complete transcription
4. Check transcriptions for accuracy
5. Analyze transcripts -> Coding



# Developing Transcription Rules

(Mergenthaler and Stinson's (1992))

1. Preserve the morphologic naturalness of transcription.
2. Preserve the naturalness of the transcript structure.
3. The transcript should be an exact reproduction.
4. The transcription rules should be universal; complete; simple.

# Transcribing Rules and Accuracy

- How we technically do the transcription

Issue	Notation
Indicate who is speaking	Use letter or codes; Each speaker has own column
Unclear speech	Put guesses in brackets Use xxxx to represent words
Paraphrasing others	Note with quotes

- How we ‘authentically’ represent the participants

# Challenges of Transcription

Can't capture emotional or non-verbal context

- “Interviewing is rather like a marriage: everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind each closed door there is a world of secrets” Oakley 1981
  
- Types of non-verbal context (Gordon 1980)
  - ▣ Proxemic communication: use of interpersonal space to communicate attitudes
  - ▣ Chronemics communication: use of pacing of speech and length of silence in conversation
  - ▣ Kinesic communication: includes any body movements or postures
  - ▣ Paralinguistic communication: includes all the variations in volume, pitch and quality of voice

# Naturalism VS Denaturalism

- Every utterance is transcribed in as much detail as possible
- Capturing accents and involuntary vocalization of participants
- Often used in conversation analysis; linguistics
  
- Challenges/ Shortcomings?
  - ▣ Reduces possibility of transcriber as filter
  - ▣ Assumes what English ought to be by recording accents and alternative pronunciations through notation.
  - ▣ May reduce anonymity

# Naturalism VS Denaturalism

- ❑ Idiosyncratic elements of speech (e.g., stutters, pauses, non-verbal, involuntary vocalizations) are removed
- ❑ Capturing meaning and perceptions of participants words
- Often use in social sciences, health sciences
  
- ❑ Challenges/ Shortcomings
  - ❑ Removes fine-grain socio-cultural features
  - ❑ Removes meaningless and meaningful elements of speech
  - ❑ Can involve 'translation' into 'standard' English

# Naturalism Transcript Example

Speaker A	Speaker B
Ok (.1) so you went to (.1) the (.1) Health Department and got tested then?	((nods)) hh
Are you currently in a relationship?	Um (.2) not so much (.5) an'thin' (.1) at all. I jus:t casu:al

# DeNaturalism Transcript Example

## Naturalism

Speaker A	Speaker B
Ok (.1) so you went to (.1) the (.1) Health Department and got tested then?	((nods)) hh
Are you currently in a relationship?	Um (.2) not so much (.5) an'thin' (.1) at all. I jus:t casu:al

## DeNaturalism

Speaker A	Speaker B
Ok, so you went to the Health Department and got tested then?	(nods)
Are you currently in a relationship?	Um, not so much. Anything at all. It's just casual.

# Denaturalism Transcript Example

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I: What did you eat?

R: It turned out to just be an apple (laughing).

R: And then he said-

I: Who said it, Bob?

R: Yes, Bob. (cough) Bob said “I’ll never eat that again”. And I said, you are a fool.



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# Best Practices: ROP/ RA

- Understand purpose of research
  - ▣ Familiarity with vocabulary, place names, etc.
  
- Understand your responsibility regarding confidentiality
  
- Develop data management protocol and transcription notations *prior to starting transcription.*

# Best Practices: ROP

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- Be *very* careful
- Avoid making controllable errors
- Have your supervisor review the transcripts after you have completed one or two
  - ▣ Record concerns, questions along the way

# Sources of Error: What to Avoid

- Deliberate Alterations of the Data
  - ▣ Making responses more upbeat
  - ▣ Improving grammar
  - ▣ 'clarifying' what the person wanted to say
  
- Accidental Alterations of the Data
  - ▣ problems with sentence structure,
  - ▣ the use of quotation marks,
  - ▣ omissions, and
  - ▣ mistaking words or phrases for others.
  
- Omissions due to needing to start and stop the recording while transcribing

# Accidental Alteration of Data

- A panda walks into a café. He orders a sandwich, eats it, then draws a gun and proceeds to fire it at the other patrons.
- "Why?" asks the confused, surviving waiter amidst the carnage, as the panda makes towards the exit. The panda produces a badly punctuated wildlife manual and tosses it over his shoulder.
- "Well, I'm a panda," he says. "Look it up."
- The waiter turns to the relevant entry in the manual and, sure enough, finds an explanation. "*Panda. Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China. **Eats, shoots and leaves.***"

# Example mistakes

## □ Correcting grammar

- ▣ Transcript: ‘Do not get me wrong, this is not what I want to do’
- ‘I mean, don’t get me wrong, this ain’t what I wanna do’

## □ Miss-hearing:

- ▣ Transcript: ‘We’ve worked with the Tobacco Free Region Appeal . . . It was the Appeal House . . .’
- Tobacco-Free Region of Peel . . . It was the Peel Health . . .”

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# Accuracy Assessment Approaches

1. Proofread by interviewer (or someone else); maybe just a subset
2. Two independent transcribers, then do a concordance comparison
3. Systematic member checking



# Reducing Work

- Do not transcribe all of the interviews in their entirety
  - ▣ Do only those parts that directly address themes/issues of interest
- Be more selective in the review of transcript quality.

# Exercise: Transcribing

- Download Assignment and Audio file:  
<http://sites.utm.utoronto.ca/conway/content/part-transcription>
- Transcribe: submit transcript by email to [tenley.conway@utoronto.ca](mailto:tenley.conway@utoronto.ca) and bring an electronic copy to class.

# Transcription Rules

- Header: what should appear at the top of the transcript? End of Interview
- Rules for:
  - ▣ Identifying different speakers
  - ▣ Dealing with pauses; unclear words; coughs, etc.
  - ▣ Background noises
  - ▣ End of transcript indication
  - ▣ Anything else?

# Details of Assignment

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- Complete a transcription from an audio interview
- Take a denaturalized approach
- Follow transcription rules we have developed
- Submit an electronic copy by 4pm Feb 1st and bring electronic copy to class.

# TRANSCRIBING AND CODING P.A.R.T. SESSION

Assignment and Audio file:

<http://sites.utm.utoronto.ca/conway/content/part-transcription>

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