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## How to use thematic analysis with interview data (process research)

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## Abstract

This chapter introduces you to thematic analysis (TA), one of the many methods of analysis for qualitative research. Qualitative research, like all research, begins with a research question. In contrast to quantitative research, in which the research question is determined at the start of the research process, qualitative research questions are fluid and flexible; they evolve and the focus of research can expand, contract, or even change

altogether, as the research progresses. To illustrate the procedures of TA we draw on a qualitative study, conducted by Nicola, guided by the following open and exploratory research question: 'how do women with a self- or formally- diagnosed history of anorexia nervosa (AN) make sense of their experiences of eating disorder (ED) treatment/therapy?' Information Box 13.1 provides a brief overview of Nicola's interview study with 12 women participants. Her interest in this question was informed by her professional practice as an ED therapist and her research with ED counsellors (Rance, Moller & Douglas, 2010); see Activity 13.1.

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; Interview process. Interviews were conducted over the phone and recorded using the Tap-a-call application. All interviews were subsequently transcribed, initially by hand, using a web based transcription tool called otranscribe. This comprehension of data means the researcher is already engaging in elements of grounded research and applying a level of rigor to their work. Grounded theory. Grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss (Glaser, Strauss and Strutzel, 1968). It's core idea is to generate theory from data, as opposed to other social research methods that are concerned with "how accurate facts can be obtained and theory tested" (Glaser, Strauss and Strutzel, 1968). Thematic analysis was key to deriving insights from the semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data (e.g. interviews). Follow these 6 steps to find and describe themes in your data. Some types of research questions you might use thematic analysis to answer: How do patients perceive doctors in a hospital setting? What are young women's experiences on dating sites? What are non-experts' ideas and opinions about climate change? How is gender constructed in high school history teaching? To answer any of these questions, you would collect data from a group of relevant participants and then analyze it. Thematic analysis allows you a lot of flexibility in interpreting the data, and allows you to approach large data sets more easily by sorting them into broad themes. Interviewing for research and analysing qualitative data: An overview. (revised May, 2011). "The interview method is a conversation with a purpose". Martin Woods School of Health & Social Services. Massey University. This process depends upon the nature of the research, and especially on the chosen analytical approach. Qualitative data analysis; a few possible approaches 1. Thematic analysis 2. Grounded theory 3. Discourse analysis 4. Others... Qualitative data analysis-Potential issues/pitfalls. 1. Data shock! The use of literature in qualitative analysis may vary considerably: i.e. In thematic analysis it may be extensive before data analysis commences in earnest But it may also be contraindicated, as in grounded theory As Glaser (1992, p. 31) notes