



PSYC7027: Qualitative Methods

Prof. Kevin Whitehead

This module aims to introduce students to qualitative methodology by 1) addressing some of the major epistemological and conceptual issues within qualitative (and, by implication, quantitative) research within the social sciences, and 2) providing an overview of a range of qualitative methods, including some practical application in gathering and analysing data.

We will use a theme that is agreed by the group as of general interest, which is an appropriate topic to be addressed qualitatively, and for which data will be readily obtainable from available media and an easily accessible research population e.g., everyday life on campus; family relationships; social identities.

The required and recommended readings listed below are generally available either through online databases or at the Wits library.

Learning objectives:

- Ability to interrogate the conceptual underpinnings of qualitative (and quantitative) research without resorting to “taken-for-granted” (but unexplicated) assumptions about research and knowledge production.
- Development of qualitative research “micro-skills”, particularly with respect to data collection, and transcription of audio/video-recorded data.
- Familiarity with a range of qualitative analytic approaches, and ability to bring the resources offered by different approaches to bear on a range of forms of data; ability to “see” data analytically, rather than at face value.
- Ability to select strong/key data fragments from a broader data set for use in written reports and oral presentations.
- Development of other written and oral presentation skills required for reporting and professional presentation of qualitative research findings.

Seminar outline and readings:

Section One: (Re)considering some basic issues in (qualitative) research (Seminars 1-3)

Seminar 1: Questions of “truth” and “reality” in research

Required reading:

1. Edwards, D., Ashmore, M., & Potter, J. (1995). Death and furniture: The rhetoric, politics, and theology of bottom line arguments against relativism. *History of the Human Sciences*, 8(2), 25-49.
2. Parker, I. (1999). Against relativism in psychology, on balance. *History of the Human Sciences*, 12(4), 61-78.
3. Edley, N. (2001). Unravelling social constructionism. *Theory & Psychology*, 11(3), 433-441.
4. Archer, M. et al. (2016). What is critical realism? *Perspectives*, 38(2), 4-9.

Recommended additional reading:

- Potter, J., Edwards, D., & Ashmore, M. (1999). Regulating criticism: Some comments on an argumentative complex. *History of the Human Sciences*, 12(4), 79-88.
- Parker, I. (1999). The quintessentially academic position. *History of the Human Sciences*, 12(4), 89-91.

- Gorski, P. S. (2013). What is critical realism? And why should you care? *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*, 42(5), 658-670.
- Pollner, M. (1974). Mundane reasoning. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 4, 35-54.

Seminar 2: "Subjects" and "objects" of (qualitative) research

Required reading:

1. Rose, N. (1988). Calculable minds and manageable individuals. *History of the Human Sciences*, 1(2), 179-200.
2. Davies, B., & Davies, C. (2007). Having, and being had by, "experience". Or, "experience" in the social sciences after the discursive/poststructuralist turn. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(8), 1139-1159.
3. Silverman, D. (2004). Who cares about "experience"? Missing issues in qualitative research. Chapter 18 in D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice*. London: Sage.

Recommended additional reading:

- Osborne, T., & Rose, N. (1999). Do the social sciences create phenomena?: The example of public opinion research. *British Journal of Sociology*, 50(3), 367-396.
- Taylor, S. (2015). Discursive and psychosocial? Theorising a complex contemporary subject. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 12(1), 8-21.
- Sacks, H. (1984). On doing 'being ordinary'. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social action* (pp. 413-429). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Frith, H. & Kitzinger, C. (1998). "Emotion work" as a participant resource: A feminist analysis of young women's talk-in-interaction. *Sociology*, 32(2), 299-320.

Seminar 3: Reflexivity in research

Required reading:

1. Parker, I. (1994). Reflexive research and the grounding of analysis: Social psychology and the psychocomplex. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 4(4), 239-252.
2. Macbeth, D. (2001). On "reflexivity" in qualitative research: Two readings, and a third. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(1), 35-68.
3. Speer, S. (2002). What can conversation analysis contribute to feminist methodology? Putting reflexivity into practice. *Discourse & Society*, 13(6), 783-803.

Recommended additional reading:

- Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(2), 175-196.
- Lynch, M. (2000). Against reflexivity as an academic virtue and source of privileged knowledge. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 17(3), 26-54.
- Speer, S. A., & Hutchby, I. (2003). From ethics to analytics: Aspects of participants' orientations to the presence and relevance of recording devices. *Sociology*, 37(2), 315-337.

Section Two: Collecting and preparing qualitative data (Seminars 4-7)

(During this time, students will collect data using the various approaches discussed here.)

Seminar 4: Issues and practices in transcription and translation of qualitative data

Required reading:

1. Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Studies from the first generation*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
2. Bucholtz, M. (2000). The politics of transcription. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 32, 1439-1465.
3. Temple, B. & Young, A. (2004). Qualitative research and translation dilemmas. *Qualitative Research*, 4(2), 161-178.

Recommended additional reading:

- Hammersley, M. (2010). Reproducing or constructing? Some questions about transcription in social research. *Qualitative Research*, 10(5) 553-569.
- Bucholtz, M. (2007). Variation in transcription. *Discourse Studies*, 9, 784-808.
- Ayaß, R. (2015). Doing data: The status of transcripts in Conversation Analysis. *Discourse Studies*, 146
- Esposito, N. (2001). From meaning to meaning: The influence of translation techniques on non-English focus group research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 11(4), 568-579.
- Larkin, P. J., Dierckx de Casterlé, B., & Schotsmans, P. (2007). Multilingual translation issues in qualitative research: Reflections on a metaphorical process. *Qualitative Health Research*, 17(4), 468-476.

Seminar 5: "Naturally occurring" talk and texts

Required reading:

1. Sacks, H. (1984). Notes on methodology. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social action* (pp. 21-27). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Speer, S. A. (2002). "Natural" and "contrived" data: A sustainable distinction? *Discourse Studies*, 4(4), 511-525.
3. Potter, J. (2002). Two kinds of natural. *Discourse Studies*, 4(4), 539-542.
4. Jowett, A. (2015). A case for using online discussion forums in critical psychological research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 12(3), 287-297.

Recommended additional reading:

- Potter, J. & Wetherell, M. (1995). Natural order: Why social psychologists should study (a constructed version of) natural language, and why they have not done so. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 14(1-2), 216-222.
- Markham, A. (2004). Internet communication as a tool for qualitative research. Chapter 6 in Silverman, D. (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice*. London: Sage.
- Herring, S. C. (2001). Computer-mediated discourse. In D. Tannen, D. Schiffrin, and H. Hamilton (Eds.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Seminar 6: Interviews and focus groups

Required reading:

1. Potter, J. & Hepburn, A. (2005). Qualitative interviews in psychology: Problems and possibilities. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2, 281-307.
2. Holstein, J. A. & Gubrium, J. F. (2004). The active interview. Chapter 8 in D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice*. London: Sage.
3. Kitzinger, J. (1995). Introducing focus groups. *British Medical Journal*, 311, 299-302.
4. Smithson, J. (2000). Using and analysing focus groups: Limitations and possibilities. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 3(2), 103-119.

Recommended additional reading:

- Smith, J. A., Hollway, W., & Mishler, E. G. (2005). Commentaries on Potter and Hepburn, "Qualitative interviews in psychology: Problems and possibilities", *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2(4), 309-325.
- Griffin, C. (2007). Being dead and being there: research interviews, sharing hand cream and the preference for analysing "naturally occurring data". *Discourse Studies*, 9(2), 246-269.
- Potter, J. & Hepburn, A. (2007). Life is out there: a comment on Griffin. *Discourse Studies*, 9(2), 276-282.
- Lamont, M., & Swidler, A. (2014). Methodological Pluralism and the Possibilities and Limits of Interviewing. *Qualitative Sociology*, 37(2), 153-171.
- Wilkinson, S. (2006). Analysing interaction in focus groups. Chapter 4 in P. Drew, G. Raymond, & D. Weinberg (Eds.), *Talk and Interaction in Social Research Methods*. London: Sage.
- Puchta, C. & Potter, J. (2004). *Focus group practice*. London: Sage.

Seminar 7: Participant observation and ethnography

Required reading:

1. Silverman (2001). Ethnography and observation. Chapter 3 in *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analysing talk, text and interaction*. London: Sage.
2. Wolfinger, N. H. (2002). On writing fieldnotes: Collection strategies and background expectancies. *Qualitative Research*, 2(1), 85-95.
3. Pinsky, D. (2015). The sustained snapshot: Incidental ethnographic encounters in qualitative interview studies. *Qualitative Research*, 15(3), 281-295.

Recommended additional reading:

- Kouritzin, S. (2002). The half-baked idea of “raw” data in ethnographic observation. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 27(1), 119-138.
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography: Principles in practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). *Writing ethnographic field notes (2nd Ed.)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Section Three: Qualitative data analysis (Seminars 8-13)

Seminar 8: Putting analysis into context, putting context into analysis

Required reading:

1. Schegloff, E. A. (1997). Whose text? Whose context? *Discourse & Society*, 8(2), 165-187.
2. Wetherell, M. (1998). Positioning and interpretative repertoires: Conversation analysis and post-structuralism in dialogue. *Discourse & Society*, 9(3), 387-412.
3. Schegloff, E. A. (1998). Reply to Wetherell. *Discourse & Society*, 9(3), 413-416.

Recommended additional reading:

- Schegloff, E. A. (1992). On talk and its institutional occasions. Chapter 3 in P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Waring, Z. H., Creider, S., Tarpey, T., & Black, B. (2012). A search for specificity in understanding CA and context. *Discourse Studies*, 14(4), 477-492.
- Antaki, C. (2012). What actions mean, to whom, and when. *Discourse Studies*, 14(4), 493-498.
- Pomerantz, A. (2012). Do participants' reports enhance conversation analytic claims? Explanations of one sort of another. *Discourse Studies*, 14(4), 499-505.

Seminar 9: Thematic analysis

Required reading:

1. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
2. Wilkinson, S. (2000). Women with breast cancer talking causes: Comparing content, biographical and discursive analyses. *Feminism & Psychology*, 10(4), 431-460.

Recommended additional reading:

- Shaw, R., & Kitzinger, C. (2005). Calls to a home birth helpline: empowerment in childbirth. *Social Science & Medicine*, 61(11), 2374-2383.
- Sedite, D., Bowman, B., & Clowes, L. (2010). Perceptions of staffriding in Post-Apartheid South Africa: the lethal thrill of speed or the masculine performance of a painful past? *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 20(4), 581-589.
- Stevens, G. (2003). Academic representations of “race” and racism in psychology: Knowledge production, historical context and dialectics in transitional South Africa. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27(2), 189-207.

- Shefer, T., Strelbel, A., & Jacobs, J. (2012). AIDS fatigue and university students' talk about HIV risk. *African Journal of AIDS Research*, 11(2), 113-121.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Sage.

Seminar 10: Conversation analysis

Required reading:

1. Heritage, J. (1984). Conversation analysis. Chapter 8 in *Garfinkel and ethnomethodology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
2. Schegloff, E.A. (1996). Issues of relevance for discourse analysis: Contingency in action, interaction and co-participant context. Pp. 3-38 in E. H. Hovy and D. Scott (Eds.), *Computational and conversational discourse: Burning issues – An interdisciplinary account*. Heidelberg: Springer Verlag.

Recommended additional reading:

- Schegloff, E. A. (1988). From interview to confrontation: Observations on the Bush/Rather encounter. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 22, 215-40.
- Kitzinger, C., & Mandelbaum, J. (2013). Word selection and social identities in talk-in-interaction. *Communication Monographs*, 80(2), 176-198.
- Whitehead, K. A. (2015). Everyday antiracism in action: Preference organization in responses to racism. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 34(4), 374-389.
- Cresswell, C., Whitehead, K. A., & Durrheim, K. (2014). The anatomy of “race trouble” in online interactions. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37(14), 2512-2528.
- Schegloff, E.A. (2007). *Sequence organization in interaction: A primer in conversation analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Seminar 11: Membership categorization

Required reading:

1. Schegloff, E. A. (2007). A tutorial on membership categorization. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, 462-482.
2. Stokoe, E. (2012). Moving forward with membership categorization analysis: Methods for systematic analysis. *Discourse Studies*, 14(3), 277-303.

Recommended additional reading:

- Schegloff, E. A. (2005). On complainability. *Social Problems*, 52, 449–476.
- Stokoe, E. (2010). “I’m not gonna hit a lady”: Conversation analysis, membership categorization and men’s denials of violence towards women. *Discourse & Society*, 21(1), 59-82.
- Widdicombe, S. (2015). “Just like the fact that I'm Syrian like you are Scottish”: Ascribing interviewer identities as a resource in cross-cultural interaction. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, DOI:10.1111/bjso.12087.
- Whitehead, K. A. (2012). Racial categories as resources and constraints in everyday interactions: Implications for racialism and non-racialism in post-apartheid South Africa. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 35(7), 1248-1265.
- Jayyusi, L. (1984) *Categorization and the moral order*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Hester, S. and Eglin, P. (Eds.) (1997). *Culture in action: Membership categorization analysis*. Boston: International Institute for Ethnomethodology and University Press of America.

Seminar 12: Discourse analysis

Required reading:

1. Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. (2000). Varieties of discourse: On the study of organizations through discourse analysis. *Human relations*, 53(9), 1125-1149.
2. Van Dijk, T. A. (1993). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & society*, 4(2), 249-283.
3. Antaki, C., Billig, M., Edwards, D. and Potter, J. (2003). Discourse analysis means doing analysis: A critique of six analytic shortcomings. *Discourse Analysis Online*, 1.

Recommended additional reading:

- Wetherell, M., & Edley, N. (1999). Negotiating hegemonic masculinity: Imaginary positions and psycho-discursive practices. *Feminism & psychology*, 9(3), 335-356.
- Barnes, B. R., & Milovanovic, M. (2015). Class, resistance, and the psychologization of development in South Africa. *Theory & Psychology*, 25(2), 222-238.
- Durrheim, K., & Dixon, J. (2001). The role of place and metaphor in racial exclusion: South Africa's beaches as sites of shifting racialization. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24(3), 433-450.
- Bowman, B. (2010). Children, pathology and politics: A genealogy of the paedophile in South Africa between 1944 and 2004. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 40(4), 443-464.
- Parker, I. (1992). *Discourse dynamics: Critical analysis for social and individual psychology*. London: Routledge.
- Potter, J. & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology: Beyond attitudes and behaviour*. London: Sage.

Seminar 13: Narrative analysis

Required reading:

1. Squire C. (2005). Reading narratives. *Group Analysis*, 38(1), 91-107.
2. Bamberg, M. (1997). Positioning between structure and performance. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1-4), 335-342.
3. Stokoe, E. H., & Edwards, D. (2006). Story formulations in talk-in-interaction. *Narrative Inquiry*, 16(1), 56-65.

Recommended additional reading:

- Frankish, T., & Bradbury, J. (2012). Telling stories for the next generation: Trauma and nostalgia. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 18(3), 294-306.
- Sullivan, L. G., & Stevens, G. (2010). Through her eyes: Relational references in black women's narratives of apartheid racism. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 40(4), 414-431.
- Van De Mierop, D., & Clifton, J. (2013). Enacting power asymmetries in reported exchanges in the narratives of former slaves. *Discourse Processes*, 50(1), 52-83.
- Jimerson, J. B., & Oware, M. K. (2006). Telling the code of the street: An ethnomethodological ethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(1), 24-50.
- Mandelbaum, J. (1987). Couples sharing stories. *Communication Quarterly*, 35(2), 144-170.
- Riessman, C.K. (2008). *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. London: Sage.

Assessment

Assessment will consist of marks for participation in seminar discussions, a transcription exercise, the data collection task, the formal in-class presentation, and a final written paper which will be exam-equivalent. A handout providing detailed instructions on how to approach these tasks will be provided well in advance of the due date for the first task. The weightings for the assessment components will be as follows:

Seminar participation	10%
Transcription exercise	10%
Data collection task	20%
Presentation	25%
Exam-equivalent final paper	35%

Transcription exercise (10%):

While transcription is not required for every conceivable source of data, it is undoubtedly a useful skill that can be applied across a wide range of data types and analytic approaches. The purpose of this task is thus to encourage you to develop some hands-on transcription skills and experience, using a detailed and widely-used set of transcription conventions, viz. those developed by the conversation analyst Gail Jefferson. While it will not always be necessary when engaging in qualitative research (depending on your analytic aims and type of findings) to transcribe your data to the level of detail represented by these transcription conventions, the ability to use these conventions competently will result in you being well-equipped to produce less complex transcripts, and to recognise what degree of complexity may be appropriate for a given analysis.

For the purposes of this task, you will be required to transcribe a short sound clip, which I will provide to you well in advance of the due date for this exercise. While no transcript should ever be considered “complete” (much less “perfect”), the sound clip will contain a number of features that will be apparent upon careful and repeated listening, and that should be included in an adequate Jeffersonian transcript. You will thus not be expected to deliver a “flawless” transcript, but will be expected to make competent use of the main Jefferson transcription conventions, and to include on your transcript features of the data that may not be easily detectable based on a single hearing.

A list of the transcription symbols is available in the Jefferson (2004) reading (required for Seminar 4), and online resources for the use of the symbols (which you are strongly encouraged to consult in the process of completing this exercise) are available at the following sites:

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/schegloff/TranscriptionProject/>

<http://homepages.lboro.ac.uk/~ssca1/sitemenu.htm>

Some further advice and/or requirements with respect to the preparation of your transcript (and transcripts in general) is as follows:

1. Use a font with uniform character spacing (i.e., one in which each character takes up the same amount of horizontal space, so an “o” takes up as much space as an “i”, or a full stop, or any other character) – this will ensure that all the lines of your transcript are properly vertically aligned. I recommend Courier or Courier New (10-point) in particular, but there are other fonts that are also suitable in this regard.
2. Start your transcript with a descriptive heading that identifies the source of the data and other relevant information, e.g., the date on which it was recorded and (if applicable) the time section within the longer recording represented on the transcript. You may also include, under the heading of the transcript, a comment briefly describing the context of the discussion from which the data is drawn.
3. Using the automatic numbering features (which most word processors have) to create line numbers is not required, but can be helpful if you need to add additional lines at a later stage. If you do use automatic numbering, however, make sure that the numbers are still aligned to the left margin (i.e., don’t allow the word processor to automatically indent them), and that there are no full stops, brackets, etc. after the line number.
4. Do not use automatic spacing (e.g., tabs), but instead use the space bar to insert spaces between line numbers, speaker designations, and text. This may create a bit more work initially, but makes the transcripts more “portable” and easier to deal with when cutting and pasting them from one document to another.
5. Start each line with a number, followed by at least four spaces; followed by a speaker designation (creating three-letter designations for each speaker helps to keep your spacing uniform); followed by at least another three spaces; followed by the text representing the speaker’s talk.
6. If a speaker’s turn-at-talk continues onto a further line of transcript, align the text representing the continuing talk with the text representing the talk on the preceding line, rather than starting the text at the beginning of the following line (under the speaker designation on the preceding line). Also, use a hard return at least a few spaces before the end of each line rather than allowing the word

processor's word wrapping function to kick in – this will allow you, if necessary, to transfer the transcript to a document with wider margins without resulting in additional lines and thus changes to the line numbering.

7. For playing sound or video clips during transcription, I recommend Quicktime player (which is available to download free at www.quicktime.com). Other players may also be suitable, but be sure to choose one that, like Quicktime, allows you to rewind or fast forward a few seconds at a time without moving you all the way to the beginning or end of the recording.
8. Start with the first speaker's first turn, transcribing only the words, and playing the recording several times to ensure that you capture the words exactly as they were spoken. Then rewind and play the same speaker's turn a few more times, adding other features of the talk (e.g., pauses, emphasis on words, intonation, etc.) using the appropriate symbols as you go. Then move on to the next speaker's turn, following the same procedure.
9. For timing pauses, do not use a stopwatch or other accurate timing device – rather devise a way of timing them to more or less the nearest one tenth of a second, and record them in the transcript as such. A useful way to do this is to use a word/words with four syllables of similar length that take about one second to say (I use "Mississippi," others use "one one thousand," etc.). When the pause starts, start saying the word(s), and when the pause ends, see how many times you have said it, and/or how far you got in the time you were busy saying, and estimate the length of the pause accordingly. For example, if you have said "one one thousand two one-" at the time the pause ends, then the pause is about 1.5 seconds long; if you have said "one one thou" when the pause ends, then the pause is about 0.75 seconds long, so you can record 0.7 or 0.8 in your transcript.
10. Once you (think you) have completed the entire transcript, play it at least one further time while reading along on your transcript, to ensure that the transcript is as accurate as possible and that you haven't missed any hearable details.
11. Remember that producing a high quality transcript using this time can take as much as one hour for each minute of recording transcribed, and should take no less than 15-20 minutes per minute of recording even in cases where there is minimal speaker overlap and other complexities. If you are taking less time than this, you are probably missing out on potentially important details!

An example of a brief transcript, produced by following the above steps, is as follows:

[SAfm Eric After Dark 5-5-08; 1:48:30-1:48:55]
 ((Caller is addressing in-studio guest, former boxer "Baby Jake" Matlala))
 1 H: .hh S'bu hi.
 2 (.)
 3 C: tch Eric?
 4 H: Yes.
 5 (.)
 6 C: I just want to ask w- eh: one question from- from eh uBaby
 7 Jake. [(I'm the/a) rugby player, .hh for me to tackle the
 8 H: [(Yeh?)
 9 C: white (guy) is always nice. How (was/is) it like f::or him
 10 for him then (.) to- to fight against the- the- the white guy?
 11 (.)
 12 H: Uhuh h[uh huh huh HUH huh was- was your fighting ever
 13 G: [hhhhh HA HA NAI .hhh hhh he he he he
 14 H: racial[ly tinged?
 15 G: [.hhh ↑NO! DOH DOH (DOBES-) .HH I (knew it was the)
 16 same weight same division. ((smile voice)) ↓I'm gonna h- p-
 17 win.

If you are still uncertain about how to approach this task, please don't hesitate to consult with me!

Data Collection Task (20%):

For the purposes of the data collection task, you are required to submit a set of data you have collected, including (if relevant) the interview schedules, search procedures, etc. you used in collecting it. You should introduce your portfolio with a brief (max. 1500 words) overview and set of reflections describing the methods used to collect these data, the decision-making processes you engaged in throughout the task, discussion of how the data collection process unfolded, and any methodological strengths or limitations that you now note in reflecting on the process. You may find it useful to make use of some of the relevant course readings in writing these reflections, but should focus on your own data collection process and activities rather than producing extensive quotes from or summaries of the readings in doing so.

You will also be required to select and (if applicable) transcribe a modest portion of your data to bring to class during at least one of the data analysis seminars (Seminars 10-14). You are free to decide which portion(s) of the data to select for this purpose, so you can select data that you are considering writing about in your final paper – thus giving you the benefit of gaining some collective insight from the class with respect to your data. However, you might find it useful to consult with me before finalising your decision about this, to ensure that what you have selected is suitable.

You are *not* required to produce a data set of the size or scope that would be included in a full-scale research project. Instead, you should include enough data to demonstrate that you *could* produce a more complete data set if required, and that (if applicable) you have been able to address issues or weaknesses with your initial data collection efforts as you collected additional data. Thus, your data portfolio should include at least two instances of the type of data you have collected (e.g., two interviews/focus groups, two recordings of naturally-occurring interactions, two complete texts/documents, etc.), but may include more if your initial attempt (e.g., your first interview) was not entirely successful.

In the case of audio data (interviews, focus groups, conversations, etc.), you are not required to make transcripts of all the data (beyond any portions you bring to class or use for your final paper), but may submit any transcripts that you have made, along electronic copies of your recordings. In the case of textual data, full copies of the original texts should be submitted.

You should also be prepared to share your data with one another. That is, it is expected that the data that each of you collects will be pooled together into a shared database that all of you will be free to draw upon in writing your final papers. You should thus give careful consideration as to whether the data you are planning to collect will be of a sensitive or confidential nature, such that you will not feel comfortable sharing it with me or with other members of the class – bearing in mind that all who have access to the data will, of course, be bound by normal ethical standards of anonymity/confidentiality in their own use of it.

You are encouraged to work in “teams” for this task, with students allocated to each form of data collaborating to produce a data set, bound by a common theme and/or methodological approach, of a scope larger than would be possible for a single student working alone. This will facilitate the availability of a number of substantial and coherent data sets from which students in the class can select the data they use for the in-class presentation and final paper described below.

You are strongly encouraged to discuss your plans for data collection with me at least once prior to commencing with this task.

In-class presentation (25%):

Your presentation should make use of data from the data set(s) collected by the class during the course of the semester, and should be based on a focus, topic, analysis, etc. that could subsequently be developed into a final exam-equivalent paper. Since you will be required to work in pairs in producing the final paper, you are encouraged to collaborate with a partner in selecting the data you work with, but each student will be required to independently develop and present their work for the purposes of this task, before either combining their work or selecting one party's presentation for joint development into the final paper (as described below).

You should approach this presentation as you would a presentation at a professional research conference, and should thus be prepared with the use of appropriate visual and audio aids (e.g., powerpoint, recordings of data excerpts, etc.). You will be allowed a maximum of 12 minutes for your presentation, with an additional 3-5 minutes for audience questions and discussion following the presentation. You will thus not have sufficient time to present something as substantial as an entire final paper, and should instead present a "distilled" version of the paper, covering only the most important content. **(NB: Please see the instructions for the final paper below for further details of what elements to include in your presentation!)**

The following criteria will be used in assessing your presentation:

1. Quality of content
 - a. Choice of data excerpts
 - b. Quality of means of representation of data (e.g., transcripts, screen shots, etc.)
 - c. Appropriateness of approach(es) to analysis for chosen data excerpts
 - d. Quality of application of chosen analytic approach(es) to data excerpts
 - e. Evidence that you are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of this approach, i.e., can situate this specific task in the field of qualitative methodology
2. Style
 - a. Effective use of visual/audio aids, transcripts, etc.
 - b. Clarity of expression of content
3. Engagement with questions/discussion during Q&A

Note that, in keeping with common practice with respect to professional research conferences, you need not have a "final" version of your final paper ready before preparing your presentation. Instead, you can use the presentation to test some initial ideas and analyses on a live audience, and then revise and incorporate those ideas into your final paper as you subsequently work on it, using the feedback you receive from the audience to assist you in doing so.

Exam-equivalent final paper (35%):

In keeping with the contemporary prevalence of collaborative or team-based research, students will be required to work in pairs in developing the final paper. Each paper will be awarded a single mark, with both students therefore receiving the same mark for the paper.

The paper should draw on the prescribed reading materials for the course, and the data collected by the class during the semester, and should include (at least) the following sections:

1. *Introduction*: In this section you should describe the data you will be analysing, and the approach(es) to analysis you will be employing in your paper. This section should demonstrate your understanding of some of the critical issues and debates surrounding your data and analytic approach and (if relevant) their relationship to qualitative research more generally. Note that you need not “settle” these issues/debates once and for all, but should show your recognition of their importance and your ability to make informed and pragmatic choices for the purposes of your own analysis of some data. Note further that you are *not* required to produce a substantive literature review relevant to your subsequent analysis – i.e., you should focus here on discussions of data and method rather than on substantive/thematic topics.
2. *Analysis*: The primary purpose of your analysis should be to demonstrate that you are able to adopt an appropriate analytic orientation towards one or more pieces of data. You are *not* expected to show complete mastery of (a) particular analytic approach(es), and you are also *not* expected to produce a comprehensive or exhaustive analysis of the data/phenomenon you are looking at. Instead you are expected to show that you can draw on the resources offered by one or more of the approaches covered in the course in order to produce a convincing analysis of some piece(s) of data, or of some aspect(s) of a potential phenomenon. There are thus a number of different ways to approach this section, none of which is the only “right” way to do it. Some possibilities are as follows:
 - a) Examine a number of different data excerpts (including, potentially, excerpts from multiple different sources) that all exemplify a candidate phenomenon, and produce some analysis of the way(s) in which this candidate phenomenon is realised across these different cases.
 - b) Examine a single piece of data, demonstrating how the application of one or more analytic perspectives offers potentially fruitful understandings of what is happening in the data.
 - c) Choose some data that relate in some way to the issues/debates you have discussed in your Introduction (and in the course materials more generally), and produce an analysis that offers insights or interventions into these issues/debates.
 - d) Some combination of any/all of the above, or some other approach that makes sense based on the data you have chosen to examine.
3. *Conclusions*: In this section you should tie together some of the discussion from your Introduction section with the analysis you have done, and offer some reflections based on the preceding sections. While you may (but need not) include some substantive conclusions about the data or phenomenon you have examined, you should ensure that you engage in some methodological discussion and reflections relating to the preceding sections of your paper.

The following criteria will be used in assessing your paper (see the appended feedback sheet below for weightings of each):

1. Effective use of the conceptual resources provided in the course readings to frame the paper, situate it within relevant methodological positions, critical debates, etc., and reflect on its contribution to consideration of these matters.
2. Choice of data excerpts and quality of means of representation of the data (e.g., transcripts, screen shots, etc.)
3. Quality of application of chosen analytic approach(es) to data excerpts, particularly with respect to making appropriate use of data as evidence for analytic claims
4. Overall clarity and coherence of writing, including “flow” between and within the sections, and appropriate use of academic style and referencing

Note:

- If your collaboration “fails” (i.e., if you and your partner are unable to successfully work together, for whatever reasons), you may request to independently submit individual papers. Prior to being permitted to do this, you will be required to meet with me to discuss this decision, and you will also be required to submit, as an appendix to your paper, a reflection (maximum one page) on how/why your collaborative relationship was unsuccessful.
- There is some overlap between the criteria for the final paper and those for the in-class presentation, and the materials you include in both may overlap, but each will be assessed independently.
- You are not expected to read beyond the reading prescribed or recommended for the course, and will not earn special credit should you decide to do so, although you may decide that doing so may improve the quality of your paper sufficiently to make it a worthwhile pursuit.
- You are strongly encouraged to discuss specific conceptual and analytic issues with one another and with me, and you should meet with me at least once to discuss your plans for your paper.
- While there is no minimum required length, your essay should be *no longer than* 7000 words (including data excerpts, but excluding references and appendices), and should be typed, double-spaced.

PSYC7027 Exam-Equivalent Final Paper Feedback Sheet

Student Names:

Assessment Criterion	Max. Mark	Mark Awarded
Effective use of the conceptual resources provided in the course readings to frame the paper, situate it within relevant methodological positions, critical debates, etc., and reflect on its contribution to consideration of these matters.	30	
Choice of data excerpts and quality of means of representation of the data (e.g., transcripts, screen shots, etc.)	20	
Quality of analytic insights, particularly with respect to making appropriate use of data as evidence for analytic claims	40	
Overall clarity and coherence of writing, including “flow” between and within the sections, and appropriate use of academic style and referencing	10	
Total	100	

Additional Comments