

RESEARCHER LOG

This is a very, *very* partial version of my researcher log. The public version of the log is online at <http://blog.melchua.com/category/ene> and does not make distinctions between one research project and another (I've found they often cross-pollinate). Between January and April 2013, I wrote 50 individual posts there, most over 500 words long.

Reading reflections are kept separately and privately, on Zotero. Again, the amount of material there is probably overwhelming; there are over 200 citations there right now.

Therefore, I have created an abridged version of the log – a slice of the massive activity that seems like it would actually be useful to look at.

Contents

- 1) The top 5 posts (in my opinion, in terms of relevance to this project) from the public blog
- 2) The top 12 reading notes (in my opinion, in terms of relevance to this project) from my Zotero collection

Key to Zotero notes:

- P indicates a paraphrase (followed by page number(s))
- Q indicates a direct quote (followed by page number(s))
- N indicates a note – my own thinking on a topic (followed by page number(s))
- ^ means “ibid”

OBSERVATION 1 – WRITEUP AND REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS

PART 1: WRITEUP

The object of my mini-study was looking at the effect of live transcription on collecting qualitative research data. When participants can see their words being written out on a computer screen (by a trained typist), how do they react and what are their perceptions? (As it turns out, they don't react very much at all – human beings speaking words to you are far more interesting than those same words being typed.)

My first observation takes place on a late Tuesday afternoon, halfway through the 3rd meeting of an advanced graduate class on qualitative research methods in the Education department of a research university. I am a student in the class, and we are practicing interviews – how to conduct them, how to build rapport with our participants, how to move things along, how to structure and adapt questions on the fly... all of the unteachable aspects of the art we are supposed to learn. It is late January and there has been a cold snap, so thick coats are draped over the backs of many chairs and piled in empty seats.

We've just finished the first practice interview, the professor and a grad student chatting in the middle of the room about graduate school work-life balance while the remaining 26 students listened quietly in a circle that enclosed them, each of us sitting in individual chairs with miniscule tabletops attached to a little arm cantilevered out from the chair's side; they are the sort of chairs you line up in rows and rows for exam-taking during finals for massive lab classes, and they make loud grating, screeching noises whenever they are dragged across the floor.

Right now is one such time – a number of things are happening simultaneously. The next subject (S) and interviewer (I) have volunteered themselves and been selected, and are walking to their seats; the professor and the student from the first interview are moving to take their places around the circle, I am walking up to place the transcription laptop between the new subject and interviewee (the screen between them, facing sideways so they both can read it), and the *entire darn circle* is scooting around with a mighty screeching noise, coming around to “my side” so they can

see the screen, turning the circle into a lumpy crescent cluster. Only one person remains on what has now become the “back” of the room, the side that can't see the screen; I've turned a theatre-in-the-round into a theatre-with-a-front. Chairs are still being scudded across the floor as the interview begins, the transcriber seated in a back corner and typing on her own laptop as the subject and interviewer begin to speak.

“So you are talking to me about the balance between life and doctoral work,” the interviewer says over the screech of chairs. “What have you given up?”

“I have given things up,” replies the subject, eyes fixed on the interviewer. “I don't go swimming as much, things like that – my typical self-care. I have also given up connections with some of my family due to the alienating nature of it. I'm a first generation student. They don't understand. As far as they can tell, all I do is read a lot and write.”

They are focused on each other, ignoring the scraping of the chairs, the probing of our eyes, the listening of our ears. They hold each other's eyes; we have been told how important it is to have rapport, how much eye contact matters for that. The interviewer holds a pen loosely in her right hand, resting it on a piece of paper.

“Have you had explicit discussions about that?” the interviewer asks.

“Yes,” says the subject. “In some portions it has gone better. In their view, people do work that you can see produced in the world. My family doesn't see producing ideas in the same way. There's just alienation that goes along with that.”

They proceed through their conversation, holding each other's gaze – and then they start to flicker off to other things, keeping the rapport taut between them. The interviewer glances down to take a quick note on her paper; the eye contact is momentarily broken, but the connection remains and the conversation is not interrupted. The subject has no pen, no piece of paper – and then it happens. I see the subject's eyes flick over to the screen mid-sentence, then just as quickly flick back. The rapport holds, the conversation flows on – but let us let their conversation continue and flick back ourselves to the moment of that glance for just a moment.

The glance was a quick motion of the eyes only, not a turning of the head, not a moving of the body. It was the sort of look that one might give a clock on the wall, a “please don't notice me” glance meant to check in on the time – except in this case, the information displayed would not have been the time, but the data of the conversation itself. Instead of “what time is it?” the glance could be a “where in the conversation are we?” glance.

Afterwards, the interviewer (I) and subject (S) of the mock interview were asked to reflectively debrief. An excerpt from my fieldnotes (which are paraphrases, not verbatim):

When asked how they reacted to the screen:

I: ignore!

S: watching screen while asking questions

I believe S meant that “when I was being spoken to by I, I was not looking at the screen; I was looking at I. When I was asking questions and therefore not being spoken to by I, *then* I was looking at the screen.” It was possible that S remembered the rapport-building briefing from earlier in the class during the actual interview, and was explaining it in the debrief as well: “I didn't want to break rapport by breaking eye contact, so I *only* watched the screen when eye contact was not being made with me because I was asking questions.”

My assertion is that visible realtime transcription is not a rapport-breaking distraction from qualitative fieldwork. Both subject and interviewer ignored the screen in favor of each other – human beings speaking words to you are far more interesting than those same words being typed. Even when the text was being looked at, as in this brief glance by the subject, the glance served to *enhance* the in-person connection. Instead of interrupting the conversation and pulling the glancer out of it, perhaps it actually helped her stay more in it by providing a navigational marker, a double-check of bearings, a way to confirm that what she was hearing was what was really being said.

Even initially disconfirming instances seem to reinforce this pattern in a different way. Here is a fieldnote excerpt from when people *did* look at the screen when there was an in-person interaction in front of them to be engaged in.

[S and I are] mostly looking at each other, but I see S quickly glance at screen mid-sentence. I is not looking at screen at all. (hard to tell if S is gancing [sic] at screen or not! I seems to be really trying hard to avoid looking at the screen.)

Aside from pointing out the impossibility of tracking the eye motions of all participants at all times (“hard to tell...”) this fieldnotes excerpt points out an instance of a person – S – attending to text on the screen when there is a person – I – directly speaking to her. The glance was a quick motion of the eyes only, and lasted less than a second – it wasn't a large turn meant to interrupt the conversation, but rather the sort of look that one might give a child on the sidelines or a clock on the wall to make sure the child was sleeping or the time for the meeting was not running out. This was also done in the middle of a fairly long question being posed by I, meaning that I had been speaking uninterrupted for a little while.

I therefore interpret S's actions as being a quick navigational check-in – “am I following the conversation correctly? Where are we at?” that *helped* her attend more to the conversation at hand with I, rather than a break from it – which indicates that the “People trump text, but text trumps silence” pattern may need stretching and further development in order to fit instances like this one.

One important piece of context is that being visibly transcribed was a new experience to both S and I – as far as I know, they had never watched their spoken words immediately come out as text before, and so the novelty of the experience may have been a factor. S's glance could have been an “am I following this conversation?” glance, but it could also be a “I want to use the *new and interesting thing* to see whether I'm following this conversation” glance – the functionality of checking-in providing an excuse to briefly play with something new in the environment, the choice to blend both streams so that they aren't overwhelming, to resolve the dilemma of how to split one's attention between text and person by using one's attention to the text in order to pay more attention to the person.

PART 2: REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS

I'm definitely feeling the wisdom of “do more with less data” right now. Even if I've only captured one of the 3 practice interviews done in class, and captured it roughly and imperfectly, a preliminary analysis on even a *tiny* part of that collected data has expanded into 4 pages. It will be difficult to integrate this all into my final data story while keeping to the 5-page limit.

One of the things I *didn't* capture and write about in my fieldnotes or in the writeup above, but which seems pertinent to mention *somewhere*, is that I was the interviewer for the 3rd interview, which was live-transcribed as well. That experience shaped my perception of the interview I ultimately analyzed, which was between two other students, (S)ubject and (I)nterviewer. While writing up assertions and warrants, I kept cross-checking it against my own experience: “if I put myself in I's shoes and replay that interaction between S and I, does my assertion make sense? Could I imagine thinking or feeling that way?”

This is useful, but also potentially problematic, so I also tried to remain conscious that I *was* cross-checking it against my own lived experience, and that S and I saw the world a different way. Perhaps I should have been more forthright about my experiences/biases/lens in my writeup; I didn't mention anywhere in there that I had also been an interviewer during that class session, but it seemed like a less important thing to include if I wanted to focus on the data story and that one assertion (first developed for my midterm). It's a choice I know I made.

If this were my dissertation, I'd want to go back and member-check my assertions with the participants, since my analysis is entirely my own (heavily biased) speculation and I'd like to see how my expressions of what happened in my head match up with their expressions of what happened in theirs. It won't make my analysis more “true” in the forensic sense, but that triangulation would make for a (more) co-constructed truth that expresses more standpoints than my solitary, limited one.

OBSERVATION 1 FIELDNOTES – JANUARY 22, 2013

(Began writing for scene-setting before the observation "officially" started)

A late Tuesday afternoon, halfway through the 3rd meeting of an advanced graduate class on qualitative research methods in the Education department. Individual chairs with desks attached, facing the front, where a projection screen (unused) covers half a blackboard spanning the room (scrawled with equations from an earlier class, largely untouched except for a small diagram on note-taking paper layout drawn earlier by the professor).

There are 27 students in this room, myself included. 4 are note-taking on paper; everyone else (23) is typing on a laptop or tablet. 3 male, 24 female students; most of us appear young (somewhere in our twenties or early thirties) but a few (at least 3) are visibly from an older generation, often here getting their PhDs (in various education-related disciplines) while they work. The other people in the room are the professor, and a transcriber who is sitting in the corner (for my accessibility).

It is late January, and there has been a cold snap, so thick coats are draped over the backs of many chairs, piled in empty desks. The professor speaks most of the time during the course of "normal" class; she does not use slides or notes, and frequently pauses in the middle of a statement to solicit students questions and responses. Oftentimes students aren't directly gazing at the professor as she speaks, but rather at their notes or screens.

It is 6:15 when we start, pushing the chairs into a circle. Everyone has some form of note-taking as per prof's request. Prof models with young female grad student -- introductions to purpose (rapport building?) They are sitting in individual chairs, partly facing each other but not head-on. Tape recorder on a table in between. (this is non-transcribed, my "control" sample)

Grad student sitting still, looking at prof as she talks; hands gesturing to illustrate points. Prof "mhm-ing" as student talks, sitting, scratching chin, gesturing in reciprocity, occasionally writing notes, but usually making eye contact with student. (I am paying attention to body language and not content, so it's only now, 3 minutes in, after the 2nd question that has been asked, that I glance at my transcript to catch up.)

Professor waiting until student is done answering question (tone of voice? finality, pacing? there's something that sounds "done" about response) before asking the next question, but is going straight through the order of the questions on the sheet of paper (handed out beforehand, made by professor, on grad school work/life balance). "MMmmmmhms!" are different tones (sympathy "hmms", vs "I am still paying attention" hmms?)

Ah, an interruption of the student -- (glancing at my transcript) I see it was for a clarification of what word she used (did prof not hear the word clearly too?)

professor skips to end (for purposes of class exercise and timing; there doesn't seem to be awkwardness), asks anything you want to add? student asking why this study, professor answers with (I'm reading my transcript here) because I experienced this myself.

Professor-driven Pause, out of character! Interview is paused. Now she asks student what this was like. (This is still an interview, just a different interview now!) Student reflects, pauses -- longest pause so far even if it's a few seconds. She is now looking not at the interviewer, but off to one side ("pondering" look and tone of voice) on occasion while she reflects on this experience.

Professor announces to class now she will give self-criticism, proceeds to do so. Opens it to students for critique, students offer various forms of feedback. Many students are nodding; people

with pencils look down at their paper whereas laptops tend to look up from them more (why is this, is it that typing can be done by touch or is faster?)

student next to me is chewing glasses, tapping pen on notebook (will not describe b/c will otherwise be identifiable) - as students ask questions and dialogue with professor, other students are reading phone, writing in what looks like a day planner, winding up power cords, etc -- some are looking back and forth to speakers, others are performing actions like that. professor holds up questions sheet (as a prop) to answer a student question. one student leaves (has to leave early? quiet, seems pre-arranged) during the discussion of 1st interview so we are down one older female student.

I stand up and explain, set recorder on table in between. entire clas comes to "my side" to see screen." Except for 1 person. still moving as the interview begins.

2 female students start the process. they scooted their chairs around to see the screen

mostly looking at each other, but I see S quickly glance at screen mid-sentence. I is not looking at screen at all. (hard to tell if S is gancing at screen or not! I seems to be really trying hard to avoid looking at the screen.)

(visually distracting as an observer to have this THING between S and I - s = subject, i = interviewer) I is taking paper notes (interesting, she has a transcript or maybe doesn't think she'll get it?)

professor interjects asking to wrap up (this gets transcribed too), I summarizes what S said, then asks if S has questions.

prof asks I to self-rate, I see S looking at screen now, and I begins to glance at screen while answering, but also at paper notes. S looking at I, at professor (who is talking with I), also at screen (there is a typo on screen, is this drawing attention?) Prof also asks S for impressions, S is looking at I and directing her response to I ("you could have taken notes more") (S talking about how I's note-taking could have increased to build rapport; maybe I still need paper notes for rapport)

now as professor talks w circle student, I is looking at screen. prof eliciting feedback from surrounding students (this is also getting transcribed) - people still looking at their notebooks, writing notes, etc. as things are going. (oh interesting -- as they moved to "this side" of circle, many people have left their laptops behind; I am now 1 of only 4 students with electronic devices aking notes)

I notes she turned this into semi-structured; one feedback point from prof is that it flowed very naturally

ah, since most of us are on "this side", to attend to us, S and I need to turn away from screen. this becomes obvious when student on "other side" asks q and screen is between them and viewer

(I should draw pictures of the setup)

When asked how they reacted to the screen:

I: ignore!

S: watching screen while asking questions

other student: kept reading instead of listening, was sitting directly in front of the screen

prof: "your transcript is done!"

transcriptionist: "sort of not really"

transcriptionist joins the discussion

I step into the role of interviewer for the next round, so these following notes are taken after the fact the next morning.

* Hard to look at subject and screen at the same time; it's very obvious I'm breaking eye contact, and the transcript is several seconds behind the subject speaking -- so I am still lipreading my subject and the live transcription does not give me any additional accessibility during the interview.

* My subject does not look at the screen during the interview either.

* I am very thankful, however, to know that the transcript is there immediately afterwards -- because I usually do miss things during the conversation, and often need to wait weeks for my transcripts to find out what was said, and this way I can do it right after the interview while my mind is fresh.

* The class (after the interview process) points out that I wasn't taking handwritten notes during the interview. I often don't -- I just mentally build a summary of the conversation as I go along, because I can't look at what I'm writing and hear the subject talking at the same time; I need to pause them and say "wait, that sounds important and I want to make sure we get that down." (In general, perhaps I ought to practice pausing, and make a habit of bringing and handwriting notes during an interview; my current practice was developed with valid reasons and it works, but it's a good chance to try tweaking it and see if that works better, and it's fine if I go back to the old way after trying the new one.)

* My transcriber notes afterwards that she is a bit nervous about the "public performance" her her captioning, but that's part of the job -- and that it might be because of her particular variant of captioning (typewell; other kinds are c-print and CART) and that CART providers in particular are used to being projected and might not be as nervous about being "public" when they type. (That's good, because CART is the method I am thinking about using; this also jives with what a friend of mine who is a professional CART provider has said about it when I asked her.)

OBSERVATION 1 TRANSCRIPT

(Livetranscribed by Cathy, anonymized by Mel)

Tuesday, January 22, 2013

Professor: We need a version of a circle. This is called fishbowl exercise. We'll put two people in middle: Interviewer and interviewee. You need to have some version of a note pad you can take notes if you are interviewer.

Professor: Who is the first interviewee? There's no pressure on the interviewee. They can say anything. No mistakes. We'll model this first. I'll be the interviewer. Here is the tape recorder. Okay. This is a version of a circle. [Class laughing.]

[role playing]

Professor: Thank you so much for agreeing to talk to me about the connections between work and life and grad school. As we talked on the phone I would like to record this. I will interview 10 other people over the next years. I hope I get published in something.

Student: Where?

Professor: A journal. We'll see. We'll start it now. I will ask you if it's okay to record again. Is it okay?

Student: Yes

Professor: Do you have questions?

Student: Are you looking only at women's experiences?

Professor: No. Men do feminist things too.

Student: Yeah.

Professor: I thought it might be more interesting to have mixed gender sample. Does that make sense?

Student: Yes

Professor: Alright. I sent you the questions ahead of time.

[Teacher reading Question 1]

Student: I don't think it's possible to have a life separate of doctoral studies. I think the whole notion, school is my life. There are parts less associated with school. I have to remind myself of that. Otherwise, you feel like you have no life. I think when I thought about school and life as being opposing, the things that take me away from my life or school make me feel bad. So I try to focus on the positive. I love school and reading.

Professor: What are the mechanics?

Student: That's the harder part. I think it's trying to combine things when I can, like when I do the dishes. We don't have a dishwasher. That's when I get to watch television that normally I would not feel is a good use of my time. So injecting pleasure where I can. I also keep detailed calendar. It's a guide. Some days it's a looser guide than others.

Professor: So what is a typical day?

Student: I feel like there are cycles. There are days on campus and days off. I like being on campus. I like teaching my class. Last

semester was challenging. Off campus days; guess things are structured more organically. I eat when hungry. I write when I feel like working on my writing.

Professor: What word did you use? "Organic"?

Student: Yes. When I come to campus, I have to think about how to dress and where I'm going. All these practical things that end up taking 20 minutes of my time when it's just as simple as going to class.

Professor: What would you be doing if not this?

Student: Working at a museum, although probably in education. Maybe a program assistant or coordinator.

Professor: [to the class] I'm going to skip to the end now. "Anything you want to add or tell me?"

Student: Um, I guess I'm curious as to why you want to start this study.

Professor: Well, like so much research I lived this tension myself. I had my own autobiography at work here that leads me to ask these questions. I am also interested in policy. OSU is always trying to come up with policies to balance school/life better.

Alright. We are going to end this now.

First question: how did it feel to be on the receiving end?

Student: I can be a talker. But I understand this is different.

Professor: You got rushed.

Student: Yeah. I ask a lot of follow-up questions, in conversation or when interviewing. You didn't ask a lot of follow-up questions. I guess I felt like I had more control maybe as the interviewee possibly. You weren't identifying what was interesting. I guess for me it worked because I can talk and talk and talk. But I'm curious if you would have asked more follow-up questions if this had been real.

Professor: I'm not great at barrage. I will give a self-criticism. It was unusual and rushed. It was a little hammer-y in terms of questions. I didn't let you have much narrative. I was too invested in my questions. So let the narrative unfold, I would say.

Now let's open it up to the rest of the class. Do you have anything to add in terms of my performance as interviewer?

Student: You acknowledged that you heard what she said and you didn't judge.

Professor: I didn't judge one way or the other.

Student: But you acknowledged.

Professor: I did a lot of "Uh-huh's" and head nodding and you could see my face. A lot of body language.

Student: You took your path at trying to set her at ease. You spelled out what you were doing.

Professor: Okay. Two more comments?

Student: I don't think you did a lot of paraphrasing. That's something I tell my student teachers to do but maybe for interviewing it's not a

good thing.

Professor: Maybe it's just something I drop. Usually I come in at the end and say it looks like the two big things we talked about were "you love school" and that "you are giving yourself over to it instead of fighting it and trying to have separate life." Love school while you are in it and do school while you are there. Is that right? I don't want to put words in your mouth.

Student: I think so.

Student: Do you do that before or after you ask your last question?

Professor: Before. I would do that before "Is there anything you want to add?"

Student: On your list do you put 1, 2, 3, 4.

Professor: The questions should be numbered. It's easier to take notes.

Student: If you are piloting or pre-piloting is it okay to say "how did that feel?"

Professor: Oh. Yeah. Yes, it is. "How did that feel?" - especially if you are piloting your questions.

Student: Even if you are not, how okay is it to keep after people?

Professor: I think you know when you are getting irritated. Partly it depends on your audience, if they get irritated quickly. You want the feedback. It's good. That can help people feel more involved and engaged -- as long as you are sensitive to the irritating part.

Now, Mel has a kind of an assignment for us.

Mel: [Comments/explanation.]

Professor: Clearly we need an interviewee.

Student: I'll do it.

Professor: You sit there. Now who will be the interviewer?

Student: I will.

Professor: Okay. [STUDENT INTERVIEWEE].

Professor: [STUDENT INTERVIEWEE] is the interviewer. I would suggest just jumping in. Pretend that you have said all the prep stuff already.

Student: So you are talking to me about the balance between life and doctoral work. What have you given up?

Student: I have given things up. I don't go swimming as much, things like that - my typical self-care. I have also given up connections with some of my family due to the alienating nature of it. I'm a first generation student. They don't understand. As far as they can tell, all I do is read a lot and write.

Student: Have you had explicit discussions about that?

Student: Yes. In some portions it has gone better. In their view, people do work that you can see produced in the world. My family doesn't see producing ideas in the same way. There's just alienation

that goes along with that.

Student: The things you have given up, I'm interested in knowing more about the family aspect.

Student: I haven't given up all my family relationships. But I have created new versions of that. I knew it was happening when I came here. It was not a surprise. It was a conscious choice. But, the benefits outweigh the negative.

Student: What kinds of things have you refused to give up?

Student: Emotional self-care. I have definitely refused to give up a little bit of ridiculous things like *Parks and Recreation*. I watch that every week. There's some line drawing and what helps feed me and what I have to have.

Student: Do you draw lines consciously or subconsciously?

Student: Both. I say I value swimming three times/week. But I have not done it since I have been here. I'm more successful about what I won't give you.

Professor: Now wrap up.

Student: Thank you so much.

Student: Yeah

Student: It looks like some of what we talked about were some family things, personal things, that kind of thing and some of the themes running through those - does that sound right?

Student: Yea

Student: Do you have questions you want to ask me?

Professor: [STUDENT INTERVIEWEE], do a self-criticism.

Student: I don't know which it is but I turned this into semi-structured interview.

Professor: It is. Why do you say *you* turned it into that?

Student: I went off script.

Professor: And you don't know if it's a strength or weakness.

Student: It depends on the purpose.

Professor: I think you are right. Instead of a lifeless list of questions, you had a conversation.

Student: My notes I was feeling self-conscious about my note taking. Just finding a balance. I think it's they are sketchy.

Student: As the interviewee, you could have written a lot more. When you wrote what I said, it feels like something I said mattered.

Professor: That's what I wanted you to hear! We think it interrupts rapport, but it builds rapport. It becomes a dance: eye contact and notes. Who did I interview? How did you feel?

Student: I thought how spare your notes were.

Professor: My notes?

Student: Yeah.

Professor: There. [showing] As opposed to word for word. You didn't think I put my energy or time into them?

Student: I thought she must have really good memory

Professor: I have sketchy notes but not as much. The note taking is a big part of it. Pay attention. It makes you feel important and listened to. Alright. Other feedback?

Student: If I had clearer picture -- as you are talking, things rise to the top. I don't know if I'm supposed to write everything down.

Professor: But other feedback for [STUDENT INTERVIEWEE]?

Student: I think you are wonderful. There was something I wanted to say. I like how she said "I'm interested in hearing more about that." That was good way to open the floor.

Professor: That made you feel good [AUDIENCE STUDENT], right?

Student: Yes. That was a form of reflection that she was listening to me.

Student: It could be from the talk about your family. You know, I think validation.

Professor: You never know where sensitivity will come forward. You might think something is innocent but it ends up being sensitive

Student: I thought the paraphrase at the end was a little weak. [Class

laughing.]

Professor: At least she did it though. Again you can see the importance of taking decent enough notes to manage that. You want to have sense of key themes: Theme 1. Theme 2. At the end, you can do this mini-memory check. You did one well but we didn't have time to do the other. I thought what you did was you made those questions organic. They felt like they came from you. Others?

Student: Sort of, in general, key themes: is it better or worse that [STUDENT INTERVIEWEE] came into with good grasp of the literature on doctoral and socialization and the line you want to pursue to better see what comes from field?

Professor: I would say both in an odd way. You always, you can't read too soon. You can't have a feel for literature of your topic too soon. But you also have to be open, don't forget, be open to logic in the field. Other feedback? That was very interesting. I think. I was jealous. Your transcriptions are already done.

Mel: I was curious. Did you ignore it?

Student: Multi-tasking to take notes. I have paid more attention while others were talking.

Student: I was watching part of it but not while I was talking.

Student: I was having a hard time. I can read instead of listening but then it's a few seconds behind, so I got behind. It does take a while to get used to it.

Professor: I'm curious as to what you meant "the transcripts are not done".

Transcriber: I am not supposed to be involved or contribute to the class.

Professor & Students: But we are interested. It's okay.

Transcriber: I clean it up. For an 2.5 hour class, it might take 1.5 hours to edit the notes, clean up punctuation, check spelling, fill in any holes I left, etc. I thought the reading on transcription as interpretation was interesting. For example, I am an atheist. When I hear the word "god" spoken, do I capitalize it or not?

Student: And if you don't talk to them about *their* religious views, how do you know whether *they* would.

Student: Thanks for being part of class.

Professor: We won't tell anyone. Thank you, ladies. I need an interviewee who can do no wrong.

Mel: I will be the interviewer.

Professor: Okay. Pretend you have done the prelim work. Jump in.

Student: Okay.

Student: I have already explained about this?

Student: [Teacher reading 1]

Student: I have a life and doctoral studies are part of it. It is intertwined with the rest of my life.

Student: You describe this is life and this is doctoral studies. How do you do that?

Student: What do you mean?

Student: You were talking about having a life and doctoral studies is a large part of that. How does that work?

Student: I am not sure. I think it's just I know I have other things going on that are not school. But school is such a big part of my life it's intertwined. I don't have a 9-5. I don't just go home. I try to maintain things not necessarily school - hobbies or hanging out with friends that don't know anything about my field and don't care about self-advocacy that people care about here. I come from a background where what I'm doing most are not into that.

Student: You don't have a 9-5. What is typical day?

Student: That's hard to answer because there are no typical days. I schedule things semester-ly. It doesn't always work out that way but it gives me some idea. I schedule meetings like 10am and then I work on project and then because of [?] 4-7 is that. Then lingering homework is done at 7.

Student: So you have it broken up in different parts

Student: Usually I have afternoon meetings.

Professor: Wrap it up

Student: I have to summarize this. Do you have anything else you would like to add?

Student: No not really. I would add sometimes it's hard to answer what is typical or normal. If you would have asked me these questions last winter they would have been different answers.

Professor: Alright. Thank you very much. Mel, critique.

Mel: Bleh!

Professor: It's an odd environment.

Student: [Comments.]

Professor: It was easier for you to ignore that.

Mel: [comments]

Student: Then I was trying to remember not to look this way.

Professor: I do that all the time. I turn my back on her and talk to her. Alright, [STUDENT AUDIENCE MEMBER]?

Student: It was different. One part weird I had seen two other people to it so I was like don't say the same answers!

Professor: The fakiness of the answers.

Student: In real life, I would have been more spontaneous. Then, also, trying to remember to look at you so you could tell what I was saying. Normally I look around.

Professor: Now one would expect you would have briefed people when communicating with them that you would be using this technology.

Mel: Yeah. This just adds [comments.]

Professor: Feedback for Mel?

Student: I think one thing is having to look at me, I felt like she's really paying attention. You followed up really well. That's my own feedback.

Mel: I can't take notes because then I can't see what you are saying.

Professor: You don't have to worry about it. There it is.

Mel: [comments.]

Professor: Ah. Yeah.

Mel: [Comments]

Professor: That's alright to say "That was so interesting I want to get that down." Slow it down. Take your notes. It makes your interviewee feel so important. Yes. That's pretty alright to do that.

Student: I thought you did good job of asking her questions and did a nice transition when talking about what she did and not having a 9-5 job.

Professor: She, in a way, refused your question. You recovered well. Sometimes you run into difficult subjects. People can be really surly.

Student: I'm sorry

Professor: The hostile interviewee. It's not unheard of. I guess we could make one of those up too

Student: I wanted to say something about slowing it down. I have a friend from grade school and when I talk to her it's like a ping pong game. How do you negotiate that?

Professor: I suppose negotiation is the perfect word. You are the interviewer. It should be paced in a way that's negotiated between you and interviewee. If they are hyper and fast, note taking can slow them down. That's where the "That's so good I want to write it down" can come in. You can run the pacing of it. You could say "I really want to make sure I get all this. Can you slow down?"

Student: Oprah does that.

Professor: It doesn't have to go a mile a minute. Just ask them to slow down. Use your note taking to make it happen.

Student: I kept waiting when she said I don't have typical day. I kept waiting for "Well, what yesterday was like?"

Professor: That would have been an organic question.

Professor: Anyone else?

Student: When you gave the initial diagram you did it again because she didn't get it. It could have gone either way. You might have said it a different way. I think it's a negotiation. Do you ask the same question verbatim? Differently? It's a practice of when is this a fail?

Mel: [comments]

Student: Oh

Student: I think I understood what you were saying but I needed a second. When you asked the second time I had had time to think about it.

Professor: Well. Okay. Thank you. Go out and interview! Go forth and interview. I will see you next week.

[end class]

OBSERVATION 1 – WRITEUP AND REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS

PART 1: WRITEUP

It's the second-to-last week of Purdue's classes on a Thursday afternoon in April – time for the Engineering Education department seminar, at which I'm presenting my ideas on “radically transparent research” (<http://radicallytransparentresearch.org/manifesto> – what would happen if we treated qualitative research like an open project?) to the usual-sized crowd. Perhaps 30 of the 100 seats in the lecture hall are filled; my classmates and professors who are present are largely munching on the snacks provided (by a classmate whose turn it is to feed the hordes; we have a snack rotation). Others can't make it and have asked for notes, so my talk's one of the few seminar lectures to be recorded as a podcast. I plan to blog the transcript later on, and have already shared the link to my slides with the audience.

I'm still looking at how people react to live-transcription during qualitative research data collection. In fact, I'm about to give a live demo of exactly that to the audience – but I need a volunteer, and haven't planned for it, mostly because I know I can be spontaneous about asking for volunteers from this particular crowd. I spot Jake, a classmate a few years older than I am, with wavy red hair and a bit of a beard, wired with nervous energy. I know Jake thinks fast on his feet and has recently been engrossed by a book by Sarasvathy I pointed him towards (he researches entrepreneurship education for engineers). He says yes, so at the appropriate time during my presentation, I call Jake up. “We're just going to do an informal quick mini interview,” I explain to the audience. “I asked him about this 10 minutes ago so there's been no prep.”

Jake and I are standing in front of two large projection screens suspended over our heads; one screen displays my slides, and the other displays the live transcript of the talk, which a stenographer is typing from the corner. We therefore cannot see the screens as we stand and face each other and converse. I'm trying to ignore the audience, and from his body orientation (towards me) and eye contact (constant), I get the impression that Jake is taking the cue to do the same. We

are both talking and gesturing a little faster than we usually do; perhaps we are both nervous.

However, we don't stop our conversation; we keep it flowing.

Jake is confirming my hypothesis that live-transcription, while it might be strange and new to people, is actually not such a big deal once it's happening; we focus on the conversation partner right in front of us and more or less forget that someone's typing. This is a different setup from my first observation in the classroom; aside from me being the interviewer (as opposed to observing someone else's interview), Jake and I can't easily see the transcript as we speak. We'd have to turn almost completely around and then crane our heads to read a screen set at an awkward angle to our eyes. In contrast, my first interview observation had the transcript scrolling out on a laptop screen right next to both participants. However, we know it's being transcribed, and that our audience can read the live transcription as it's going.

Since the live transcript is also a world-editable document, one of our audience members begins inserting commentary into it as we speak, although Jake and I don't know that, since we're positioned so we cannot see the screen. As Jake talks about the commonalities he's found between Sarasvathy's entrepreneurship research and the sociological writings of Herbert Simon, the (anonymous) audience member types: *Pointing to what stands out – connection – connecting one body of work to another – exciting to see connections*

Their typed commentary immediately becomes part of our transcript, given the same typographic weight as the verbal conversation Jake and I are having. I see it as a way to give interviews more affordances for multivocality, and later hear from others in the room that they had been inspired to shake up their own research after seeing the live transcription, commentary, and editing, and that at least one professor had turned to an administrator and asked if they could use the technique during committee meetings to help committees be more reflective *during* those meetings.

I do not know any of these things right now; Jake and I are wrapping up our conversation. I take a few minutes to assign the transcript copyright to Jake, which will allow him to release it under an open license – both steps in the “radically transparent research” procedures I've developed

(and am demoing today). Such actions allow me to do my data analysis in a fishbowl that the general public can both see and contribute to. But first Jake has to approve his transcript, which he may not want to do without editing it a little. So we walk over to the computer at the podium, and I tell him: “I’d like you to look over it a bit and see if there’s anything you would like to take out or correct.”

“I mean, do you want me to go through this and do it?” Jake asks. I say yes, so he corrects some typos, noting that “there’s no way that our transcriber would guess the spelling of the name [Saraswathy] from me saying it,” but soon arriving at the conclusion that “there’s nothing in here that I’m against having shared, if that’s where we’re going.” I ask him if he sees any patterns in his talk – basically, asking him to quickly analyze his own data – and he echoes something very similar to what our audience member had typed earlier:

“The big theme is that is connection, you know, trying to find, and I guess that’s a big theme of what I’m trying to do anyway is connect this body of stuff to this body of stuff and get them together. I guess the part that excites me about the things I’m reading is when it is helping to draw those connections that I’m trying to find.”

I thank Jeff, and he returns to his audience seat. We’ve just demonstrated a few things, including *grounded indigenous coding*, which is analyzing the conversation you’re participating in (indigenous coding) based on an artifact (grounded) that captures that conversation in high resolution. Our comment-typing audience member has raised the question of who “counts” as a participant. Issues of researcher/subject power dynamics also come up; although Jake has the legal power due to our copyright transfer, he still looks to me for direction in our interactions.

PART 2: REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS

This observation took place after multiple failed attempts to schedule another observation of a live-transcribed interview between two other people. In one case, the transcriber failed to show up. In another case, the interviewer (who was doing the interview for the qualitative research class they were taking) kept postponing scheduling of the interview, including subject recruitment, for over a month despite repeated reminders and offers to arrange the interview logistics myself. In the third case, the interviewer decided 48 hours before the planned interview that they actually didn't need that interview to do their research, and abruptly cancelled. Since realtime transcription is a professional service costing anywhere from \$50-100 per hour and requiring scheduling over a week in advance, this represented a substantial amount of lost time on my part.

At this point, it was April – so I figured I would need to take matters into my own hands, even if it meant I'd be the interviewer myself. I was already scheduled to present at my department seminar two weeks out, and the demonstration of a live-transcribed interview had already been written into my presentation, and the service arranged for. Voila: participant observation.

I would have liked to spend a longer time conversing with Jake; there's an artificiality to our conversation because of the constraints of short notice, limited time, and being very obviously a performance in front of an audience. I wasn't really trying to *have* an interview with Jake; I was trying to *demonstrate* an interview with Jake. I cared about our conversation and paid attention to it, and so did he – but it was all for the sake of having something to show our audience. You could almost call it a “dummy” interview, although it was also a real interview (a real dummy interview, perhaps).

The title of “dummy” forgives a lot of sins. We were so time-constrained as to be unable to say anything other than a quick braindump and a hurried “I just need to think of *something!*” analysis, so the data is “terrible” and the analysis is “shallow” according to the standards many qualitative researchers apply to determine what counts as “good research.” If we'd tried to pass it off as a “good interview,” we would have been laughed at. But we didn't. It was obviously a sketch, a

draft, a prototype – and our audience members had enough experience with qualitative methods themselves to know that (or at least I trusted that they did, and haven't seen evidence to the contrary yet). I was gambling that our audience would be able to see our quick run, *know* it was a quick run, and mentally extrapolate the radical transparency techniques to longer, richer, more deliberate interviews for “real” research projects (for some value of “real”).

OBSERVATION 2 – FIELDNOTES

(Note: Participant names are not anonymized because the data is released under an open license with full identifiers online at <http://blog.melchua.com/2013/04/22/full-talk-transcript-psst-wanna-eavesdrop-on-my-research/#more-4376>).

- This is a “demo” interview conducted with my classmate Jake as part of my presentation on radically transparent research in my department seminar. The purpose of the interview is to demonstrate to my audience what a live-transcribed interview looks like.
- It's April 18, the second-to-last week of classes. The setting is a lecture hall with seats for 100 or so people, with a podium at front; my computer is hooked to the podium and displays my slidedeck on one of the two large overhead screens. The other screen displays the live transcription of the entire talk, which includes the interview (the interview is a tiny part of the talk, maybe 5 minutes of a 55-minute seminar).
- We have snacks! This is a normal thing; the student who's taken snack duty for this rotation has put cake and other items off to one side, storebrought, nothing fancy or expensive.
- I need an interview subject for this talk, and I've known that for months but haven't pre-arranged one because I'm pretty sure I won't have trouble finding one ad-hoc on the day of the talk. From being in classes with Jake, I know he thinks fast on his feet and is happy being spontaneous. From conversations with him, I know he's excited about Sarasvathy, a researcher whose book I introduced him to a couple months ago. And he is standing in front of me by the snack table before seminar starts, so I just ask him, and he's game. Yay!
- Jake is a few years older than I am, with wavy red hair and a bit of a beard, average build, wired with nervous energy as a default rule, prone to getting excited about ideas and jumping around discussion topics a lot (I know this from being in classes with him all this year). He studies entrepreneurship education within engineering education.

- Maybe 30 folks are in the room which is an average department seminar turnout. Multiple people who wanted to come (faculty and students) had schedule conflicts and apologized for not being able to make it, so the professor in charge of the seminar series arranged for it to be recorded as a podcast. This is intimidating, but I plan to post the whole transcript and slides up on my blog later, so whatever.
- Jake and I are both talking and gesturing a little faster than we usually do; I think it's because we're both slightly nervous about being onstage, but we don't stop our conversation, we ask clarifying questions of each other, I think we get through totally fine.
- Jake doesn't know when to sit back down, I haven't made that super-clear to him at the beginning, and we have some moments (easily visible in the transcript) where he is unclear whether he should keep hanging out in the front of the stage or go back into the audience. Maybe I should have made those expectations clearer? Nah, we're fine improvising, we trust each other, I don't think the audience is showing signs of being pissed (frustrated looks, confused looks, sighs, etc) and I want an informal atmosphere to this presentation anyway, so people won't be afraid of jumping in with commentary, and so they'll get the idea that what I'm presenting is very much a method-in-progress, so rough edges are actually helpful.

OBSERVATION 2 – TRANSCRIPT

(Note: Participant names are not anonymized because the data is released under an open license with full identifiers online at <http://blog.melchua.com/2013/04/22/full-talk-transcript-psst-wanna-eavesdrop-on-my-research/#more-4376>).

MEL: So that's enough talking from me. First thing we need to do is collect data. So if I can have my audience volunteer Jake, come up here... we're just going to do an informal quick mini interview, I asked him about this 10 minutes ago so there's been no prep. Jake, you told me that you've been reading the work of a researcher called Saraswathy, and I was curious what kinds of ideas you've been seeing and why you were so excited about this person.

JAKE: As you already know, and some people, know my research is a lot about entrepreneurship and how to teach entrepreneurship and whether or not entrepreneurship is useful for engineering students and in engineering education and why and and where does engineering and entrepreneurship mix. It was really exciting reading this book by Sara Saraswathy because she is all about entrepreneurship but gets really heavy into philosophy and the types of things we've talked about in history and philosophy and design cognition and learning, especially the Herbert Simon's work about the — gosh just lost it — like, um the artificial science

MEL: Okay.

JAKE: You know not artificial as in fake but having to do with artifacts. That's the kinds of logic and problem solving skills that come out of that philosophy are really relevant to entrepreneurs. But I got excited about it because I know they're really relevant to engineers as well based on the things we've done in our classes. So it's been really cool to see how she applies that to entrepreneurship and I could see if we were trying to teach our students in engineering those types of logic and those ways of thinking, that would be really useful in both fields. There's kind of a common philosophical foundation for both of those fields if we line them up right .

MEL: For the fields of engineering...

JAKE: Of engineering and entrepreneurship.

MEL: Yes, and the common philosophical foundation is...?

JAKE: Mostly like the theoretical work of Simon around that, you know, artificial science and Saraswathy goes into detail on the way she sees that logic working. She calls it effectual logic as being different from other types of logic. It's those kinds of problem solving skills she found in her research that entrepreneurs use as they try to solve entrepreneurial problems.

TEXT COMMENTARY FROM AUDIENCE: Pointing to what stands out – connection – connecting one body of work to another – exciting to see connections

MEL: Cool. I'm going to pause here for a moment. When we go through this in a second we'll talk about how this was similar to and different from a normal interview, but for right now, roll with me here. I'm going to need you for a couple more minutes.

JAKE: That's okay.

MEL: License data. So right now we have collected this interview data. The transcript is already there. It doesn't belong to anyone per se, so I need to specifically give Jake the copyright for it. There's a nice little template here to do that.

I, Mel Chua, hereby irrevocably transfer to Jake in perpetuity the transcript of the thing that we just said here on the 18th of April in the engineering education seminar. Done. What that does is it legally gives Jake all the rights to this transcript. So from a research subject standpoint, he now has all the power for everything about the data. I can't use the data for my research until he says I can.

So the next thing is then you can ask your subject, okay, now that you own that transcript, we're going to try and come up with an open licensed version of it by applying a creative commons license. These kinds of licenses can grant certain kinds of rights. You can give people the right to share your work, remix your work but there's always an attribution clause that requires that if you

use my stuff you must cite me. So there are no worries about people scooping me and running away because they have to point back to my dataset in any work they do. So Jake, what I'd like you to do is if you can come over to— we have your transcript up on the screen here...

JAKE: Okay .

MEL: I'd like you to look over it a bit and see if there's anything you would like to take out or correct.

JAKE: I mean do you want me to go through this and do it?

MEL: Yes.

JAKE: I don't know off the top of my head I would— am I able to do this right here? There's no way that our transcriber would guess the spelling of the name [Saraswathy] from me saying it... (Jake corrects some typos)

MEL: We're correcting the spelling of the name.

JAKE: Yeah, um, I mean I can do a couple more of those if that is helpful. I don't know what kinds of things. There's nothing in here that I'm against having shared if that's where we're going

MEL: Yeah, pretty much. And is there, as you look through this are there any patterns or things that come to mind of “oh, I said that?”

JAKE: I— probably just I mean the big theme is that is connection, you know, trying to find, and I guess that's a big theme of what I'm trying to do anyway is connect this body of stuff to this body of stuff and get them together. I guess the part that excites me about the things I'm reading is when it is helping to draw those connections that I'm trying to find.

MEL: Thanks Jake.

JAKE: Okay. I'm safe to go home?

MEL: Yeah, cool. [Audience laughter]

Equipment for qualitative research

<http://blog.melchua.com/2013/01/08/equipment-for-qualitative-research/>

May 8, 2013

January 8, 2013 – 5:42 pm

I'm writing this post from the first meeting of Patricia Lather's qualitative research methods class at OSU. To take this class, I'm driving over 4 hours each way from Indiana to Ohio — every week — and it is going to be totally worth it. I've done qualitative work before, but never critiqued by someone who "thought like me" (in the sense of being poststructural) — and Dr. Lather is one of the pioneers of that paradigm in educational research, so there's no better way I could be learning.

During the first portion of the class, Dr. Lather talked about equipment that qualitative researchers should have to make their lives as easy as possible, and I think this is something others might want to know. We need to find practices (including tools) that fit us — that fit the way we want to work, the way we do our knowing and our learning and recording, so these are lists to start thinking from rather than absolutes.

- A good tape recorder. A good digital recorder might run you about \$300. I personally have the [Zoom H2](#) from music recording experiments, but have taken to recording research interviews on my digital camera or even my phone so that I can lipread the interviewee I'm transcribing. (I'm deaf, so my transcription setup and considerations will be different than most people's; in fact, part of the work I'm doing on my dissertation methodology is finding workarounds for this.)
- A foot pedal, maybe \$15 at Radio Shack.
- If you're doing phone interviews, there are devices that connect to the phone that can record phone conversations. (I can't lipread over the phone, so this will never be the case for me — however, I might want to figure out something for videochat interviews.)
- If you're doing group discussions or focus groups, you'll need the ability to mic multiple people — table mics and so forth. Those are getting more expensive, \$80 and up. Also note that group discussions are hellishly hard to transcribe; people overlap and interrupt, you need to tell whose voice is whose... (and I think: "hard to transcribe? that's why they're hard for me to *hear!*")
- Transcribing software. I still need to figure out what I want to use for this — any recommendations, or internet metabrain?

Dr. Lather wants us to transcribe our recordings — to know in our bones that every hour of interviewing is multiple hours of transcription, reams of data to work with... the course philosophy is "do more with less data," which I sorely need to learn. She also emphasises the importance of taking good notes; many people are afraid to take notes during an interview because of "losing rapport," but you need to learn how to do it because it forces you to pay attention in a different way. It's a skill that needs to be developed; sometimes interviewees actually respond well to it because it makes them feel important. Also, not everyone wants to be tape recorded; what if you can't record where you're going? That limits where and how you can collect data. Why be limited?

Rule of thumb: when you tape, transcribe within 24 hours. (Quote of the week: "If you get home and put that tape in the closet and think 'Oh, I'll transcribe it later,' that tape will have babies, and then you'll look and there'll be 10 tapes in the closet, untranscribed.")

It's fascinating as I sit here — they're talking about recording setups and the things most people

don't realize when they're novices to interviewing. For instance, "don't record in a restaurant, it'll pick up the noise and the tape will be hard to understand" is something I would never do — I can't hear in a restaurant, period! If it doesn't work well for audio recorders, it won't work well for me; conversely, the mic setups I think about for making situations understandable to me (ok, I need a table mic for remote CART for this, a lavalier mic for that, I need to set the room up this way so the acoustics will be good)... are also the same considerations for making recordings. So in a weird way, I'm ahead of that game.

Break time; I think we're mostly done talking about equipment. Other notes:

One recommended reading for our qualitative research methods course is "The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales" because of how it takes familiar fairy tales and flips our preconceptions of what fairy tales are — there's a lot of postcolonial and postmodern thinking in that children's book. Tell the story from the villain's point of view, the ugly duckling grows up to be an ugly duck, that sort of thing. A lot of qual, I think, is becoming aware of and playing with your own thinking; how can you turn other people's perceptions upside-down unless you know how to do that with yours?

Discourse analysis is the most difficult kind of analysis, apparently — compared to quantitative analysis of qualitative documents, or other kinds of qualitative content analysis that look for themes. (Oh, boy. Discourse analysis is what I'm planning on doing. Awesome.)

It's important to be there — to see reactions, to see what's happening. One researcher had an illumination moment when the subject she'd given a survey to got mad about the questions on the survey — and then that anger became the grounds for further understanding.

Using live text transcription for qualitative research interviews: methods notes after a first experiment

<http://blog.melchua.com/2013/01/23/using-live-text-transcription-for-qualitative-research-interviews-methods-notes-after-a-first-experiment/>

May 8, 2013

January 23, 2013 – 5:18 pm

This is a research journal note on using live text transcription (via CART or other means) for qualitative research interviews. I'm typing in the Glenn building on OSU's campus; Kyler is next to me reading my cultural theories reader (by Glesne) with a concerned look on his face (it's a hard book) and we've just both come from a mind-spinning scholarly autobiographical talk by Patti Lather. So much for scene-setting. I'm also typing these initial paragraphs to warm up, mentally and physically — it's cold and my fingers are defrosting.

Here's what I've got. The "normal" interview protocol is something like this:

Current interview protocol

1. I (the researcher) talk with the subject and tape-record our conversation.
2. I go home and get the tape transcribed (delay!)
3. I send the subject the transcript and say "could you check if that's right?" (delay!)
4. Busy subject does not have time to read long transcript of a conversation he/she no longer remembers (delay!)
5. I try repeatedly to contact subject until (1) I give up, (2) subject says "stop bugging me," or (3) subject caves and checks the transcript (delay!)

Most researchers who use interviews do all these steps. Since I'm trying to practice [radically transparent research](#), I add another step after all these: if the subject grants permission to release the edited/revised data (maybe anonymizing names or taking out some parts) under an open license, then the data enters an open dataset, and analysis on it can also be done publicly, and other fun things. (This is instead of the "normal" practice of having the data be in a secret place that nobody can see, so people have to trust the researchers to have interpreted it "correctly" and they can't reuse that data for other things — in open source software terms, it's like releasing a binary blob.)

You'll notice there are many delays in the above process. You need to wait for transcripts, then wait for the subject to see their transcript, then wait for... and every waiting moment increases the chance of participant dropout.

Here's what I want the process to look like instead.

Interview protocol with realtime transcription

1. Talk with the subject and have our convo transcribed in realtime and displayed on a screen we both can see. (Probably remote CART with a tablet to the side where both subject and I can see it.)
2. Immediately after — or even during — the interview, I tell the subject "ok, go and edit/cut

whatever you don't want public, and tell me when you've got a version you'd like to apply an open license to and publish."

3. They do that. We push a button. Bam, open-licensed data is available to everyone — immediately after it's generated.
4. There is no next step. We are already done. I don't need to juggle follow-ups. The subject is free and clear.

That's the theory. How does this look in practice? To find out, I tried two things: piloting that interview technique (to see what parts of my hypothesizing fall apart in reality) and asking my friend, NYC CART provider [Mirabai Knight](#), for her thoughts. Here's what happened, summarized by theme.

Worry: people get awkward and self-conscious when they see their speech being transcribed.

Mirabai mentioned that some people might "feel self-conscious and clam up and get distracted reading what they just said, so some of your subjects might request to have the screen pointed away from them, so it doesn't throw them off." This actually didn't matter in the pilot. It did take a few minutes to explain the setup (since it's different from what most people have seen before), but once we started talking, both my subject and I just ignored the screen. This may have been because the transcript lagged a few seconds behind our actual conversation, so we had to pay attention to each other to keep up anyway — but in any case, it didn't interfere with our conversational process. If it had, we could have moved the screen anywhere the subject wanted it.

Also, each subject will get interviewed multiple times (at least for my dissertation, and for many qualitative research projects) so that "learning curve" is really a first-time setup thing, and on later interviews it'll just be "ah right, that's part of the way we do these interviews."

Worry: if we read the screen, it'll interfere with eye contact and therefore rapport. If we don't, we'll miss incorrect transcriptions when they come up.

This was another tradeoff brought up by Mirabai, and one I ended up being overconfident about. "I read text extremely fast and lipread extremely well and tend to be very, very good at patching different input streams together without losing a connection with the person I'm talking with," I told her. "I think this will be ok."

And it was ok — but because I ended up ignoring the screen and lipreading my subject, as mentioned earlier. Looking at the screen does noticeably break eye contact, and this felt like a rapport diminisher — in contrast to note-taking, which can be a rapport-*builder* even if you need to interrupt your subject to do it. "Hang on, that sounded really important; I want to make sure we write that down." Maybe that's because of the active nature of the writing/typing of notes; the subject can see you're *doing* something in response to them, marking their words as Serious Data — in contrast, the flickering of eyes to screen looks a lot more like "I am not paying attention."

That's something I want to play with in the next round; is there a way I can make my (our?) engagements with the transcript more visibly *work*, more visibly "this is because I am paying *more* attention to the important things you're saying," more active, more engaging?

We're also still left with the other part of the problem Mirabai pointed out, that of missing mistakes: "...misheard phrase or a misspelled proper name or if the subject was talking too quickly so the CART provider had to condense, or maybe even made a misstroke and didn't catch it..."

For the next pilot experimental round, I want to try solving both those problems with the same

technique: instead of trying to edit the manuscript into perfection in realtime, let's just play with the transcript together immediately after the interview and check it then *for content edits* — that the realtime transcript will become valuable during what I'm going to call the *immediate participant check*.

Working out the immediate participant check

Mirabai, again: "If you're mainly relying on the subject to edit and correct things after the fact, that would probably work quite well in most circumstances, especially for fairly short interviews. If it was a long interview and there's a lot of text for them to wade through, they might be too worn out to proofread carefully."

This is an excellent incentive to do short interviews, which I should be aiming for anyway. I'll need to figure out what the steady-state storytelling time is for most people — that is, can I get people to practice telling (different) stories from their lives until they can fit each story they tell under a certain time-goal (say, half an hour?) If so, how long does it take someone to "train" into the half-hour (or however long the time-goal is) format, so that even new stories come out in that conciseness and length?

Mirabai's comment also made me realize I needed to decide what to do and what to *not* do during immediate participant checks. Going for 100% realtime transcription accuracy was already abandoned as an unreasonable goal. Going for 100% transcript review during immediate participant checks... also probably unreasonable. I'll need to distinguish between *transcription errors* (misspellings, misstrokes, phrases transcribed a little off, or condensed) which we can note but do not have to fix during the immediate participant check (I can go back with a videorecording of the interview that I can lipread and do those fine-detail fixes later) and *content edits*, which are what I really want the participant to do: "Oh, make sure you anonymize this part — and take that section out."

What I want to leave with is *not* a finished transcript ready for release, but a to-do list from the participant on what to *do* to the transcript so it will be finished and ready for release — an agreement that if I do X, Y, and Z, then their data is free to go (without needing to check in with them further). For instance, "make sure that name is spelled right through the whole transcript, and delete the tape from here to here, and let's change this person's name to Joe, and just say that they're from a small African village" might be one set of instructions.

I'll need to make sure my interviewees don't feel rushed. Mirabai pointed out that they might feel awkward about their reading speed in front of me (feeling like they're wasting my time unless they review it as quickly as possible), or that they might want to sleep on a particularly sensitive bit of information before deciding whether they're comfortable with releasing it. I want to see if I can make transcripts more navigable to help alleviate some of these issues, and have a software engineering proposal (which I'll write up later) as to how this could be the case — but it won't remove these issues entirely, and right now all I can say is "I need to pilot more and be conscious and watchful of this; it is not yet figured out."

That's what I have for this round. My next round of notes on this are likely to be about liability concerns, technical suggestions for how I could make transcripts more navigable during immediate participant checks, and how this method of transcription also brings with it some default philosophical stances about data that I should probably point out explicitly when I'm writing this up for my prelim.

Help me spend \$ on microphones, or: how does a deaf ethnographer record 8 people in a noisy room?

<http://blog.melchua.com/2013/02/03/help-me-spend-on-microphones-or-how-does-a-deaf-ethnographer-record-8-people-in-a-noisy-room/>

May 8, 2013

February 3, 2013 – 12:01 am

Okay, internet.

1. For part of this summer's fieldwork, I'll need to record conversations between up to 8 people in a noisy room — and they need to be clear enough (for someone else) to transcribe later. In all probability, this means 8 microphones.
2. I'm deaf, so being able to listen to all 8 microphones at once via my hearing aids (which have a standard 1/8" audio jack/cable) would be *awesome* — I can lipread, but good amplified audio makes it so much less exhausting. (My fantastic teammate [Emily Dringenberg](#) will be in the field with me, and she is hearing — but I would still like to be able to listen more easily to the conversations we're observing!)
3. I plan to use this rig for a long time and truck it across the world, so durability and portability is key.
4. I am a grad student of limited budget. Therefore, I like less-expensive things. That having been said, I'd rather have to work harder to get a good setup that will last a long time.

What should I get? Here's what I've thought of so far...

The Non-Accessible But Cheapass Solution: individual digital recorders (~\$45 each, plus ~\$15 memory each) and wired lapel mics (~\$20 each) and put one on each participant. Mix all 8 tracks together in post-production (Audacity) to make the final conversational recording. Pros: cheap (~\$640 total), durable, portable, participants can move around a lot. Cons: a lot of post-production, not sure how well 8 tracks will mix together, does not help me hear the conversation better as it's happening.

The Accessible But Needs-A-Grant solution: 8-channel portable wireless mic system like [this beautiful setup](#) from Revolabs. Pros: durable, portable, participants can move around a lot; top-notch audio quality, accessibility, and high reuse flexibility value — in other words, I could use the same equipment for teleconferencing, documentary filmmaking, live-transcribing (with CART) classes I teach or attend, and so forth. Heck, I could use the setup to stream the 8 mics to a transcriptionist in realtime, and *that conversation* could get live-transcribed. Cons: expensive expensive (\$9-10k, which is way more than half of what I earn per year these days). I would basically need a grant for this within the next 4 months.

I really, really like the idea of the Revolabs setup. I see that as the not-just-for-deaf-people (and therefore way more flexible/extensible) [Companion Mic](#) system — hearing aids often have individual microphone accessories you can give to a speaker that'll stream their mic straight to your aids, but they're severely limited. There's usually only one microphone, meaning one speaker at a time, good luck hearing anyone else. (One system has 4 mics, but that's as high as it goes.) More importantly, they only stream to your hearing aids; you can't get the audio out anywhere else for recording, teleconferencing, or so forth.

So imagine being able to use this for, say... being a postdoc doing an ethnographic study and documentary film of hackerspaces – clipping wireless mics on makers as they wind and talk their way through a machine shop, clamber up robots, spin fire... following along with a camera in my hand and the base system (and a power supply) in a sturdy pack on my back, using my hearing aids (and/or cochlear implant) as audio monitors, being able to *hear* things, simultaneously streaming that hi-fi audio and a lower-res video out to a live audience... I mean, that's a rough strawman subject to change, especially as I learn more about ethnography/documentary filmmaking/what I'll do after graduation in May 2015, but that's the sort of thing that *could* be done with such a setup, if money were to be had. I think.

Anyway, I'm spinning out a lot of dreams here, but the reality is that I have next to no budget and know very little about audio setups and microphones. So... yeah. Ideas for other setups? Thoughts on these? Ideas in general! (And thank you!)

Addressing liability issues when using live text transcription (CART) for qualitative research data collection

<http://blog.melchua.com/2013/02/04/addressing-liability-issues-when-using-live-text-transcription-cart-for-qualitative-research-data-collection/>

May 8, 2013

February 4, 2013 – 12:50 am

This is a follow-up on my [earlier research journal entry](#) on using live text transcription for qualitative research interviews.

I hadn't thought about legal issues behind live-transcribing qualitative research data collection (interviews, but possibly also observations) at all until [Mirabai](#) pointed it out, so I'm indebted to her for this crucial piece. There is not much precedence for liability in the CART (realtime transcription) world, and erring on the side of caution is a good thing, as in most legal matters. The issue is that a CART provider could be held liable if they release a transcript and then someone later says "I never said that!"

Because of this, some providers don't offer transcripts at all. Others offer only certified verbatim transcripts that they've checked over for complete, courtroom-level accuracy afterwards — an expensive and time-consuming proposition. Mirabai described her own policy:

I offer lightly edited transcripts (I scan through for any strokes flagged by my software as potential misstrokes, plus any places that I marked invisibly for myself that I screwed up and need to fix. Then I spell check and send it out) with no extra charge for internal use, with the disclaimer that I accept no responsibility for errors or omissions. My boilerplate is:

DISCLAIMER: The following was originally produced in the process of Communication Access Realtime Transcription for Deaf and hard of hearing members of the audience. It is not a verbatim record of events, and no liability is assumed by the CART provider for any omissions or mistranscriptions.

That seems a workable starting point. It seems that if the people being transcribed (the interviewee and interviewer) sign off on the document as being ok with them saying "we absolve the transcriptionist and are cool with this document, even if it may not be 100% verbatim," that solves the liability issue for realtime transcription providers.

Favorite bits of “Women’s Ways of Knowing”: midwife-teacher, constructivism summaries, being “in” at the start

<http://blog.melchua.com/2013/01/28/favorite-bits-of-womens-ways-of-knowing-midwife-teacher-constructivism-summaries-being-in-at-the-start/>

May 8, 2013

January 28, 2013 – 10:47 pm

I just finished reading *Women’s Ways of Knowing*, a book I’m quietly adding to my small storehouse of examples for “I want specific aspects of my dissertation to look like this.” Oddly enough, all three of the books on that list are written by women in deliberately feminist voices; that wasn’t a selection criteria, but they’ve all turned out that way. Hm.

- *Women’s Ways of Knowing* — introduction, study methodology description
- *Composing A Life* — interwoven narratives, positionality
- *Troubling the Angels* — multivocal layout

Some of the fascinating bits I noted down for future reference, and thought others might appreciate...

To most women, the first steps on this journey [towards the sort of procedural knowledge used in STEM fields] do not feel like progress. The voice diminishes in volume; it lacks authority. These women lack even the derived authority of those who, having faith in received knowledge, can assume as they parrot their elders that they speak the truth. Lacking, also, the inner authority of the subjectivist, they cannot cheerfully blurt out the first idea that springs to mind. The inner voice turns critical; it tells them their ideas may be stupid. Women at this position think before they speak; and, because their ideas must measure up to certain objective standards, they speak in measured tones. Often, they do not speak at all. But this is not a passive silence; on the other side of this silence, reason is stirring. (Emphasis mine)

For those who are thinking about getting women involved in open source, engineering, etc, that quote — and this next one — are illuminating. This next quote comes from a section about how men go through trials and then get confirmed into a community at the end of them (“you passed 4 years of hellish classes; congratulations, you’ve graduated and you are an engineer!”) women need confirmation of community membership at the start, before they undergo the trials of learning to be part of it (“you are an engineer — you’re ready to handle 4 years of hellish classes!”)

For women, confirmation and community are prerequisites rather than consequences of development. (Emphasis mine, again.)

Practical implication? Make sure people know they’re “in” when they begin to try — and that the quiet lurking and the unsure stumblings in the beginning are the mark of a fully participating new member.

Then there's this great quote drawn from Mary Daly's 1973 book *Beyond God The Father*.

The tyranny of methodolatry hinders new discoveries. It prevents us from raising questions never asked before and from being illumined by ideas that do not fit into preestablished boxes and norms. The worshippers of Method have an effective way of handling data that does not fit into the Respectable Categories of Questions and Answers. They simply classify it as nondata, thereby rendering it invisible.

And Marge Piercy's poem "[Unlearning to Not Speak](#)" which I will only quote the ending of here...

She must learn again to speak starting with I starting with We starting as the infant does with her own true hunger and pleasure and rage.

And the best summaries of constructivist thinking I've ever read:

All knowledge is constructed, and the knower is an intimate part of the known.

Becoming and staying aware of the workings of their minds are vital to constructivist women's sense of well-being... Constructivists seek to stretch the outer boundaries of their consciousness — by making the unconscious conscious, by consulting and listening to the self, by voicing the unsaid, by listening to others and staying alert to all the currents and undercurrents of life about them, by imagining themselves inside the new poem or person or idea that they want to come to know and understand. Constructivists become passionate knowers, knowers who enter into a union with that which is to be known.

[Conversations between constructivists imply] ...a mutually shared agreement that together you are creating the optimum setting so that half-baked or emergent ideas can grow.

Then there's a quote by Marguerite Duras on how women write from places of darkness and unknown, and translate that darkness as they write. And a section on the idea of the midwife-teacher, helping students draw out of themselves what is already inside and self-created — that's the type of teacher I hope I am, and want to be.

INTERVIEW 1 – WRITEUP AND REFLECTION

PART 1: WRITEUP

T is a PhD student in Social Psychology, young and eager, on the brink of graduation. My interview with T came about at the end of a long chain of reasoning on my part. I wanted to see how people reacted to realtime transcription during interviews, *and* I wanted those interviews to be close to my dissertation topic of “how faculty make sense of curriculum revisions” *and* my dissertation methodology of having interview subjects respond to each others stories rather than my prompts, and so in order to set up an interview with a faculty member about *their* curriculum change story, I needed to have someone *else's* curricular change story to turn into a prompt for them. (The prompt is a “onepager” shown in this collection, right before the raw transcript it's been excerpted from.) At some point in all this, T (a quantitative researcher) asked me how qualitative research was done, and I seized my chance by offering to demonstrate.

So we sat down, and I figured T had probably not experienced a curricular *revision*, but had certainly needed to revise some aspects of a *course*, so I pulled out my laptop and said ok, tell me the story. The following writeup/analysis focuses on the content of T's interview rather than any response to realtime transcription, since the “transcription” was actually me trying to type as fast as possible, and we did not conduct any debriefs or member-checks of the data or the interview experience afterwards.

We heard the story of T's first teaching job, an introductory social psychology writing course for undergraduates that had a slew of sections and an army of teaching assistants (“TAs,” T's role). “When you become a new TA [for this class] they'd give you a CD of previous things past TAs had done, previous paper prompts they'd used, all the way down to here are the lecture slides,” T said. The CD was unofficial, passed from TA to TA; for the new-to-teaching T, it was a security blanket, “very comforting. You're expected to be a subject matter expert and you're just a 2nd-year grad student!”

As a new teacher, T started out granting legitimacy to artifacts because of the credentials of

their authors. “[In the beginning] I'd use things from the people with good credentials, like did they win a teaching award, ok, I'll use their stuff.” Over time, T developed confidence and began engaging with the material itself, rather than the reputations of those who had created them. “combine their materials, look at a couple slide decks and sort of synthesize my own slides from that.” Eventually, T created original materials, but there was a limit to how much those materials got reworked and refined that still hints at an underlying lack of confidence: “I think that once I have a good idea I should stop and just use that because my next ideas would not be as good.”

It was a cognitive apprenticeship of sorts, in that T was able to see the work of many people and thus intuit that there were many different ways to teach. T did not say this specifically, but I would guess that the insight into the existence of “different teaching styles” was accompanied by the realization that no one style was unambiguously best under all circumstances. However, unlike most cognitive apprenticeships, it's unclear how much T engaged with the actual *people* behind the materials. “It was comforting knowing there were mentors and peers around,” said T – with no indication that those mentors and peers were ever consulted; it's possible they served as an insurance policy of sorts, a reassurance that if something went completely haywire, help would be there. There were, however, no reports of things going haywire.

T seemed conscious that the performance was a growth story, ending on an optimistic note that it was “not a big deal” now, and “now I know that I've done it and could do it again.” Despite never mentioning past mistakes or their resolutions, T expressed the ability to recover from future mistakes. I found myself wondering how much of that was motivated by the desire to find a happy ending, the broader contextual need for T (who was actively job-hunting) to present an identity as a competent teacher, or other factors beyond either of our perceptions or control.

PART 2: REFLECTION

In case you've not noticed by now, I've chosen not to share the genders of my interview participants in their transcripts or in my initial writeup. This was deliberate; I wanted to see what other people would make of their personalities in the absence of as many categories of labeling as possible. (The reactions of others are shown in my document analysis.) It made writing a little awkward, but not too badly so; still, there's nothing like trying to not use pronouns that makes you realize just how much you usually do.

Conducting this interview was my first hint that I should probably focus on a less “meta” project than “how do people react to method X in study Y?” In order to do that, I needed to invent a “study Y” *and* manage the logistics for it in *addition* to the study on method X. It seems far more logistically sane to do study Y, which *happens* (by deliberate design) to use method X, then loop back and ask “so what did method X do, as opposed to other methods that you could have picked?” Ah well. Live and learn.

I found myself far more engaged in this interview than in my first observation, possibly because of the interview topic's closeness to my dissertation topic. My interview with T felt a lot more “real” than the practice interviews in the classroom I'd observed; it was longer (30 minutes rather than 5) and more private (just the two of us in T's living room, rather than the two of us talking while being observed by 28 other human beings), so I got a richer story.

I could have gone farther, probed more – but it would have had to be another interview session, because I'd told T at the start that it would be a 30-minute interview, and sure enough – close to the 30-minute mark, T's story magically started winding up (with that super-optimistic, “the future is promising” ending).

I wonder what T would have made of the comments of others on our conversation. At this point, T has graduated and is no longer geographically accessible. I could email and ask, I suppose, but the benefits of learning that don't seem to outweigh the work it would involve, so I'm letting this be. (Besides, I *have* seen the reactions of the other interviewee to the comments on their transcript.)

INTERVIEW 1 – ONE PAGE VERSION

Introductory Social Psychology writing course

Taught for the 3rd time by a 5th year Social Psychology PhD student

There's a common book and grading [rubric] across sections, and there's always 2 midterms and a final and 6 papers, but it's up to you what the questions on the midterm and the final and the papers are. [So] when you become a new TA [for this class] they'd give you a CD of previous things past TAs had done, previous paper prompts they'd used, all the way down to here are the lecture slides. It was unofficial, the TAs did it themselves. It was a wonderful resource, because why reinvent the wheel -- if there's stuff from someone who's taught this 7 times, I can just use that.

I started off with copying questions from the CD, and [the initial essay and exam questions I gave] were more about having my students define terms. I took a 10-week summer teaching class before I [first] taught, [but] I was a complete newcomer to teaching, so the CD of materials was very comforting. You're expected to be a subject matter expert and you're just a 2nd-year grad student!

[In the beginning] I'd use things from the people with good credentials, like did they win a teaching award, ok, I'll use their stuff. Sometimes I'd combine their materials, look at a couple slide decks and sort of synthesize my own slides from that, because from looking at that CD I could tell there were different teaching styles, that different people taught different ways. Midway through the first time I taught it I got more comfortable and started changing questions and writing my own questions, less about defining terms and more about moving into usage, how would you apply this [social psychology concept] in real situations.

[The nature of the midterm and paper questions I assigned] kept changing the second and third time I taught the class. It was an evolution. I would reuse [questions in subsequent years] if I thought they were good. It wasn't so much about making everything from scratch, it's not that on principle I had to create new things, because I think that once I have a good idea I should stop and just use that because my next ideas would not be as good. Sometimes I would update questions -- if something was really big in pop culture I'd write a question about that -- but not making [new questions] for the sake of making things.

[As I modified my curriculum more and more, it was comforting] knowing there were mentors and peers around, because it was a required course so there were a lot of sections and other people teaching the course. Even if you didn't actually ask [those people for help], they were there. That support was definitely helpful, that availability.

As I went on I started making activities and games for my students to do [instead of using materials from the TA CD] and actually this last time I taught it I didn't use slides at all. And I think one of the things that made that work was that I was clear up front. Here's what I'm going to do, and if you don't like that you can leave [and go to another section]. And I also addressed their learning goals: what do you want to get out of this class? I had my goals, but we had theirs too.

For my student evaluations [of the last, most heavily-modified curriculum] I asked them about specific learning goals, both mine and theirs, and I found I got much better feedback when I asked "how did we do in meeting this specific goal?" -- then listing the goal -- than when I asked them just about "what did you like about the class, what didn't you like about the class." I got probably the best student feedback I have ever seen.

Now it's not a big deal, and now I know that I've done it and could do it again. You can recover from your mistakes. And even if you screw something up, the next class is a blank slate.

INTERVIEW 1 of 2: TRANSCRIPT

Note: this transcript was typed by the interviewer as the subject was speaking. It attempted to be as close to verbatim as possible, but is still largely a paraphrase. Interviewer comments were omitted (they were few and far between, and most of them were variants on “mhm”) and bracketed text was inserted after the interview in order to be clearer. Thus the document is written as if it were a transcription of a monologue – because it basically is.

I'm in my fifth and hopefully last year of my PhD in Social Psychology. I've taught 6 classes; 3 of those were writing courses on Introductory Social Psychology, so let's talk about that. There are a lot of sections, and there's a common book and grading [rubric] across sections, and there's always 2 midterms and a final and 6 papers, but it's up to you what the questions on the midterm and the final and the papers are. There's flexibility.

When you become a new TA [for this class] they'd give you a CD of previous things past TAs had done, previous paper prompts they'd used, all the way down to here are the lecture slides. It was unofficial, the TAs did it themselves. I think faculty were aware of it and thought it was a good thing but they didn't do anything about it. It was a wonderful resource, because why reinvent the wheel -- if there's stuff from someone who's taught this 7 times, I can just use that.

It's really interesting to think about [how I modified the course materials]. I started off with copying questions from the CD, and [the questions] were more about having my students define terms. I took a 10-week summer teaching class over the summer before I [first] taught, [but] as a new TA I was a complete newcomer to teaching, so the CD of materials was very comforting. I'd use things from the people with good credentials, like did they win a teaching award, ok, I'll use their stuff. Sometimes I'd combine their materials, look at a couple slide decks and sort of synthesize my own slides from that, because from looking at that CD I could tell there were different teaching styles,

that different people taught different ways. Midway through the first time I taught it I got more comfortable and started changing questions and writing my own questions, less about defining terms and more about moving into usage, how would you apply this [social psychology concept] in real situations.

[The nature of the midterm and paper questions I assigned] kept changing the second and third time I taught the class. It was an evolution. I would reuse [questions in subsequent years] if I thought they were good. It wasn't so much about making everything from scratch, it's not that on principle I had to create new things, because I think that once I have a good idea I should stop and just use that because my next ideas would not be as good. Sometimes I would update questions -- if something was really big in pop culture I'd write a question about that -- but not making [new questions] for the sake of making things.

[As I modified my curriculum more and more, it was comforting] knowing there were mentors and peers around, because it was a required course so there were a lot of sections and other people teaching the course. Even if you didn't actually ask [those people for help], they were there. That support was definitely helpful, that availability. I remember having these moments of "aha" insight during teaching, I remember that I had them, but I don't remember what they were, so it's probably better to have people tell their stories while they're still doing it instead of afterwards.

As I went on I started making activities and games for my students to do [instead of using materials from the TA CD] and actually this last time I taught it I didn't use slides at all. And I think one of the things that made that work was that I was clear up front. Here's what I'm going to do, and if you don't like that you can leave. And I also addressed their learning goals, [asking them] what do you want to get out of this class? And doing that up front was really important.

For my student evaluations [of the last, most heavily-modified curriculum] I asked them about specific learning goals, both mine and theirs, and I found I got much better feedback when I asked "how did we do in meeting this specific goal?" than when I asked them just about "what did you like about the class, what didn't you like about the class." I got probably the best student feedback I have ever seen, I did not expect that, [it] surprised me how much the students engaged with that.

There's this thing [in psychology] called the "end of history" illusion where people always think they've changed in the past but they aren't going to change in the future. Looking back [at my earlier self when I was just starting to teach], I changed a lot. I was so scared of public speaking. And you're expected to be a subject matter expert and you're really just a second-year grad student! And now it's not a big deal, and now I know that I've done it and could do it again. And that mistakes don't matter. One time I drank too much water and realized I wasn't going to make it [all the way through class] and finally said "Ok class, take a break!" and then dashed to the bathroom and it felt really silly at the time -- then I looked at that and think "wait, they probably didn't even know, and even if they do, they don't care." And it doesn't matter. You can recover from your mistakes. And even if you screw something up, the next class is a blank slate.

INTERVIEW 2 – WRITEUP AND REFLECTION

PART 1: WRITEUP

R is an engineering professor at a large research university who has done qualitative research on design thinking in engineering for nearly a decade. The prompt for the interview was reading T's one-page narrative and responding to it with a teaching story from R's own career, an experience wherein a colleague's sudden absence at the start of a term forced R and another professor to take over teaching that professor's class (which was not in their area of specialty) with only a few days of preparation time atop their other duties.

This interview was the longest I conducted in my pilot studies (spanning nearly an hour) and was divided into a “storytelling” part at the beginning and a “member check” part at the end in which the contents from the storytelling section were reviewed and analyzed in-situ by both myself and R. My analysis assignments focused largely on R's reaction to live-transcription and grounded indigenous coding, but for this writeup I will focus on the “storytelling” section in order to be able to weave R's interview in with T's and the document analysis in the final data story.

The primary theme of R's interview (as stated by R during the “member check” section of the interview) is the “big magic book that has all the answers ,” a resource “written as if it were meant to be shared” by multiple teachers of the class, whether they are co-instructors (teaching the same class together in the same semester) or a handoff of a class from one instructor to another. The “big book” theme itself was inspired by a section in T's interview describing a “CD of previous things past TAs had done,” but during the course of the interview, it became apparent that the “big book” was not simply a collection of reading materials for use with the class; it was a tool for communicating the structure and intent for student learning in the class – learning objectives, notes on coordinating teaching practices, and so forth.

As the discussion progressed, several questions on the nature of the “big book” were considered. Did the “big book” need to have a particular format or form? No, because R described one “big book” as being purely digital/online. Did the “big book” need to be readable by external

audiences? R was contradictory on this point; at the beginning of the interview, the descriptions of the “big book” are very much that of a trail guide left behind for subsequent hikers to discover, and – like a trail guide – needed to be understandable by the hikers who picked it up when standing in an isolated lodge without the ability to talk with the author.

However, R later described a case study of a high-quality “big book” experience as “not meant for consumption really beyond us [the original authors],” followed by a description of the “big book” as “the place where we wrote checking if we were all on the same page.” This expanded the definition of the “big book” to be a more general communication tool that could be context-rich or context-free, meant for internal or external consumption or anywhere in between. I therefore interpret R's complaint about the lack of a “big book” for the course that was the subject interview as a critique of the existing “big book.” In other words, it was the lack of a “big book” *that R considered usable* in the specific instructional situation that was the complaint, rather than a statement that no “big book” at all existed for the course. (The same “big book” accompanied by conversations with the original instructor may have been perfectly adequate.)

In this expanded definition, the “big book” might be a standalone artifact meant to be transmitted to someone at a far geographic and chronological distance without any discussions or shared context between author and user, as in K-12 curriculum binders, or it may be a co-created artifact borne out of discussions and largely unusable by anyone but the original authors and participants in those discussions.

Towards the end of the interview (both storytelling and member-check), R and I began reflecting on the “big book” on potentially being a myth – was there such a thing, or was the “big book” a wish for a magic wand that would deliver its bearer from the process of wrestling with making a class one's own? The key quote for me was this (from R):

“If there was a Big Book of “this is how to teach the class,” I don't know if I would have necessarily gone “ah, here is the recipe.” I probably still would have tried to figure out what were the big ideas...Ultimately I had to make it my own.”

The “big book” then becomes something that comes “out of the process” of instructors sitting down with materials, ideas, and potentially each other – an artifact that captures aspects of that process in a way that's useful to the instructor, whatever that may mean to that particular instructor for that course at that particular point in time.

PART 2: REFLECTION

Of all the data I collected this semester, the interview with R spurred the most reaction and commentary both from myself and from those I discussed the data with. I believe this was in part a snowball effect enabled by the permission I got from R to share the interview materials (and eventually share them with full identifiers) – as I found more things in it, I could share those insights with others, who had their own ideas, and thus gave me more ideas, and so forth.

R was a contributor to that snowball effect as well. In fact, you could say that R kicked it off as my first co-analyst during the “member check” portion of our interview. It was R who first identified and named the theme of “big book” running through the story (although a focus on the “big book” idea meant that we did not examine other potential themes in the interview due to limited time). As I heard other people comment on R's story, I would mention their comments to R (who I knew would be interested) the next time we passed on campus – accidental member-checks of a sort rather than deliberately planned ones. (However, I recognized and was intentional about taking the opportunity for accidental member-checks, so it wasn't *completely* unplanned.)

Why did this happen for R and not for T? I saw both R and T on a roughly weekly basis, but my professional involvement with R had a longer history and included projects beyond this interview, which may have made me more eager to share comments with R. I also was fairly sure R would react with great excitement, as our interview topic of curricular change was also one of R's research interests, whereas T's interview was an aside to T's everyday research in social psychology.

Since engaging storytelling participants in the analysis of their own stories is something I want to be central to my dissertation research, I will need to ensure that my subjects are actually interested in digging deeper into their understandings of their own stories; ideally, they will be seeking self-knowledge and open to that knowledge coming in many forms, from many places, and including input they may disagree with or even be offended by (especially critiques of their own character or practice that may not be politely phrased). I believe the participants I have recruited for my dissertation fit this criteria, but it will be interesting to see how it plays out in practice.

Another note is that – as you may have noticed, and as I have pointed out before – I hid the genders of both R and T in these writeup and in the one-page “interview prompt” versions that were summaries of their interviews composed almost entirely of verbatim quotes from the interviewees. This was originally unconscious, but when one of the colleagues I discussed the data with assumed that R was male, I did a double-take: *wait, I did do that.* (R and T are both female.)

This led to a discussion with that colleague about the basis behind her assumptions of the gender of both R and T, and whether I should have disclosed that information to her beforehand. My colleague was of mixed feelings: on the one hand, she felt “guilty” for getting the gender of R wrong because she had assumed that bold criticism (by R of the inadequate materials left behind by her teaching predecessor) was a male characteristic, as well as confidence (on R's part that she would be able to figure out a way to teach the class anyway). On the other hand, the gender had clearly affected her interpretations of their actions. I'll need to consider what I want to do about this in my final study design.

INTERVIEW 2 – ONE PAGE VERSION

Theories of Development and Engineering Thinking

Taught for the first time by a pair of associate professors (one is the interviewee here)

In looking at this [story, I am] immediately thinking of what would it have been like to have the Big Book of how to teach this class, the placeholder for the key points, the goals, written as if it's meant to be shared, and how would I have used it... We're teaching a class for which the faculty member didn't show up. We had all of a day to sit down, pull together stories from the students who took the class [last year], the materials we had from the last time it was taught, and very, very quickly come up with something to give to students so that there was some stability. It was just wide open. We didn't really feel comfortable just saying "we will do exactly what she did" because we don't know exactly what she did. Well, we can't be her. We have to be whatever it is that we can be.

We had copies of all the readings, the syllabus. Lots of words on the [old] syllabus are things about "if you don't show up for class..." we didn't change that. We kept the structure. We had to change the course project because we didn't really have the resources to [grade] 20 papers. Time, time. It's the one thing that you can't go and get more of. Even though there were people who were willing to help, that actually had its own cost at the get-go [and] we needed to do something as quickly as possible. [My co-instructor] and I came together for coffee for an afternoon [and] we rewrote the objectives because we needed to think about what were the big ideas. Because we would look at the stuff [from last year's class] and go "why is she having you read all this stuff, it's like 200 pages, does she really expect you to read all that?" I can't assign readings if I'm not going to read them and be responsible for it. I don't have time in my life to read 200 pages...

We kind of came up with our own stories of things. You're going to be reading a whole bunch of theories about human development. We're not going to give you a test at the end of the week and say "which one said this?" We wanted to develop your ability to be able to engage with these ideas. There's not a single, universal theory. The reason they all exist is because they are each speaking to a weakness or something that wasn't addressed somewhere else. So that ended up being an enduring idea, [making] sense of these things on your own. Once we did that we came back and looked at each week at the readings we selected. We tried to make sure that there was some sort of reading that was talking about strengths or weaknesses [of the theory of the week], [and] a reading that either illustrates how you use this to do research or how this might relate to designing learning environments.

In the process of doing that we're noticing that some of the [reading] selections are not what I would have chosen. For example one of the key things about Vygotsky is the idea of a zone of proximal development. She didn't have any readings that went really into that. So I looked around for that one and came across a paper by one of the authors that we were going to do the week after, talking about the people that we had read before him. What a great opportunity to have this person sort of sit back and talk about these two theories, because these are real people. Their ideas didn't come out of some magic box. It sort of carried a story line connecting the various people that we were reading.

If there was a Big Book of "this is how to teach the class," I don't know if I would have necessarily gone "ah, here is the recipe." I probably still would have tried to figure out what were the big ideas. Is there such a thing as the Big Magic Book that has all the answers? Ultimately I had to make it my own. The Big Book is me and [my co-instructor] sitting down and talking to each other, a place [that doesn't] necessarily look pretty but captured conversations about the class. The [Big] Book is coming out of the process.

INTERVIEW 2: RAW TRANSCRIPT

Note: full names are used in this transcript because the parties involved have given permission to release it into the public domain with full identifying information.

Note: The transcription was done by Terry Wood, a CART provider who dialed into our (in-person) conversation in Robin's office via speakerphone, and typed into a shared text document on my computer. Typos and punctuation were left as Terry wrote them, and a horizontal line divides the "storytelling" part of the interview from the "member check" portion, with #hashtags placed there by myself and Robin during the "member check" process.

Pilot Interview - Feb. 14, 2013

Response to 5th year PhD student in Social Psychology describing Introductory Social Psychology writing course

ROBIN: This is Robin

MEL: So what I'm going to do is clear the document of things that are this is going to be split into two time segments for you. One I'll be interviewing Robin, correcting revisions and that kind of thing. Then we'll pause and then have a reflection on what it's like to have the transcription going on. So I'm setting this up a little bit and Robin, if you were my real dissertation subject this is the time at which things would be going and set up already when you log in and so forth. So I want to give you a moment to glance over the narrative that I probably should have printed.

ROBIN: No, this is fine.

MEL: Okay.

>> You are quick. What's your name,

>> Terry.

>> [Laughter]

>> Are you still there?

ROBIN: Yeah, I'm reading.

MEL: so I want to take about 15 minutes for this first round of just getting your narrative.

Don't worry about reading all of it and actually want to talk with you about the engineering, thinking series of engineering department

ROBIN: Whatever the title of the class is. Thinking.

MEL: And about the class that you've inherited and sort of rewrote and revised and maybe that add to the story to the one you're reading here

ROBIN: Uh-huh

MEL: If you could, what aspects of the class you're teaching now and the way you're reworking it might [indistinguishable word] by the stuff that you're reading

ROBIN: Well the example that you're showing me is somebody who here is this class and here is the big book, you know, of all the stuff that goes with the class. For the thinking class, you know, there wasn't a big book. In fact I contacted you to find out what happened when you did it. So that was essentially, you know, copies of all the readings, the version of the syllabus and we had all of a day to sort of sit down and try to have something quick so that the students in the class had a clue of what to do the next week.

#BIGBOOK

is there such a thing that has all the answers?

do you need to make it your own, always?

[Laughter]

MEL: Uh-huh

ROBIN: So it's been an interesting story in terms of not having a fair amount of information about what was done in the past, and not knowing why she chose the things that she chose to read, and not really seeing the pattern and not really even seeing a, you know, a set of questions that she might have had in her mind. It was just wide open. You know, the downside of that is we didn't really feel comfortable just saying we will do exactly what she did because we don't know exactly what she did. [Laughter]

#BIGBOOK

as information placeholder -- what are the goals

terrain *and* map to navigate it?

"written as if it's meant to be shared"

in contrast to History & Philosophy, which does have a "big book"

MEL: Right

ROBIN: You know and then it was well we can't be her. We have to be whatever it is that we can be. So then you and other folks started getting e-mails about can you tell me how she used time in class. Can you tell me she assigned 6 readings. It's like 2 hundred pages. Does she really expect you to read all that? I can't assign readings if I'm not going to read them and be responsible for it. I don't have time in my life to read 200 pages in a way to be responsible for it. So a lot of it was trying to pull together stories from the student who took the class, the materials we had from the last time it was taught and trying to find a way to very, very quickly come up with something to give to students so that there was some stability, some direction immediately.

you would have thought maybe we could have spent time before the term happened to anticipate this and plan it out but in so many ways we didn't want to rock the boat and we were just, because we wanted her to show up. I realize part of this transcript is we're teaching a class for which the faculty member didn't show up should probably be in there. So it was a very strange experience. I don't know if there was a big book of like this is how to teach the class.

#BIGBOOK

A book for the teacher, not necessarily the student?

If I would have necessarily gone ah, you know, here is the recipe. This is what I will do this week. This is what I will do next week to kind of see the big story so that I could confidently do it

. So when we're looking at the things the class does we kept, for the most part, the structure.

We really liked the idea of the structure. We had to change what the course project is because we didn't really have the resources to pull it off, the course project being the term paper and we didn't really have the resources to go through cycles of feedback and then read 20 papers. We just didn't think we could pull it off

MEL: In terms of resources you mean faculty time?

ROBIN: Time, time. It's all time. It's the one thing that you can't go and get more of. Even though there were people who were willing to help, we were realizing that actually had its own cost at the get go and now maybe we're more open to it but at the beginning there was not the time to sit with people and come up with a plan. We needed to do something as quickly as possible. So yeah, I mean in looking at this thing and immediately thinking of what would it have been like to have the big book of how to teach this class and how would I have flipped through the big book and how would I have used it, and, you know, I probably still would have tried to figure out what were the big ideas.

#BIGBOOK

MEL: Uh-huh

ROBIN: If the big book had that, I might use that but the big book didn't have that because that didn't exist. [Laughter]

MEL: The big idea, are you envisioning like the big book would come with like the 3 big ideas of this class are A B C?

ROBIN: It wasn't something that would be like in a syllabus like the 3 big ideas of this class are, you know. Because we got those although we actually crafted those in terms of what we thought were the big ideas.

MEL: [Inaudible]

ROBIN: Well we wrote the objectives. I mean lots of words on the syllabus that are things about if you don't show up for class and you're sick. We didn't change that. We rewrote the objectives because again we needed to think about what were the big ideas that we can get on

board with and that we could constantly keep coming back to as the thing that holds the class together. So with using the cap and [indistinguishable word] understanding idea and Ruth and I went off to the places and came together for coffee for an afternoon and said these are the ones I think and those are the ones that you think and then they were essentially the same.

MEL: Did you have to read through all of the readings?

ROBIN: No

MEL: How did you come up with the structure?

ROBIN: Well in terms of the big ideas, they really dealt with how do you make sense of this stuff. So, okay, you're going to be reading a whole bunch of theories about human development. We're not going to give you a test at the end of the week and say which one said this.

MEL: Uh-huh

ROBIN: What we wanted is we wanted to develop or improve your ability to be able to engage with these ideas, make sense of them on your own, summarize them and think about the various limitations of them. That kind of connected to a bigger idea which is, you know, these are a whole bunch of really useful theories but there's not a single, universal theory. Every single one of them has limitations. The reason they all exist is because they are each speaking to a weakness or something that wasn't addressed somewhere else. So we wanted that to be part of the practice, that you were in thinking that the limitations it wasn't about critiquing the heck out of it, you know. Blah blah and just attacking it. It was about being able to understand why this idea in combination with another idea might help you get at the thing you want to do. The so more about seeing connections and less about just attacking. So that ended up being an en- curing idea. So it was the things about being able to learn how to make sense of these things on your own, summarize them, find the key points, being able to understand both the strengths and weaknesses and then kind of bubbling up into the bigger ideas about how can you use these ideas. So use them either to think about curriculum

development or use them to think about studying engineering learning. So it was kind of had that triangle connected thing. Once we did that then it meant that when we came back and looked at each week and looked at the readings we selected. We were like well we're not going to give you 200 pages because we actually, you know, it just didn't seem very feasible. In an effort to try to manage that level of reading you might miss the point. So we tried to pick readings that we thought did a really great job of illustrating the idea and were organized in ways that you could, you know, we can help you sort of figure out what are the key ideas of this particular theory. We tried to always make sure that there was some sort of reading or a section of a reading that somebody was talking about with strengths or weaknesses or what this doesn't do. We're always trying to include a reading where there was something that either illustrates how you use this to do research or how this might relate to designing learning environments. So smaller number of readings but focused on speaking to the ideas.

MEL: So it sounds like when you talk about the big book you basically made your big book or in some sense because your big book was a subset of the /SKWRAOEUPBL big book that you got [indistinguishable word] you did get a big book but you turned it into your own.

ROBIN: We had the big book of the parts but we didn't have the story. The only story we had of the big book was what the syllabus was before.

MEL: Okay so you got a not particularly a navigatable

ROBIN: Right, exactly. Because we would look at the stuff and go why is she having you read all this stuff. We kind of came up with our own stories of things. What's been happening, and thank God these students are flexible because we're trying to kind of be at least a week in advance so we can really read each thing and be very clear about stuff. In the process of doing that we're noticing that some of the selections that she had that we're using are not what I would have chosen.

MEL: Okay.

ROBIN: For example so Ruth and I are taking turns so kind of again sort of the time issue to acknowledge that this is work load we were not anticipating and how to be pragmatic. So I did the Vygotsky piece (sound problem) how are you going to speakoh, okay. So one of the key things about the Vygotsky is the idea of a zone of proximal development. She didn't have any readings that went really into that or critiqued it or connected it to how people were using it. So I looked around for that one and then in looking for something that would do that I came across a paper by one of the authors that we were going to do the week after that, that was essentially a keynote talk about him talking about the people that we had read before him. It was like what a great opportunity to have this person sort of sit back and talk about these two theories because these are real people. Their ideas didn't come out of some magic box. They came out of something interesting. So there's a lot of to kind of speak to the limitations and strengths and it sort of carried a story line connecting the various people that we were reading so that again kind of counteracting a desire to say oh, this is a bad idea. I won't use it, to like this is a good idea but it's flawed.

MEL: Okay.

ROBIN: So

MEL: So I'm going to kind of sounds like we've come to a bit of a hard point and I wouldn't do this in an actual interview, just so you know. I usually have better-- this methodology thing and what I'd like to do is put a marker here and Terry, you can keep transcribing, but what I'd like you to do and I think I'm going to do this simultaneously but you're Robin so I'm going to try it

ROBIN: Catching me at the end of the day.

MEL: So what we have is, as you can see, the transcript. We'll skim through it. We're not going to read this data an but see what it's like to look through things and quickly

ROBIN: What would you be looking at?

MEL: [Indistinguishable word] and also in general one step back what was it like to talk and have it transcribed and the practice is set up. I noticed that you were looking for oh, how do you spell Vygotsky at the time that both of us were not looking at the screen.

ROBIN: There were times I was looking at the screen and acknowledging that it was writing stuff. Then I realized that I couldn't really watch it and talk at the same time because it would just it's like information overload somehow. I think if I was going to go back and look at this, you know, I would do sort of the simple things of, you know, are there funky words that can be fixed or is, you know, looking for the parts where what I said was I really don't like this but it comes across as I really do like it. So those sort of glaring like no, no, no, I didn't mean that.

MEL: Okay.

ROBIN: Part of me is wondering what would be the benefit of being able to do the bracketed thing, you know, like if I was going to point somebody to like that was a key thing that I think I was trying to deal with or something

MEL: Yeah,, so let's try this and see. I think 13 minutes left of Terry time we have. Instead of skimming over this not going through it but thinking about what was an interesting part you might want to come back to. So I think, we might have different ideas but anything that really jumps out to you from that conversation and go what did I say about that.

ROBIN: Well I mean I think one thing is this idea of there's this, you know, the big book. Even using the language the big magic book that has all the answers, you know, and kind of me sort of thinking about is there such a thing as the big book that has all the answers. Ultimately I had to make it my own. I think that was something I was thinking about.

MEL: Okay. So I'm marking that a little bit on line 22. So big book text just as a way of annotating. This is all very rough and improvisational. We have the big book you talk about so there wasn't a big book. What else you talk about having the big book? Talked about the effect of not having

ROBIN: Right

MEL: Not having a big book.

ROBIN: Right. So the big book being the placeholder for information about the class, what we could do, what are the key points, you know, what are the goals. You know, the image that comes to my mind is, you know, in K-12 instruction there are these big books, you know. They're binders that have this is a lesson plan and for each lesson plan these are the objectives and these are the reasons we do it this way and this is what you do and this is how you spend your time and these are problems students may have and here are the resources. So it's sort of this, you know, it's written as if it's meant to be shared which is probably why there was no big book. [Laughter].

MEL: Because she didn't put that stuff together thinking ah, some day I shall pass this class on to other people.

ROBIN: Yeah.

MEL: Another thing I sort of heard you talk about and I'm looking up in the transcript, there's 2 ways you're talking about the big book. You're talking about what would it be like to have the big book of materials and at first I thought you meant if we had something that had all the readings and didn't have to go out and ask what papers there were and what books to read and all that stuff. Then I realized actually you've got that. In fact, the student whose story you're reading that's the kind of book they had

ROBIN: Right

MEL: It wasn't official. It was shared. It was meant to be shared but it didn't sound like there was a look I'm teaching this class and here are the learning objectives, here is how you go about it. -- so you talk about the big book, are you talking about the raw material from which I'm going to pull myself together, like the terrain or are you talking about here is the guide book or the map or the outline?

ROBIN: Well it's funny because for the history and philosophy class there is a big book. So

what the big book is, is me and Alice sitting down and talking to each other about well what are the big things we want students to get. How could we use the time to help them get there? What problems might we anticipate that they're going to struggle with? How can we use class time to not only get at some big ideas but help develop tools to figure things out on their own? . So it's an electronic big book and it's not pretty. It's not meant for consumption really beyond us. We would sit down and it was also because we taught collaboratively. The it was the place where we wrote checking if we were all on the same page. It was also the way of you're going to take the first half of class and I'm going to take the second half of class and just being clear to each other about what that means, and if there was something there that was, you know, on oh, you're going to do this and get this point across I don't get what you mean by that and you can help he me. So it's a place where we had conversations about the class. So it didn't necessarily look pretty but it captured those pieces and it had qualities of for the first 45 minutes we spend out time this way. It's a partnership for 3 hours and you know what you're going to be doing. So at some level we're kind of creating a version of the big book for thinking, not in the same way that Alice and I did for history and philosophy but Ruth started this idea of making slides. So we actually have slides for the class, not to say that we get up there and present, but the slides are places for us to connect to, and they end up being like the points we want to get across or the connections we want them to see and then it goes up with the other materials that the students can access if they want to go and get to that too. So it's a little bit-- it doesn't look like the behind the scenes story like the dirty, the one that Alice a
nd I have. It's a cleaned up version that we're using in class and as a resource for students. So it's the, the book is coming out of the process.

MEL: There are really, really interesting big book, what does it mean-- down but since we have Terry for 10 more minutes probably, the pause and call back in a little bit and think about what we've been doing here. So more I've been going through the transcript and

tagging. This is, interview cap on, Robin. -- and put your Robin my advisor hat on from a method perspective.

MEL: This is fascinating

ROBIN: Yeah. I mean hmm lots of different things going on in my head. I mean I I think the thing of tagging stuff is, you know, I've been rambling on for God knows how long and the tags are kind of the short story. It's like what are the key things that I talked about, and it's where am I struggling with finding words to explain myself. It's also as a method it's providing a way for us to do a version of triangulation from the standpoint of you kind of saying well there's something important that seems to be going on here and then you get to hear it again from my point of view.

MEL: Yeah

ROBIN: So I think that's kind of interesting. You know because the transcript is up there you can actually point to my words instead of your memory of what the words were or the connection that came into your mind. So like the big book is like my language, and you could have said something else. You could have said oh, a curriculum module, you know. And I would be like no that's not the big book.

MEL: So does that-- talk about the triangulation. Does that depend on having as an [indistinguishable word] having a transcript in front of you right now help make things more solid somehow? -- memory and couldn't quote your words back to you, you know-- basically. If this wasn't to print.

ROBIN: One of the things, another thing of what I was talking about were the pragmatics of time. So what you did is you asked me to reflect on something and I did it cold. I just started thinking about it and I like talked in circles. So being able to do, so have the opportunity to do that is its own thing. Being able to come back and look at what I said the moment is actually an opportunity to kind of solidify some ideas or to see for myself

what I was trying to figure out versus, you know, yeah you're going to send this to me in another week when it's transcribed and then I'm just going to magically have some time.

MEL: Right

ROBIN: And then I'm going to do stuff. So it's kind of like you have me now. Use me now. That's one of the, very pragmatic because pragmatic I cans was seen in the big book.

MEL: The conversation but they'll have this on top of each other. We're not going to get a beautiful clean unified story. Part of that is my job taking it back and messing around but in terms of this is the raw material-- anything explosive you may want to take out before you say this is the raw material. Do you feel like at this point you would be able to do that, that if we had another 20 minutes just to worry about that.

ROBIN: Yeah, I mean in this particular scenario it has some bad stuff attached to it and if I had said some of that stuff I would like to have had the opportunity to take that out. So the bad stuff being, you know, this was a class that was taught by somebody who didn't show up.

[Laughter]

MEL: Right

ROBIN: That on its own doesn't look so bad. You know, this goes out into the world the minute people know it's me, it's-- you know. If I had said something like I'm going to give you something politically charged, this is somebody who didn't get tenure and as an act of rebellion didn't show up, you know, I think I would probably be okay with it was a situation where a faculty member didn't show up but the other one I would have the opportunity.

Hmm, it's not necessary. It's not necessary for the story, quite frankly. You don't need to know that.

MEL: The story

ROBIN: Right

MEL: And the story you talked-- oh, this is the part where you said that. How would you like to change that.

ROBIN: Right and giving me this directed me to the big book. I don't know if I would have said the big book.

MEL: Okay. So I know we didn't refer back to that very much but it was a jumping off place instead of me sitting down going tell me about.

ROBIN: Yeah at 5 o'clock at the end of the day doing essentially not as well as Terry is doing it but sitting in a meeting writing notes for an hour and a half my brain fatigues. I don't know what I would have said without a prompt. The reality is any prompt is a good prompt.

MEL: Yeah. Okay Terry I know that this is the end of the time we have with you. So this is a stopping point. Is that okay for you.

yes.

okay. Thanks

ROBIN: Sorry I was-- so

>> Okay buy guys.

AIDS education: a conversation with an african-american adolescent

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2013-qualitative-lather

Notizen:

P: A researcher's reflections on what she learned from a 13-year-old girl who looked at the survey instrument on AIDS the researcher was planning on giving to local youth. The girl was angry at the survey's phrasing and statements, saying that the survey (which she saw as coming from adults, who are supposed to teach kids things) was inappropriate and needed to tell kids not to have sex and get AIDS. It was this girl's outburst of anger that disrupted the researcher's planned study in a way that actually let her get deeper into, and learn more about, how to reach and research youth with HIV/AIDS.

Becoming qualitative researchers: an introduction

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2013-qualitative-lather, Methodology, Social sciences

Notizen:

Chapter 1 - Meeting Qualitative Inquiry

Q 4: [Quantitative and qualitative researchers both] "state a purpose, pose a problem or raise a question, define a research population, select research methods, develop a time frame, collect and analyze data, and present outcomes. They also rely (explicitly or implicitly) on theory and are concerned with rigor."

P 5: Logical positivism is the paradigm that research built linearly upon itself until we knew how the world worked. Thomas Kuhn was the first to question this.

Q 5: "A paradigm... is a framework or philosophy of science that makes assumptions about the nature of reality and truth, the kinds of questions to explore, and how to go about doing so."

P 5: Ontology is what you believe about reality.

P 5: Epistemology is the study of the nature of knowledge.

P 7: Great table on paradigms, partially reproduced below.

- Positivism (also postpositivism and logical empiricism) - research is to predict, methods are experimental or quasi-experimental, causal comparative
- Interpretivism (also constructivism, naturalism, phenomenological, hermeneutical) - research is to understand, methods are ethnography, phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, narrative analysis, grounded theory
- Critical theory (also feminist theory and critical race theory) - research is to emancipate, methods are critical ethnography, feminist research, participatory action, critical discourse analysis
- Poststructuralism (also postmodernism, postcolonialism, post-Fordist) - research is to deconstruct, methods are deconstruction, genealogy, rhizoanalysis, paralogic legitimation

N: There's a more detailed history/overview of the growth of these paradigms that I skip here because we covered it in Dr. Dolby's class in May 2012.

P 16-23 : Different methods -- ethnography, life history (getting at a picture of an individual life or lives), grounded theory, case studies, action research (focused on getting stuff done)

P 22: Three types of case studies: intrinsic (understand that actual case better), instrumental (use the case to gain insight into or change perceptions of something), and collective (use a few instrumental cases to look at a general condition/population).

Chapter 2 - prestudy tasks: doing what is good for you

P 29-30: Choose a topic that's of interest to you, but not so personal/emotional that it's about your therapy.

P 31-33: Use literature reviews as an ongoing process to inform and inspire your methods, broaden your horizons, and make sure you're going into new territory with the knowledge you're contributing.

N: What is the difference between a literature review and a theory review? Is one type of lit review a theory lit review? Is lit reviewing about "facts" and theory about "framing of the facts"?

P 35-36: There are several layers of theories.

- Low level - empirical generalizations or substantive theories; these are outcomes from related studies.
- Middle-range - formal theory, general theory, middle-range propositions: explain a class of phenomena (examples in book: revolution, delinquency, antagonism)

N ^: Are there higher-level theories? Or... help me understand what theories are, what the mapping is, how to think about them because right now I just have one big brain-lump labeled "THEORY" and that does me little good.

P 39-44 : Design your research statement and question, select a site.

N ^: I'm skipping taking notes on these because I'm mostly using "The Craft of Research" on research questions (and this repeats much of it) and I have my sites (or at least as of this January 2013 writing, think I do).

P 44- : Study participant selection, some options:

- typical case sampling
- extreme/deviant case sampling
- homogenous sampling (describe people "of this type")
- maximum variation sampling (search for common patterns, try to get people of all different types)
- theoretical sampling (select based on your evolving theory, mostly grounded theorists use this)
- snowball/chain/network sampling (one participant leads to another; mostly a getting-started point, not recommended if you have other options)
- convenience sampling (what's easy? not recommended at all)

P 46: How many people do you need to interview? Morse (1994, 225) suggests 30-50 interviews are needed for ethnographic/grounded theory research.

N ^: Do I fit that with my current design? Let's see. 4 faculty per school for 8 faculty total... times 3 interviews per semester, times 2 semesters is 48 interviews... plus pre/post interviews and admin interviews? Yeah, I have plenty.

P 47-50 : select research techniques (longer discussion here than I'm taking notes on) and consider how to make your research trustworthy; who can check you, how can you check yourself, see your biases?

P 50-59 : Consider timeframe for everything; it usually takes longer than you think it will. Factor in IRB.

P 59-60: Define your role as a researcher.

N ^: What is mine? I need to consider this.

Chapter 3 - Being there: developing understanding through participant observation

P 65: Where on the continuum from observer to participant should you place yourself? It depends, but remember to do it consciously, and you may adjust as needed.

Q 71: Wolcott (1981) suggests four more strategies to guide observations: (1) observations by a broad sweep, (2) observations of nothing in particular, (3) observations that search for paradoxes, and (4) observations that search for problems facing the group.

P ^: The "nothing in particular" is to see what stands out when you're not looking for specific things.

P 83-85: collaboratively created visual data; researcher gives participants cameras, for instance. Consent, etc. is important to consider; do you want to anonymize, blur faces, etc? Will photos be published, etc? Photos/videos tend to make participants more eager to review/read/get copies of the research.

N^: Is this something I want to do for my dissertation, since classrooms/curricula are so often such embodied spaces, and space designs are a huge factor in learning experience design?

P 90: table on different kinds of observational data: setting appearance, acts, events, processes, talk, documents, and artifacts

Q 94: As participation increases, marginality decreases, and you begin to experience what others see, think and feel. This can be absolutely worthwhile for yourself and research participants; no amount of advantageous marginality can replace the sense of the things that participation offers. How you combine participation and observation will be dictated by what you hope to understand, your theoretical stance, and your research participants.

Chapter 4 - Making words fly: developing understanding through interviewing

P 102: Types of interviews - structured, semi-structured, unstructured/conversational

P 107: Differentiates between "presupposition questions" and "leading questions." The former presupposes the respondent has something to say; for instance instead of asking "Are you satisfied with volunteering? In what ways yes, in what ways no?" you can say "I will ask you about your satisfaction/dissatisfaction with volunteering; let's start with how it's satisfying" and presuppose there's satisfaction/dissatisfaction involved. This is not leading. Leading is when you make it obvious which way you "want" them to answer.

P 110: Pilot your questions with (ideally) the group you want to study, but not your actual study subjects. Get your pilot respondents to also criticize and help you shape your questions.

P 114: How long should an interview last? An hour starts being the point of diminishing returns for most. How often will you meet? Regularity is helpful, and it's good to agree on a couple sessions in advance if you need more data.

Q 114: [sample text you can use with subjects] "I would like to meet with you at least two times, and maybe more, certainly no more than is comfortable for you. And you may - without any explanation - stop any particular session or all further sessions."

N ^: Citation of (Meho, 2006) here on online interviewing, which I need to read. This is Meho, L. 2006. Email interviewing in qualitative research: A methodological discussion. Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 57(10), 1284-1295.

Chapter 5 - Personal Dimensions: Field relations and reflexivity

P 142: Sometimes you'll need to take action to fit in -- standing up for "the side" of the people you're building rapport with, or ignoring "bad things" for the same reason (if someone makes racist remarks, etc), or modifying your public behavior (displays of affection, etc).

P 146: You may need to take breaks and blow off steam during your fieldwork; your journal is a place where you can do this. Gain distance periodically.

P 154: Be attuned to your emotions -- when you feel angry, sad, excited, etc. your personal views are likely

at work. Explore those feelings and what they tell you about who you are in relationship to your participants, what you're learning, what you might be preventing yourself from seeing and learning.

Q 158: Thinking about the interplay of subjectivity, embodiment, and positioning of yourself with that of research participants assists in data interpretation and representation. In fact, how you position yourself within the text is yet another positioning, a "textual positioning" (Madison 2005). Ask yourself how those in the research site would react to your interpretations, to your words. Is your interpretation paternalistic at times? ...How is the representation missing the complexity of the lives studied?

Q 158-159: Rather than the voice of the expert who authoritatively presents "results," the reflexive stance involves honestly and openly locating your positions and positionalities in the research, reflecting upon how they interacted with your observations and interpretations.

P 159-160: A set of reflexive questions based on Patton's work that can be used to prompt reflection.

Chapter 6 - But is it ethical? Considering what's "right"

P 164: Quotes the AAA Code of Ethics -- especially pay attention to the following...

Q 164: Anthropological researchers have primary ethical obligations to the people, species, and materials they study and to the people with whom they work. These obligations can supersede the goal of seeking new knowledge...

Q 164: Anthropological researchers must determine in advance whether their hosts/providers of information wish to remain anonymous or receive recognition, and make every effort to comply with those wishes. Researchers must present to their research participants the possible impacts of the choices, and make clear that despite their best efforts, anonymity may be compromised or recognition fail to materialize.

N^: Use for Leadership case study on RTR IRB

P 181-182: Current IRB standards are being challenged by "feminist communitarianism." (Lincoln and Denzin 2008, pp 542-543) has more on this; it's (according to Lincoln & Denzin) "communitarian, egalitarian, democratic, critical, caring, engaged, performative, social justice oriented" and creates a community characterized by "moral obligation on the part of qualitative researchers, responsibility and obligation to participants, to respondents, to consumers of research, and to themselves as qualitative field-workers... [and mandates] a stance that is democratic, reciprocal, and reciprocating rather than objective and objectifying"

Chapter 7 - Finding your story: data analysis

P 185: Quick definition of conversation analysis taken from (Bloor and Wood, 2006)

Q 186: In other words, the context in which the narrator tells the story influences what is told and how it is told. Who asks the questions that invite a story? How are some stories encouraged or silenced?

P 186: Mentions Gubrium & Holstein's 2009 work on "narrative ethnography" - see (Gubrium and Holstein, 2009) for full quote.

P 190: Create and keep a filing system of some sort. Consider keeping, in particular, a file for quotations to use for epigraphs and so forth.

P 193: How can you tell the difference between theoretical saturation and a too-small sample pool? No absolute answer, but it's something to pay attention to.

P 206-207: (Weitzman, 2000) classifies CAQDAS (computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software) programs as follows:

- Text retrievers - search for words/phrases
- Text-based managers - holds text and metadata on that text, allows you to organize/sort/retrieve it according to different criteria
- Code and retrieve programs - apply codes to text, then retrieve data according to codes
- Code-based theory builders - Code and retrieve programs that also graphically represent relationships between codes; lets you create hierarchies
- Conceptual network builders - network displays that show relationships among concepts

N^: Right now I have zotero, ack, and my brain. I should probably work more with zotero export to plaintext so I can sift it with ack.

P 207: Nice quote by Gibbs from "Analyzing Qualitative Data" (2007, p. 40) on plenty of great qualitative analysis was done without software before it became available, so software tools aren't actually needed.

P 208-209: (Wolcott, 1994) "Transforming Qualitative Data: Description, Analysis, and Interpretation" posits those three means of data transformation as stages you can use to move from organization to meaning of data.

N^: Might make a good blog post in the midst of my dissertation, and help me explain the coding process to participants if I frame it in this way.

P 213: An outline that one can put all of one's research data into.

N^: If I ever teach qualitative methods to newbies, I should give them this page as an outline for their first assignment. Also Appendix A, "guide for developing a qualitative research proposal."

Chapter 8: Crafting your story: writing up qualitative data

P 219: The writer's roles are threefold: artist, translator/interpreter, and transformer.

P 227: Mentions Stephen King's 10% rule -- every draft, cut the previous draft by 10%.

P 229-231: Possibilities for text organization:

- thematic
- natural history approach ("retrace your own steps and perceptions")
- chronological
- zoom lens - move between descriptive detail and theoretical abstraction
- narrative
- separate narrative and interpretation
- amalgamation -- describe the "typical" person or day
- data display (charts, graphs, etc)

P 233-234: Examples of different ways to end a write-up: academic-style "essence" statements, "looking forward" statements that point towards the next project, and journalistic-style writing that leaves the last line as a quote from a research participant. From (Delamont, 1992) 's analysis of endings of qualitative

write-ups.

P 236: There are tradeoffs you can think about when deciding on presentation form. For instance, what are the pluses/minuses of storytelling vs problem statement + lit review + methods + findings + conclusion, or a separate literature section vs integrating it into the text?

P 237: If you're quoting your subjects and your interview notes are accessible (online, etc) you should cite/link-to them.

P 246: Examples of nonconventional formats: *Troubling the Angels* (Lather and Smithies, 1997), *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen* (Tsing, 1993).

P 247: Autoethnography is the sort of writing you do when you put yourself into an sociocultural context you're writing about. Readers are often asked to relive the experience with writers.

P 247-249: Many autoethnography resources, including (Reed-Danahay, 1997) on the phenomenon and (Ellis, 1996) and (Boechner, 2000) as examples. (Richardson 2000, p. 931) describes how readers are asked to relive the experience with the author. (Pigeon, 1998) is an example reliving a PhD. And *Mystory* (Denzin 2008, 123) is like autethnography but collides sources and then uses those stories to critique some aspect of society.

N^: these are notes for me for further reading -- I'd like to write a memo/blog on this.

P 250-255: Poetic transcription as a writing technique, with examples. More at (Glesne, 1997) - That rare feeling: Re-presenting research through poetic transcription. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3(2), 202-221.

P 255-259: Ethnodrama as a writing technique, with more resources here if I need to draw upon them later.

N^: "Handle With Care" is an example of an ethnodrama on cancer, with scripts pieced together from "data."

P 259-260: Short stories or ethnographic novels are another format -- nothing new.

N^: Tracy Kidder is a good example.

P 260-262: there are tons of formats you could use for your output -- film, painting... be creative! what message will you send with your medium?

Meeting qualitative inquiry -- Prestudy tasks : doing what is good for you -- Being there : developing understanding through participant observation -- Making words fly : developing understanding through interviewing -- Personal dimensions : field relations and reflexivity -- But is it ethical? Considering what's "right" -- Finding your story : data analysis -- Crafting your story : writing up qualitative data -- Improvising a song of the world : language and representation -- The continuing search

Design Across Disciplines

Typ Dissertation

Autor Shanna R. Daly

Universität Purdue University

Ort West Lafayette

Datum August 2008

Anzahl der Seiten 189

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Notizen:

P 38: Uses 2 frameworks: one describing features of a design task that determined participant recruitment from different disciplines, the other being phenomenography (what is it to be aware of an aspect of the world) and its specific subset of variation theory that shaped the research approach

P 39-41: Phenomenography is a very engineering-ish approach that sounds like a reply to post-positivism's decentering: "there is only one world, but it is a world that we (as individuals) experience." It's been used in education ("how do different students understand and experience the same concept?")

N 41: Defends sample size by saying phenomenographical samples are "traditionally small" (she had 20 participants, which I don't think is small at all!)

P 41: Sampling method is for as wide a variation as possible in discipline

P 42: Used structured questions with unstructured follow-ups

N 42-45: Spends a lot of time explaining the approach and defending its "rigor" -- interviewer should not "lead" participants and make sure all data comes "from them," don't even transcribe things until all interviews are done because otherwise transcription will influence the future interviews, etc. -- all this points to a distanced positionality.

P 46: 3 outcomes of a phenomenographic study: description of outcome space, picture of categories of description and their relationship, description of categories.

N ^: Does picture mean, literally, "graphic"?

Q 47: A criticism of many qualitative studies is researcher bias.

N^: Sounds like she's trying to remove this as much as possible instead of embracing it.

P 47: Member-checking in phenomenography is used only for transcript accuracy, not for analysis verification (participants can't member-check something that's been aggregated from data that includes people that aren't them).

Q 48: In the end, finding professional designers who were willing to be participants played a more significant role than the balance of all criteria [of diversity, namely gender, years of experience, and domain of design].

N^: Participant selection was constrained by reality/sanity bounds.

P 51: In the disciplinary sample, a lot of engineers were included deliberately because engineering is heavily associated with design, and the researcher is an engineer.

N^: Speaking of herself in the third person. Also, why not just say "this was an engineering education dissertation"? Was Shanna trying to reach as broad a design audience as possible?

P 55: Describes the process of piloting interview protocol; tested with art/writing grad student and chemical engineering grad student, so that it was piloted with one discipline Shanna was associated with (engineering) and one she wasn't (art).

N^: This makes the informal "I'll ask my friends!" protocol sound more formal.

P 56-59: The interview protocol is given here; it is a short list of questions that spans 2 pages (1 full page and 2 half-pages).

P 59: Interviews were 30-60 min

P 61-66: Includes a few versions of her categories (one of her final "research outcomes") and how they evolved; displays an early categorization and then a brief critique of what she realized wasn't quite right, and then how this got reworked for the next version

P 66-67 : Describes researcher bias as a chemical engineer and dancer/choreographer, and describes frustration feelings from people reacting to her doing both by thinking they were super-different; Shanna believes there are fundamental similarities

P 67: Shanna says she did not impart this bias to participants and did not let it influence her analysis, because she was aware she held this bias

N^: ...really?

Eliciting narrative through the in-depth interview

Typ Zeitschriftenartikel

Zusammenfassung Interviews that elicit narratives can be more meaningful than interviews based on a question-and-answer format. A study investigating the fear of crime elicited rich data when interviewees were allowed to tell stories in response to open-ended questions. An understanding of the gestalt of the narrative and its connection to the psychological implications of free association can help social scientists understand the meaning of the interview.

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Notizen:

Interviews that elicit narratives can be more meaningful than interviews based on a question-and-answer format. A study investigating the fear of crime elicited rich data when interviewees were allowed to tell stories in response to open-ended questions. An understanding of the gestalt of the narrative and its connection to the psychological implications of free association can help social scientists understand the meaning of the interview.

P: It can be difficult to talk with people about subjects difficult to them (traumatic experiences, fears they have, etc) because their defenses get in the way, even if they're trying to be open about it. The biographical interpretative method, first developed for interviews of Holocaust survivors, was created for exactly this. It takes the stance that there is a whole ("gestalt") behind the parts that the researcher should strive to elicit and not destroy -- a delicate extraction, a peeking at the anxieties through the thicket of defenses. There are 4 principles: use open-ended and not closed questions, elicit stories, avoid "why" questions, and follow up using respondents' ordering/phrasing.

N ^: Seems fairly straightforward -- if I decide to use this for my narrative elicitation, the citation is in this paper.

E-mail interviewing in qualitative research: A methodological discussion

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Notizen:

P 1284: This paper looks at email interviewing - "online, asynchronous, in-depth interviewing within the context of qualitative research" -- as a method. It's previously been lumped into "online qualitative research methods" but is distinct from surveys, etc.

P 1286-1287: tables summarizing the studies they found that used email interviewing -- number of participants, number of dropouts, etc.

P 1285-1288: pluses/minuses of email interviewing

- scheduling is easier
- cost is low (no travel, no transcription)
- enables geographically spread out groups to communicate
- may be more comfortable for shy people
- some people may respond slowly, or drop out

P 1288-1289: recruitment is usually via online means -- message boards, etc. Do follow-up emails because some people delete emails. Also, consent forms can be done via email as well instead of on paper, but make sure you do them, and consider data protection and anonymity measures.

P 1289-1291: Email interviews can have just as good data quality as face-to-face ones (there have been several studies comparing these). Interviewers must be skilled with online interviews -- compensating for the lack of body language and tone of voice, probing with good follow-up questions afterwards (knowing that some participants won't respond to follow-up probes), etc.

N ^: If I consider doing online ethnography/interviews, those will be good sources to look at to think about how I will get good data quality, and show others that my data quality is high.

P: ends with a how-to on doing email interviews

Keywords in Qualitative Methods

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Notizen:

N: Quote below comes from Glesne's "Becoming Qualitative Researchers," 4th ed.

Q 39: Conversation analysis studies the various practices adopted by conversational participants during ordinary everyday talk. This may include how participants negotiate overlaps and interruptions, how various failures (such as hearing and understanding problems) are dealt with during the interaction and how conversations are opened and terminated.

N^: This is a positive framing of conversation analysis (CA) compared to (Parker 2004) chapter 7, which critiques it as a pale shadow of discourse analysis. It seems to me to be a technique that has its place, just like every other -- and strengths and weaknesses, like every other.

N^: I won't do this in my dissertation, but CART during interviews opens up some interesting possibilities for CA on those interviews either during or after the session.

Passion at work: blogging practices of knowledge workers

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Autor Lilia Efimova
Universität Novay
Ort Enschede
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N: This was a dissertation completed by a student in the Netherlands that studied the blogging practices of knowledge workers. I chose it for a few reasons: first, she was doing her data collection online and navigating public/private spaces and relationships in a similar way as what I see myself doing, and second, her approach and attitude was very transparent -- she blogged memos to herself throughout her work, and her blog posts are as much a "methodology section" as the formal chapter in her printed dissertation, and I found the interplay fascinating. All the notes below are based solely on the printed dissertation paper.

Q 17: Somewhere in 2004 I shared Italian food and some of my methodological frustrations with Torill Mortensen, also a blogger, who had just completed her PhD studying text-based multi-user computer games.

N^: This is the most conversational and human-embedded opening to a methods section I've ever seen. She names people! She shares food with them! She admits the story as part of the process! This is in contrast to Shanna's "I am objective and speak of myself in the third person" approach and even Alice's brisk "I did this, that, and the other" fact-stating.

P 18-19: Describes her paradigm as interpretive, and explains why choosing and articulating a paradigm is so important. Explicitly acknowledges that her thinking and research evolved a great deal in the process.

P 20-26: Efimova provides a detailed literature review of multiple aspects of researching using blog data; prior work done, analysis tools that can be used, limitations, assumptions, various uses of data and technology. She draws a broad picture of the possible terrain, then locates herself within it.

P 27: Includes a snippet from one of her blog posts in the middle of the chapter to illustrate a point about her research approach.

N^: This is incredibly cool -- it's like a sidebar, a different way of quoting yourself that makes it clear that these are different versions of you speaking at different levels of polish and at different points in time.

P 28-30: Describes Efimova's decision to become a participant researcher -- that is, she began blogging herself when she began studying bloggers. This helped her understand the experiences of bloggers more deeply. Her blogging practice also gave her something to compare to the practices of her subjects, and made her an "insider" that could more freely move about and be introduced within the community as "one of them."

N^: The researcher is transformed by her research.

P 30-31: Efimova also used blogging as a way to make sense of her research while she was doing it and also as a way to involve participants.

Q 31: As I blogged on the progress of my research, other bloggers could easily follow those posts, creating influences and feedback loops that researchers usually learn to avoid in order to escape "contaminating their data". I have learnt to embrace them in my research...

N: But this did not mean she let all hell break loose in terms of "anything goes" building relationships between herself and her subjects.

Q 31: I tried to vary the degree of closeness to the participants between and within specific studies. For example, when selecting bloggers for interviews I made an effort to talk to people more distant from myself (for example, those unlikely to be reading my weblog).

P 31-36: Writing style and role conflict created by being a participant-researcher, a researcher and a blogger -- how to keep this project from being endless and unformed, how to react when the "researcher" reaction to an occurrence and the "friend" or "fellow blogger" reaction might be different? Efimova doesn't offer neat answers, but instead offers excerpts from her blog posts grappling with these issues. She also notes the deadline of finishing a dissertation was great motivation to stay on track.

P 36-38: Efimova describes her decisions with regards to research ethics and confidentiality. She used public data sources from public figures, which were searchable and non-anonymizable -- but also blended them with more "private" data (as in interviews), so making sure the "private" data didn't inadvertently get unmasked by the "public" data was an important consideration.

Q 37: As a starting point to resolve this problem, I use ethical recommendation from the Association of Internet Research (Ess & the AoIR ethics working committee, 2002): I treat bloggers as authors of publicly available texts and explicitly attribute weblog posts to them.

P 38-45: The remainder of the chapter provides suggestions on how to evaluate the quality of the research, including techniques such as triangulation and thick description.

N^: In effect, Efimova is saying "I know this is complex and hard to evaluate; let me show you some ways you could judge the quality of my work."

Qualitative Psychology

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Notizen:

7 - Discourse (p. 88-104)

N: (From Dr. Lather in class) The word "discourse" here is used in a very specific sense; some people say "discourse" when they really mean just "talk" or "language." In the Foucauldian sense, "discourse" specifically refers to how words shape and are shaped by power/politics.

N: "heteroglossia" (from Mikhail Bakhtin) is a PhD-student word Dr. Lather jokes we can impress people with (it refers to different "varieties" within a single "language" -- English-speaking parents speak a different way to their little kids than to their boss.)

P 89-90: 4 key ideas in discourse analysis useful to radical research

- Multivoicedness of language: how are we made to fit into certain categories, how are we marked as different, how contradictions work in/within the categories... what's the difference between "lesbian" and "dyke" and "homosexual" (which can be seen as synonyms, but mean different things in category names)?
- Semiotics: how do we put language together into things (papers, book covers, etc) and how are we put together by our language and discourse? (Q 90: "At the same time as we actively form sentences and turns in a conversation, we also have to use words and phrases that carry meanings we cannot entirely control.")
- Resistance: what actions is the language carrying out? Does it challenge power relations? Keep them in place?
- Social bond: how does discourse draw boundaries to show what is in what category, what people are in/out of certain social bonds? (Q 90: For example, a discourse of heterosexuality defines what is

deviant, a medical discourse defines what is sick, and a dominant patriotic discourse defines what is alien.)

P 91-92: Beware conversation analysis, a shadow of discourse analysis that sticks to moment-by-moment interaction of "what they said" to keep the research "safer." Pitfalls:

- Textual empiricism: we need to "really see what is there" so we can only talk about what we see in the transcript, so if subjects did not specifically talk about power, we can't either.
- Pointless redescription: taking points already made in the transcript and repeating them more verbosely by inserting jargon to make things sound impressive; you add nothing new
- Nuts and bolts positivism: building up a list of technical terms that you use only for pointless redescription
- Not our department thinking: "we can't talk about ideology/power here because I'm only concerned with this tiny transcript I'm analyzing, it's out-of-scope"

N^: conversation analysis is the positivist version of discourse analysis?

N^: I'm not convinced by these arguments against conversation analysis -- I see how they can be limiting evils when done unconsciously in the name of TRUTH!!!, but conscious boundary-drawing is not evil and is in fact necessary sometimes.

P 92: Questions for discourse-analytic reading:

- Why is the text interesting?
- What do we know of the material out of which it is constructed? (P 93: bring in context -- what do we know about the characters/places/etc already?)
- What might be the effects of different readings of the text?
- How does it confront/challenge patterns of power?

P 94-98: Discourse-analytic interviewing. A discourse-analytic interview is a text-in-process; your "interview subject" becomes a "co-researcher" when enrolled as a discourse analyst (make sure your subject can do this). Start with a puzzling text and a question about it, and tell your co-researcher you want to be wary of taking things for granted so you share a framing of suspecting things may not be as they seem. Then fragment the text into parts: what are the objects described, the agents portrayed? What audience is this text written for, and what might people-who-agree-with-the-text say about people-who-disagree-with-the-text? What sorts of theory (sexuality? race/class? gender?) will you use to organize and map these categories? Finally, reflecting on what you've done together: where have you gone, what did you find, what did you miss because of the path you chose?

P 99-100: content vs thematic vs discourse analysis

- Content analysis counts words (quantitative: "we said X 9 times.")
- Thematic analysis groups words/phrases, which means we're making assumptions that the words in a group mean the same-enough thing to be grouped.
- Discourse analysis goes beyond that and links terms into meanings that are independent of the speakers.

N^: (Dr. Lather, in-class) Discourse is the study of effects that are somewhat independent of speakers. It decenters the subject. It's much more about how we are born into these discursive frameworks.

P 100-101: Pitfalls in discourse research

- Idle curiosity/voyeurism instead of a research question -- know why you're there!
- Sorting into themes instead of linking into discourses
- Discovering what people "really think"
- Discovering the "only" reading of the text

N 101: Talks about (Cameron, 1995) on verbal hygiene -- might want to look up this reference. Turns out to be the book "Verbal Hygiene" by Deborah Cameron, published 1995.

Other sections of the book

P 66-67: Pitfalls in interview research

- Claiming to have "established rapport" -- you're claiming it, not your subject. Instead, pay attention to when rapport breaks down and what you do about it.
- Claiming that someone has "really told you their story" -- it's a version of a story crafted for an audience. Why did they tell you this one?
- Claiming to have discovered "important information" -- you're not there to get information; that's an interrogation. You're there to learn about differences between forms of information and the consequences of those differences.
- Using the interview to "describe someone's experience" -- you don't have the experience, you have their story of it.

P 83: Pitfalls in narrative research

- "They really told me their story" -- it was a performance for you to hear. What was that performance about?
- "It was therapeutic for them" -- you're a researcher, not a counselor; keep boundaries so you don't cause them pain.
- "They were a good example of X" -- even if people present themselves as part of a category, don't just accept that blindly. Why did they do that, what identity scripts are at play?
- "They meant X by Y" -- you can't decode "the truth."

Q 140: Notes on validity/quality

- What counts as good?
- Who should it be for?
- What counts as analysis?
- What is the role of theory?

N ^ Boundaries I should pay attention to in my methods section writeup. Efimova did this admirably in her dissertation.

"They Must Be Working Hard": An (Auto-)Ethnographic Account of Women's Artistic Gymnastics

Typ Zeitschriftenartikel
Autor N. Barker-Ruchti
Publikation Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies
Band 8
Ausgabe 3
Seiten 372-380

Datum 2008-08-01**DOI** 10.1177/1532708607310799**ISSN** 1532-7086**Kurztitel** "They Must Be Working Hard"**URL** <http://csc.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/1532708607310799>**Heruntergeladen am** Di 19 Mär 2013 18:41:27 EDT**Bibliothekskatalog** CrossRef**Hinzugefügt am** Di 19 Mär 2013 18:41:27 EDT**Geändert am** Di 19 Mär 2013 18:41:27 EDT**Tags:**

2013-qualitative-lather

Notizen:

N: Great example of narrative write-ups in research that draw on an author's personal experience with the subject.

N: In-class questions:

1. The style used here is auto-ethnography, a fictional narrative interwoven from a collation of "real" experiences. The fictional narrative automatically invites suspicion (but sometimes that's intentional).
2. It comes from (unsurprisingly) Foucault.
3. The interweaving of theory and data was a lack of interweaving -- the author separated data from her theory so readers could interpret the data on their own.
4. (bibliography tips -- left empty)
5. Interesting things here: the author is writing about one of her own interests, and deliberately introducing fiction into the narrative construction.

Transcription in Research and Practice: From Standardization of Technique to Interpretive Positionings

Typ Zeitschriftenartikel**Autor** J. C. Lapadat**Autor** A. C. Lindsay**Publikation** Qualitative Inquiry**Band** 5**Ausgabe** 1**Seiten** 64-86**Datum** 1999-03-01**DOI** 10.1177/107780049900500104**ISSN** 1077-8004

Kurztitel Transcription in Research and Practice

URL <http://qix.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/107780049900500104>

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Geändert am Di 22 Jan 2013 15:58:35 EST

Tags:

2013-qualitative-lather

Notizen:

Q 66: ...researchers make choices about transcription that enact the theories that they hold.

P: By treating transcription itself as a research method, we can see that there are many different conventions that can be used, all revealing underlying assumptions about what the data is and how one ought to work with it.

N: The article itself discusses (mostly theoretically) a wide range of techniques for transcription, so its references may be a good place to look at examples of varied techniques.

N: My stance on transcription is an interesting one -- if I'm using CART to transcribe my interviews in realtime, what does that say about my stance? That also removes my opportunity to do my own transcription and make certain choices myself. What does it say that I'm relying on others for this -- and are there any specs I want to give them?

What can be known and how? Narrated subjects and the Listening Guide

Typ Zeitschriftenartikel

Autor A. Doucet

Autor N. S. Mauthner

Publikation Qualitative Research

Band 8

Ausgabe 3

Seiten 399-409

Datum 2008-07-01

DOI 10.1177/1468794106093636

ISSN 1468-7941

Kurztitel What can be known and how?

URL <http://qrj.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/1468794106093636>

Heruntergeladen am Di 19 Mär 2013 18:43:26 EDT

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Geändert am Di 19 Mär 2013 18:43:26 EDT

Tags:

2013-qualitative-lather

Notizen:

Talks about "narrated subjects" and describes a "listening guide" for how to read, in successive iterations, a narrative.

Q 405: READING 1: RELATIONAL AND REFLEXIVELY CONSTITUTED NARRATIVES. Our own approach has been to combine the basic grounded theory question, which is 'what is happening here?' (Charmaz, 2006), with elements from narrative analysis such as an interest in recurring words, themes, events, chronology of events, protagonists, plot, subplots, and key characters (Mishler, 1986; Elliott, 2005)

Q 405-406: READING 2: TRACING NARRATED SUBJECTS. A second reading of interview transcripts attends to the particular subject or narrator in the interview transcripts, and to how this person speaks about her/himself and the parameters of their social world. In concrete terms, we conduct this reading by utilising a coloured pencil to trace the 'I' in the interview transcripts. This process centres our attention on the active 'I' who is telling the story, amplifying the terms in which the respondent sees and presents her/himself while also highlighting where the respondent might be emotionally or intellectually struggling to say something. It also identifies those places where the respondent shifts between 'I', 'we', 'you' or 'it', which can signal varied meanings in the respondent's perceptions of self (Stanley, 2002).

Q 406: READING 3: READING FOR RELATIONAL NARRATED SUBJECTS. Our third reading of interview transcripts is a reading for social networks, and close and intimate relations.

Q 406: READING 4: READING FOR STRUCTURED SUBJECTS. A fourth reading of interview transcripts focuses on structured power relations and dominant ideologies that frame narratives. This reflects a concern to link micro-level narratives with macro-level processes and structures.

N: In-class discussion questions:

1. Name the narrative strategy. - Iterative reading of narrative subjects
2. From where do they get their theory? - grounded theory (Charmaz) and narrative analysis (Mishler & Elliott)
3. How do they interweave theory and data? - They don't. There is no data.
4. Bib tips - read the Charmaz and the Mishler, they're fantastic.
5. What's useful or not? - useful things: reminders that a story isn't the same as forensic truth, first 3 steps. not useful: no data, ridiculous amounts of theory that don't seem relevant to the analysis (they're the a priori theory they use to analyze their data, but they don't show us the data), and the 4th step seems only useful sometimes because it takes a hardcore critical theory stance -- if it just said, instead, "link your grounded theory with a priori now," it'd be way better.

Where do you draw the line? A study of academic engineers negotiating the boundaries of engineering

Typ Dissertation
Autor Alice L. Pawley
Universität University of Wisconsin-Madison
Ort Madison
Datum 2007
Anzahl der Seiten 229
Sprache en
Hinzugefügt am Di 05 Mär 2013 07:17:22 EST
Geändert am Di 05 Mär 2013 07:18:26 EST

Tags:

2013-qualitative-lather

Notizen:

N: The dissertation of one of my professors in Engineering Education at Purdue. She does research on feminist engineering education and still uses small, interview-intensive, qualitative datasets for her work.

N: In contrast to Shanna Daly's dissertation, which sprinkled references throughout an extended defense of her methodology, Alice simply lists the references for the methods she chose, as if to say "and that's it, people."

Q 64: This study employed semi-structured interviews: the majority of questions were determined ahead of time, but the order or wording was modified on site, and additional relevant questions were posed, depending on the interviewer's perception of the flow of the interview.

N ^: I love this wording and may borrow it. Concise and clear.

P 65: Section on how the IRB reacted - this study was exempt and classified "benign."

N ^: I've worried a lot about IRB reactions to my own work, but maybe it's not such a big deal.

N: Alice uses appendices a lot to refer to more detail that people can choose to look at; she doesn't need to defend everything up-front, but if she needs it, the work is there.

P 66: Alice used an "interview summary form" of guiding reflections/questions for herself to fill out after each interview to help guide thinking on the next ones.

- What were main issues in interview?
- Summarize the information you got, or failed to get on each target question.
- Anything else interesting, salient, illuminating, or important in this interview?
- What new (or remaining) target questions do you have in considering the next interview?

N^: I like this -- I'd never thought about making instruments for myself before, but I can see how giving myself a structure will help me sort out the mount of data I tend to get buried in.

P 67-70: Describes sampling methodology, which was based on getting a diversity of tenure-line engineering faculty at a large research university. Participants are not described individually ("subject A

was a woman associate professor...") but breakdowns are given for each of the criteria (X women, Y full professors, and so forth).

Q 70: (Description of member-checking) Once the interviews were transcribed, participants were mailed a CD containing the voice files of their interviews and the transcripts, and were invited to read through and correct any inaccuracies or other problems or to add any clarifications. However, no corrections were submitted, so the transcripts were taken as approved.

N^: Lack of activity is still a good thing to report -- tell everyone your procedure even if "nothing happened."

N: Alice lists in great detail all the tools and technology she used, right down to the model of microphone used to record the interviews and the specific software she applied.

Q 74: (On validity and data display) In many cases, I decided to base the writing on long quotations, which remain in the document rather than being paraphrased. These long quotes are a form of data display, and because of the nature of the data, they can only be "reduced" so much without losing information. I found it challenging to try to reduce the quotations because how each one hangs together—through the actual language used, through its context, and often messily intertwined with all sorts of other ideas—seemed so crucial for understanding what each person was trying to say. The presence of the data themselves allows readers to decide whether the analysis is believable or not.

P 76-78: One interesting writing convention was to not refer to participants using gendered pronouns ("except in direct quotes and in a very few instances where the participant's quote made visible his or her own gender.") Alice does note that excluding identifiers may be as offensive to people in some cases as including them -- some people think it's very important to note they are of a certain race/gender/group/etc.

P 78-80: Alice gives a demonstration of a raw interview snippet and how she analyzed it, to give a picture of how complex the analysis was.

N^: This is a great behind-the-scenes technique.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS – WRITEUP AND REFLECTION

PART 1: WRITEUP

This document was written as an experimental “third link” in a chain of stories. The first link in the chain was a story told by T about a course T had taught. A shortened version of T's story had been read by R, who then responded by telling a story of a course R had taught; I then produced a shortened version of R's story as well. Both T and R's stories were in-person interviews, and I wanted to see what it would look like to ask someone to *write* a story in response to the stories of others, rather than *tell* an (oral) story in an interview, so I asked M to read the short version of both T's and R's stories and then write a third story about a course M had taught. M wrote a one-page document that is the document under analysis.

M's story echoes elements of T's and R's in its beginning. The first sentence, “I remember back to my first teaching position,” references back to T's tale of being a first-time teacher, while the second, “I graduated in December and took over for the teacher who resigned,” echoes R's story of needing to step in for an absent colleague. There are 4 more sentences briefly and generically outlining M's actions as a novice teacher... and then the document ceases to be a story and begins to be an opinion paper. Instead of relaying M's past actions/thoughts, they begin like so:

- I would expect...
- I would think...
- I feel...
- [item] must...
- [person] should...
- I want to...

The document ended up not being useful for my desired analysis of teaching stories, because it wasn't a teaching story.

PART 2: REFLECTION

While I'd need to throw this document out as “data” in a study on “stories about teaching change,” its presence did make me think about what I wanted in my study (and I would note that in a final writeup, rather than pretending that the document never existed).

The generation of this document was not part of my original study design; I'd initially intended to study the live-edited transcript of an interview as a document, making note of the editing activity over time – what was edited out and what spoken dialogue accompanied that editing. However, participants generally did *not* censor their interviews; instead, they corrected typos. Therefore, I needed to figure out another “document” to analyze, and landed on this idea.

From the experience of collecting and analyzing this document, I learned that I should *probably* do interviews rather than asking participants to write documents (I thought that would probably be the case, but it was good to confirm it). I found myself frustrated when reading this document: “no, that wasn't what I wanted!” -- which made me think “ok, what do I want, then?” which led to a rearticulation that I wanted *stories*, and reflections grounded in those stories – not just the generalized reflections. Show, don't tell; assertions make very little sense without stories backing them as warrants. While some of my subjects (college faculty) may be perfectly able to write vivid, detailed prose, it's probably easier for them to talk about it with another person. We usually talk faster than we type, so the same “content” takes less time to generate, time being something precious and scarce for faculty. Interviews also allow the interviewer (me) to probe and the storyteller to respond; they're interactive, and that interaction (even with the interviewer as a silent witness) makes the story richer with the sort of details that I want to analyze.

I also learned that I might need to give storytellers more explicit guidance to tell *their* stories rather than commenting and critiquing the stories of others. Yes, it's nice you feel this way. Yes, it's nice you have this thought on what another person said (in fact, I hope you do – getting subjects involved in data analysis is one hope I have for my study design) but all those things are much, much less important than what I *actually* need from you, which is: what did *you* do?

DOCUMENT – RAW

I remember back to my first teaching position. I graduated in December and took over for the teacher who resigned. I can't remember if she had plans or not. What I do remember was developing a "scope and sequence" for all my classes for the following year.

In that case, I chose from a list of possible state written objectives to cover and went from there. Since all the objectives couldn't be covered in a semester and no two communities are alike, we chose what we felt was most important for our students to learn.

If, as was the case in the first paper, there were several sections of the same course, I would expect there to be set concepts to be covered. How those concepts were presented would be for the instructor to decide. I would think the department would expect some degree of uniformity so no student would have a deficit of knowledge because they had one instructor instead of another.

I have always appreciated other people's ideas about how to cover a concept. It is nice to have something to choose from. I feel the instructor will make the delivery their own by the points they make, how engaging they are, how safe the students feel about expressing their opinions or experiences, and the choice of materials used.

Evaluations must test concepts covered in the materials and classroom. Using someone else's plans doesn't mean the same points were stressed. The instructor should have stressed what they felt was important in the material, made the connections they felt were important. Those concepts are what should be tested in the evaluations. I want to test for the concepts and objectives I felt I covered, what I lead a discussion about.

GROUNDING SURVEY – WRITEUP AND REFLECTION

PART 1: WRITEUP

This survey was administered to R, the storyteller in my 2nd interview, based on the initial observations and assertions made in my midterm work. In this writeup, I will focus on 2 things: (1) my earlier assertion that live-transcription of interviews is nondisruptive because “people trump text” and (2) a discussion on the role and perception of the transcriber by interview subjects.

“People trump text”

In my midterm, I asserted (based on observations and an interview) that having your conversation captioned does not reduce your ability to attend to and develop rapport with other people physically present in that conversation. Pursuing that assertion further was one of the goals of this survey's design, and findings corroborated the assertion. As R so bluntly put it, “quite honestly [the transcriptionist] faded to the background pretty quickly.”

When asked to indicate a breakdown of their attention during the conversation, R indicated that the majority (65%) of her attention had been to either her storytelling or her own memories and thoughts, with 20% of the remaining attention going to me (the interviewer) or my questions, and 15% going to the transcript or the transcriptionist. For an interview designed to capture a story of R's memories as told by R, this breakdown seems quite appropriate.

R's comment, added after listing these numbers, bears further analysis:

R's comment	My interpretation
At the beginning and end I was noticing the transcriber and interviewer more	For those new to realtime transcription, there may be an initial adjustment period, but transcription soon fades into the background. This is corroborated in later comments on the survey; when asked how important it would be to her to have the same transcriber for future interviews, R wrote: “my sense is that after the first time it probably wouldn't [sic] be that important (a 2?) because it would be a familiar process.”
but for the most part I was focusing on the story and my memories in relation to the questions being asked.	This shows no signs of the transcription interfering with R's focus on her story.

<p>At times I noticed the transcription text - but my eyes didn't stay there.</p>	<p>The transcription isn't “sticky” -- it's something that can be glanced at and then looked away from quickly. This was seen in earlier observations of different interviews; participants would flick their eyes to the monitor and then look back to the other person in the conversation.</p>
<p>Sometimes watching the text made me think more.</p>	<p>This starts going into a second theme of my analysis (not explored fully in this writeup), that of <i>grounded indigenous coding</i>. Having one's thoughts externalized as a concrete artifact that's shareable by others can help participants reflect.</p> <p>This is corroborated by a comment R writes later in the survey, when she talks about “reading the transcript as a way to follow my own story” and how it was “a benefit” and “a memory device.”</p>

What is a transcriptionist seen as?

I warrant that the transcriptionist is seen as a service provided by a professional person, but that only the transcriptionist's skill and professionalism are relevant. This skill is quickly assessed in the beginning, and thereafter the transcriptionist is hardly thought of.

This is most poignantly captured in one survey comment by R: “I like that *it* was a human.” R continues: “That *the human* had a name meant she was human.” (Emphasis mine.) Names are part of an initial verification of the transcriptionist's categorical humanity, just as the first few minutes of watching the typed output are initial verifications of the transcriptionist's skill, a key part of building up the perception that you could trust the transcriptionist enough to ignore them. As R put it, “I didn't feel I needed to monitor what she typed to see whether she was capturing what I was saying.”

Skill did not mean error-free; errors by a transcriptionist perceived to be “skilled” did not diminish the perception of skill, at least not if R could see the mistake being a reasonable one – for instance, not knowing how to spell long names of Russian or East Indian origin. Allowances for differences in transcriptionist skill were also expressed: “if [the transcriptionist] wasn't keeping up, [I] would have slowed down or something .”

PART 2: REFLECTION

Doing this survey was a lot of fun – and blurred the line, for me, between survey and interview. I'd originally written the survey as a single page to be administered to R in person, but R's busy schedule combined with mine ended up with a meeting postponement and a decision to just send it by email (which is how the final version ended up being longer; I needed to write out some text I'd originally been meaning to speak to R).

R finally emailed back the results (shown in the survey-results file), but had misinterpreted one of the questions: where I asked about the transcriptionist, R had answered the questions as if they were about me (the interviewer). Curious about this, I asked R about it during our next meeting, which was not about the survey (or this research project) at all; she immediately started not just answering the question I'd pointed out, but also commenting even more on the survey questions, which I tried to capture (shown in the survey-followup file). This turned into a longer conversation on our research work in general, and my dissertation, and... at some point early in that process, when it became clear that our conversation was no longer about survey answers, I just stopped taking notes and started enjoying the talk (a decision that cost me “data,” I realize – but made me far happier at that particular moment, and you know what? I've lived just fine without whatever that “data” was.)

The lessons here, I think, were: (1) Interviews, surveys, and observations aren't distinct things – they blend into each other. (I knew that before, though.) (2) Surveys (and other small data artifacts) can be excellent conversation starters. Artifacts, in general, are good for getting participants to talk and toss around ideas with you; it gives you a common thing to focus on both mentally and physically. I could go into a long discussion of affordances, artifacts, the physical quality of human interaction, focus points, etc. here, but let's just leave it at that. (3) It's easy to “see” patterns that confirm or extend assertions you've already made. I didn't do a very thorough job of looking for contradictions – I'm definitely weaving a unified narrative here – and that's something I'd do in a longer project (possibly with a bit more data).

GROUNDING SURVEY (administered via email)

Thanks for participating in this survey. The questions were developed based on several research experiences with realtime transcription, and the survey itself shouldn't take more than 15 minutes to complete (if you don't comment on the questions; if you do, I have no idea how long it'll take you).

There are 5 questions. Feel free to wear any and all hats you like while completing this survey (interview subject, qualitative researcher, educational/design theorist, my advisor, etc.)

You recently participated in an interview that utilized live transcription, where you were able to converse with another person in the room with you and simultaneously see both your words appearing on a computer screen nearby. Recall this experience while you answer the questions in this survey.

1. What percentage of your attention do you remember giving to each data source during the live-transcribed conversation? Place numbers by the following so that they add up to 100% (0% is no attention at all, and 100% is all your attention).

- * your own storytelling (external/performance focus)
- * your own memories and thoughts (internal focus)
- * the interviewer's questions/context
- * the interviewer as a person
- * the transcription text
- * the transcriber as a person
- * other (please describe, and add as many "other" slots as needed)

Any comments on this question? (optional)

2. During the course of the interview, you may have learned some information about the transcriber, and others may not have come up. For each piece of information below, please indicate whether you feel like you learned that information during the interview (even if you cannot remember what it is now) and how important learning that information was to your comfort and success in participating fully in the interview (for instance, would you have been very uncomfortable/distracted not knowing the transcriber's name?). Rate importance on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not important at all" and 5 is "absolutely vital."

- * name [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5]
- * gender [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5]
- * age [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5]
- * location [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5]
- * experience with transcription [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5]
- * experience with the subject matter of the interview [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5]
- * other (please describe, and add as many "other" slots as needed) [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5]

Any comments on this question? (optional)

3. If you were to do multiple follow-up interviews with the same interviewer on the same topic, how important would it be to you to have the same transcriber? Rate importance on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not important at all" and 5 is "absolutely vital."

Any comments on this question? (optional)

4. Transcription and transcribers can be framed in many ways: as a service that happens to be provided by a person (like an oil change), as a tool (like speech recognition software), as an active and unique research contributor (like a graduate research assistant), or in some way not mentioned here. How would you describe your view of the transcriber/transcription during your interview?

Any comments on this question? (optional)

5. During a livetranscribed conversation, there are often times when we become more aware of the transcription process than others. Here are a few occurrences that have made participants more aware of the transcription process:

- * Seeing errors in typing (whether they are corrected or not)
- * Anticipating that they are about to say a difficult thing to type (an unusual name the transcriber may not know how to spell, etc.)
- * Hearing the transcriber speak (to introduce him/herself, ask a question, etc)
- * Hearing your interviewer speak to the transcriber

Do you agree with the items on this list? (If you do not agree with any of these items, please note which ones.) Can you think of any others that should go on this list? (If so, please list below.)

Any comments on this question? (optional)

Thank you for your time!

Betreff: Re: Mel's survey for qualitative class
Von: "Adams, Robin S." <rsadams@purdue.edu>
Datum: 17.04.2013 23:33
An: Mel Chua <mel@purdue.edu>

Sorry - got tied up...responses in the email

Robin Adams
Associate Professor
Graduate Program Co-Chair
School of Engineering Education, ARMS 1233
Purdue University

On Apr 14, 2013, at 8:47 PM, Mel Chua <mel@purdue.edu> wrote:

(here it is, in all its imperfect glory!)

Thanks for participating in this survey. The questions were developed based on several research experiences with realtime transcription, and the survey itself shouldn't take more than 15 minutes to complete (if you don't comment on the questions; if you do, I have no idea how long it'll take you).

There are 5 questions. Feel free to wear any and all hats you like while completing this survey (interview subject, qualitative researcher, educational/design theorist, my advisor, etc.)

You recently participated in an interview that utilized live transcription, where you were able to converse with another person in the room with you and simulatenously see both your words appearing on a computer screen nearby. Recall this experience while you answer the questions in this survey.

1. What percentage of your attention do you remember giving to each data source during the live-transcribed conversation? Place numbers by the following so that they add up to 100% (0% is no attention at all, and 100% is all your attention).

- * your own storytelling (external/performance focus) - 30%
- * your own memories and thoughts (internal focus) - 35%
- * the interviewer's questions/context - 15%
- * the interviewer as a person - 5%
- * the transcription text - 10%
- * the transcriber as a person - 5%
- * other (please describe, and add as many "other" slots as needed)

Any comments on this question? (optional)

At the beginning and end I was noticing the transcriber and interviewer more - but for the most part I was focusing on the story and my memories in relation to the questions being asked. At times I noticed the transcription text - but my eyes didn't stay there. Sometimes watching the text made me think more.

2. During the course of the interview, you may have learned some information about the transcriber, and others may not have come up. For each piece of information below, please indicate whether you feel like you learned that information during the interview (even if you cannot remember what it is now) and how important learning that information was to your comfort and success in participating fully in the interview (for instance, would you have been very uncomfortable/distracted not knowing the transcriber's name?). Rate importance on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not important at all" and 5 is "absolutely vital."

* name [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] well, duh...knew it...important - in the moment, perhaps not in the long run

- * gender [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] :) .. wasn't important this time
- * age [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] actually, not 100% sure i know how old you are - have a ballpark figure...not important at all
- * location [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] was in my office - was nicely convenient
- * experience with transcription [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] - learned her name, some background...important - it was nice to have some rapport with the transcriber
- * experience with the subject matter of the interview [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] - very reflective...enjoyable (which is important)
- * other (please describe, and add as many "other" slots as needed) [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] ?

Any comments on this question? (optional)

3. If you were to do multiple follow-up interviews with the same interviewer on the same topic, how important would it be to you to have the same transcriber? Rate importance on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not important at all" and 5 is "absolutely vital."

Hard to know for sure - my sense is that after the first time it probably wouldnt' be that important (a 2?) because it would be a familiar process.

Any comments on this question? (optional)

4. Transcription and transcribers can be framed in many ways: as a service that happens to be provided by a person (like an oil change), as a tool (like speech recognition software), as an active and unique research contributor (like a graduate research assistant), or in some way not mentioned here. How would you describe your view of the transcriber/transcription during your interview?

I like the human aspect - but quite honestly she faded to the background pretty quickly. At the beginning I think it is useful to understand just a bit of why the interview is being done this way - perhaps as a unique way of doing research.

Any comments on this question? (optional)

5. During a livetranscribed conversation, there are often times when we become more aware of the transcription process than others. Here are a few occurrences that have made participants more aware of the transcription process:

- * Seeing errors in typing (whether they are corrected or not) - not really, i can imagine doing this though - but it would mean i am paying more attention to it than to the questions
- * Anticipating that they are about to say a difficult thing to type (an unusual name the transcriber may not know how to spell, etc.) - did do this, spelled the word for her - giggled - didn't feel like it changed the flow
- * Hearing the transcriber speak (to introduce him/herself, ask a question, etc) - was actually nice - again, that human thing vs machine thing
- * Hearing your interviewer speak to the transcriber - made it seem like they were partners

Do you agree with the items on this list? (If you do not agree with any of these items, please note which ones.) Can you think of any others that should go on this list? (If so, please list below.)

i seem to remember times when i was reading the transcript as a way to follow my own story - i saw that as a benefit. I wasn't engaged in that at the point of fixing my own grammar - more of a memory device.

Any comments on this question? (optional)

Thank you for your time!

Betreff: Re: Mel's survey for qualitative class

Von: Mel Chua <mel@purdue.edu>

Datum: 18.04.2013 18:04

An: mel@purdue.edu

"I liked that it was a human. That the human had a name meant she was human. But knowing her name wasn't important. It just identified her as a real person."

2. During the course of the interview, you may have learned some information about the transcriber, and others may not have come up. For each piece of information below, please indicate whether you feel like you learned that information during the interview (even if you cannot remember what it is now) and how important learning that information was to your comfort and success in participating fully in the interview (for instance, would you have been very uncomfortable/distracted not knowing the transcriber's name?). Rate importance on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not important at all" and 5 is "absolutely vital."

* name [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] well, duh...knew it...important - in the moment, perhaps not in the long run

* gender [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] :) .. wasn't important this time
 * age [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] actually, not 100% sure i know how old you are - have a ballpark figure...not important at all
 * location [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] was in my office - was nicely convenient

* experience with transcription [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] - learned her name, some background...important - it was nice to have some rapport with the transcriber

Y - 1

b/c I take this sort of role in meetings, I was looking for cues of "oh, she's capturing this" "trust"

"I didn't feel I needed to monitor what she typed to see whether she was capturing what I was saying"

if she wasn't keeping up, would have slowed down or something
 already knew the process from having transcriber in class

* experience with the subject matter of the interview [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] - very reflective...enjoyable (which is important)

Y - courtesy

--

sarasvathy incident

"oh that's hard" not "idiot"

why CART and not some other notetaking thing: words are important, everyday languages in cultures are important.

* other (please describe, and add as many "other" slots as needed) [Learned? Y/N] [Important? 1-5] ?

A WORD ON TRUSTWORTHINESS, ETHICS, AND POLITICS

Trustworthiness

Trust came up in this study on several fronts:

- Can my participants (interview storytellers, people-I'm-observing) trust me and feel safe around me? What makes that so?
- Can I trust my participants and feel safe around them? What makes that so?
- Can I be trusted as a researcher to gather “good” data and tell a “reliable” story to you, the reader/audience?

I addressed the first (participants trusting me) by laying as many of my cards as possible on the table: what study I'm doing and why, motivations, what would happen with their data, etc – and continuing to do so throughout the process, plus asking them how they felt about the process and being attentive to cues of discomfort (which didn't come up often). Since I was interviewing/observing other academics, my role as a graduate student helped: I'm “one of them.”

Similar things make me believe that my participants themselves were and are trustworthy in the sense that they would do their best to help my study, and not sabotage it deliberately. I went into the project believing they would be, and I think that came across (“she trusts us!”) and became a self-fulfilling prophecy, which was what I had hoped. In general, I encountered a great desire to help and a willingness to be reflexive with me on the fly.

In terms of whether you (the reader) can trust me – well, that's up to you. Is my data believable? I've left openings for you to verify my data by giving details of many of my participants, whose contact information can be found online. I've tried to be forthright about my biases and background (although I'm sure I've forgotten things – but I try to say that too!) and try to point directly to data as evidence to back up claims I make. However, many of my claims are suppositions at this point, because I have so little data; many of them are large leaps that go far from the original wording of the interview transcript... I offer you these writings as my own view and my current best-guesses, but it's your call what you think and believe of them.

Ethics

In working on a research project involving radical transparency, I had to weigh the ethics of “first, do no harm” against the mandate given to historians and journalists to find the truth. The two often don't conflict, but when they do, is it my duty as a researcher to “protect” my subjects if the telling or hearing of “truth” might harm them?

My answer: no. I side squarely with historians and journalists here; my subjects are adults who have or are pursuing advanced degrees and are fully aware of the possible consequences of their speech and actions. It is my ethical obligation to inform them fully of the parameters of my research (what I'll be talking with them about, what will happen to the data, who'll be able to see it, that they can stop at any time, etc) and the possible risks I can think of to them, but then it is *their* responsibility to “protect themselves” and *my* responsibility to facilitate pursuit of whatever truth we can pursue together. This includes ongoing truthfulness to participants if things come up or either of us thinks of a potential consequence along the way, or if something seems to pose a danger to them (in the case of my study, “danger” is likely to be professional instead of physical).

There are no easy answers. I know I'm stepping into unknown territory, but as long as my subjects know that and are willing to come along with me, and we all try to do the right things by each other (and to discuss our evolving definitions of the “right thing” as situations come up), we'll be okay.

Politics

Politics came up most often here in the form of bureaucracy needed to access transcription services. Contracts for CART services (Communication Access Realtime Transcription, the verbatim service I highly prefer for radical transparency research) are usually administered through a University's Disability Resources Center (DRC), but Indiana adds another level of red tape by requiring all DRCs to contract with providers through a state agency, even if the funding came from my advisor's research budget via our department's finance office (yet another round of paperwork for me). The

individual transcriptionists (I've built personal relationships with several), the DRC, and my advisor had gotten used to my strange requests (“I have an international research conference call.” “I’ll be a department seminar speaker and need to understand audience Q&A.” “I’m going to Ohio.”) I can't say the same for the state agency. At every level (advisor, department financial office, DRC, state agency, transcriptionists) I needed to describe my project repeatedly, ensure the paperwork I was given to fill out was correct (it often wasn't; they frequently assumed I was asking for assistive services for class meetings, and were confused that I was using CART as a research tool) nudge people to get forms through... all part of a day's work.

I was surprised that institutional politics weren't a barrier to getting great stories from my subjects. I'd expected them to be wary of the transparent nature of the data-sharing and the potential for full disclosure of their names (T was an exception), concerned about promotion/tenure/what-will-others-in-my-dept-think, reluctant to speak ill of colleagues, and so forth, but they simply nodded at the information and talked with me as they would have spoken in a hallway within earshot of passers-by. As long as storytellers know the parameters of who'll be hearing their story, it's easy for them to adjust (as they would for a live audience) – even when I brought up “but institutional politics?” explicitly to them out of concern that the faculty/grad-students might have forgotten it, the usual response was “eh, so-and-so knows I speak my mind and I've already told them XYZ anyway.” I am also guessing that my positionality as a graduate student helped; I imagine lines of thinking along the lines of “you're one of us; you understand our context or are on your way to doing so, and it is part of my role to help you see this world more clearly via stories of my experiences and my advice.” In other words, my participation in the same politics helped me get around them.

LISTING OF DOCUMENTS IN FIELD SITE (PARTIAL)

1. All data, including:
 1. Real-time transcripts of spoken interactions (both edited and unedited) during interviews and observations
 2. Survey and survey responses
2. Email exchanges between myself & study participants for scheduling, etc.
3. Email exchanges between myself & university administration & state agencies & disability service agencies regarding transcription services and scheduling (and payment, and... this was a big logistical frustration and they didn't quite know what to do with me)
4. Handwritten notes taken by interviewers/interviewees during observation 1
5. Photograph/map of room layout for observations 1 and 2
6. Talk slides during observation 2
7. Comments on a blog post about the talk wherein observation 2 took place
8. Blackboard photographs during observation 2
9. Photograph/map of room layout for interviews 1 and 2
10. Course materials from the courses discussed during interviews
 1. syllabi
 2. websites
 3. exam questions (both old and new) for T's class
 4. CD of teaching materials T mentioned during interview
 5. student survey responses for T's instructor feedback, mentioned by T in interview
 6. the old "big book" of course materials inherited and complained about by R during interview
 7. the new "big book" of course materials and assignments created by R and co-instructor and discussed during interview
 8. Email conversations mentioned in R's interview (to students that had previously taken the class that R was suddenly scheduled to teach, asking "what happened in this class, how was it run, do you have copies of the syllabus and reading, etc")
 9. Videos that were used as R as course material in the redesigned "big book" and specifically discussed as a serendipitous find during the interview
 10. the "big book" of course materials and notes made for another class and discussed by R as an ideal "big book" case study during interview
 11. Interviews or notes/reflections from R's co-instructor (if already written)
11. Course materials from "M," the writer of the document analyzed
 1. Syllabi from M's first year as a novice teacher
 2. Printout of state standards at the time M was a novice teacher (referenced by M during interview as being the primary consideration in the development of syllabi)
 3. Announcements (school newspapers, etc) of the old teacher's retirement and M's arrival as new faculty, to see how they were portrayed
12. Annotated copies of short version of interviews, handwritten by "analysis buddies"

LISTING OF FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE

Date	Time spent	Total to date (target: 20 hours)	What did you do?
1/8/2013	0:20:00	0:20:00	Emailed potential subjects/sites, found CITI certification, made and posted public version of current research proposal draft
1/22/2013	0:30:00	0:50:00	Conducted first observation in class (unstructured)
1/23/2013	0:15:00	1:05:00	Wrote up remaining fieldnotes on first observation
1/23/2013	0:30:00	1:35:00	Wrote up conversation with Mirabai on the logistics of CART transcription for interviews
1/23/2013	4:00:00	5:35:00	going back and forth with university bureaucracy to coordinate transcription services (spread out over this week; email)
1/25/2013	1:00:00	6:35:00	Arranging scheduling for 2nd observation, live transcription of pilot interview
1/29/2013	0:20:00	6:55:00	Conducted pre-pilot interview to generate prompt for actual pilot interview. I'll be using/analyzing for class
1/29/2013	1:30:00	8:25:00	interview 1 conducted, analyzed, reflected upon
1/30/2013	0:50:00	9:15:00	Quickly (informally, non-rigorously) transformed pre-pilot interview tape into 1-page pilot interview prompt
1/30/2013	0:10:00	9:25:00	solicited observation 2 interview volunteers, got several candidates
2/4/2013	0:15:00	9:40:00	discussed observation 2 scheduling with volunteer
2/14/2013	0:50:00	10:30:00	Interview 2 conducted
2/15/2013	1:00:00	11:30:00	interview 2 preliminary analysis/reflection
3/1/2013	0:05:00	11:35:00	ended observation 2 arrangement with 1st potential interviewer
3/5/2013	0:05:00	11:40:00	proposed observation 2 scheduling to 2nd potential interviewer, got agreement
3/27/2013	0:05:00	11:45:00	was cancelled on again for observation 2 by 2nd potential interviewer
4/2/2013	0:30:00	12:15:00	wrote and emailed survey questions
4/9/2013	1:30:00	13:45:00	"analysis buddy" time and reflection writing, also got document
4/12/2013	1:00:00	14:45:00	co-analysis with colleague from professional development division
4/16/2013	1:30:00	16:15:00	"analysis buddy" time and reflection writing (round 2)
4/18/2013	0:30:00	16:45:00	Discussion with R about "misinterpreted" survey question
4/18/2013	1:30:00	18:15:00	Conducted seminar talk during which I did my 2nd observation
4/18/2013	0:40:00	18:55:00	discussion with subject about other commenters' reactions to her interview
4/22/2013	4:00:00	22:55:00	Cleaned up transcript of 2nd observation, wrote notes
4/26/2013	4:30:00	27:25:00	analysis/writing of final packet
4/29/2013	1:30:00	28:55:00	analysis/writing of final packet
4/30/2013	0:40:00	29:35:00	analysis/writing of final packet
5/1/2013	2:00:00	31:35:00	analysis/writing of final packet
5/2/2013	1:30:00	33:05:00	analysis/writing of final packet
5/7/2013	8:00:00	41:05:00	final compilation of packet

Note: Far exceeded target time to spend on this exercise -- In fact, more than doubled it.

CITI Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)

Responsible Conduct of Research Curriculum Completion Report Printed on 1/8/2013

Learner: Mel Chua (username: mallorychua)

Institution: Purdue University

Contact Information 828 1/2 Main St

Lafayette, IN 47901 USA

Department: Engineering Education

Phone: 847-970-8484

Email: mel@purdue.edu

Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research Course 1.:

Stage 1. Basic Course Passed on 09/12/11 (Ref # 6685281)

Required Modules	Date Completed	Score
Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research	09/12/11	no quiz
Research Misconduct 2-1495	09/12/11	4/5 (80%)
Data Acquisition, Management, Sharing and Ownership 2-1523	09/12/11	5/5 (100%)
Publication Practices and Responsible Authorship 2-1518	09/12/11	5/5 (100%)
Peer Review 2-1521	09/12/11	5/5 (100%)
Mentor and Trainee Responsibilities 01234 1250	09/12/11	6/6 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest and Commitment 2-1462	09/12/11	6/6 (100%)
Collaborative Research 2-1484	09/12/11	6/6 (100%)
Purdue University Institutional Page	09/12/11	no quiz
The CITI RCR Course Completion Page	09/12/11	no quiz

For this Completion Report to be valid, the learner listed above must be affiliated with a CITI participating institution. Falsified information and unauthorized use of the CITI course site is unethical, and may be considered scientific misconduct by your institution.

Paul Braunschweiger Ph.D.
Professor, University of Miami
Director Office of Research Education
CITI Course Coordinator

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CITI Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Human Research Curriculum Completion Report Printed on 1/8/2013

Learner: Mel Chua (username: mallorychua)

Institution: Purdue University

Contact Information 828 1/2 Main St

Lafayette, IN 47901 USA

Department: Engineering Education

Phone: 847-970-8484

Email: mel@purdue.edu

Group 2.Social Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel.:

Stage 1. Basic Course Passed on 09/13/11 (Ref # 6685279)

Required Modules	Date Completed	Score
Introduction	09/12/11	no quiz
History and Ethical Principles - SBR	09/12/11	4/4 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBR	09/12/11	5/5 (100%)
The Regulations and The Social and Behavioral Sciences - SBR	09/12/11	4/5 (80%)
Assessing Risk in Social and Behavioral Sciences - SBR	09/12/11	4/5 (80%)
Informed Consent - SBR	09/12/11	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBR	09/12/11	5/5 (100%)
Research with Prisoners - SBR	09/12/11	4/4 (100%)
Research with Children - SBR	09/12/11	4/4 (100%)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBR	09/12/11	4/4 (100%)
International Research - SBR	09/12/11	3/3 (100%)
Internet Research - SBR	09/12/11	4/4 (100%)
Research and HIPAA Privacy Protections	09/12/11	4/5 (80%)
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees	09/12/11	4/4 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects	09/13/11	0/2 (0%)
Purdue University Institutional Page	09/12/11	no quiz

For this Completion Report to be valid, the learner listed above must be affiliated with a CITI participating institution. Falsified information and unauthorized use of the CITI course site is unethical, and may be considered scientific misconduct by your institution.

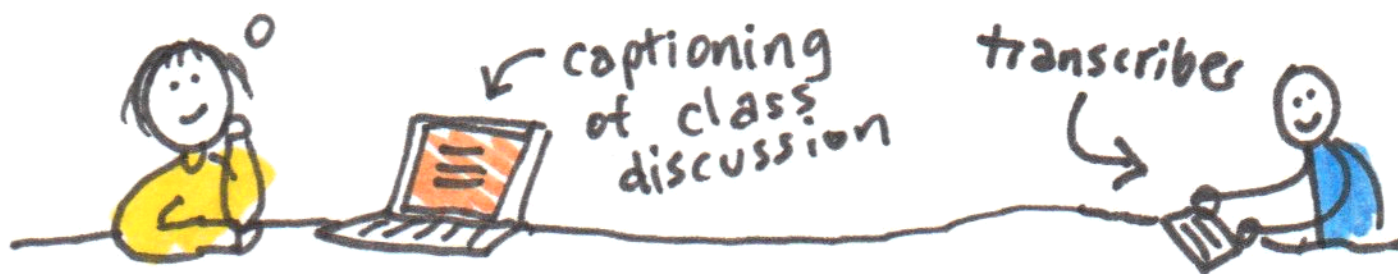
Paul Braunschweiger Ph.D.
Professor, University of Miami

Director Office of Research Education
CITI Course Coordinator

[Return](#)

I started my project wondering:

What happens in an interview when you use realtime transcription?

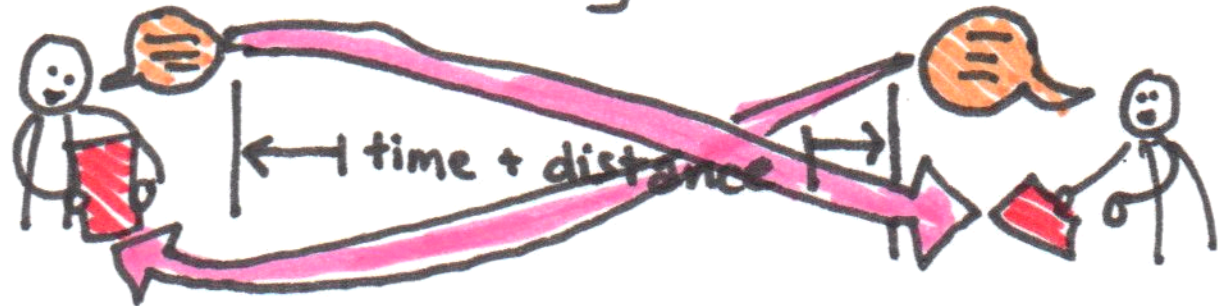


So I tried to find out.

① OBSERVATION of "S" and "I"

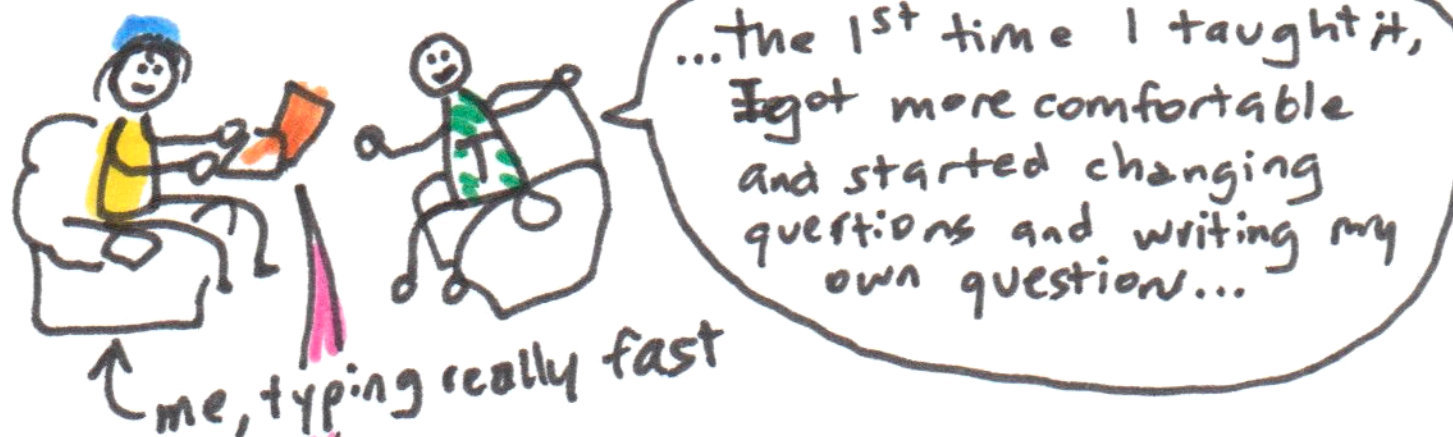


I was already interviewing college instructors about their experiences during curricular change efforts for my dissertation to see what would happen when faculty read and responded to the teaching stories of each other with the teaching stories of their own.



So I asked R and T to tell stories of a time when they had to adapt course materials that they "inherited" from someone else. (R, T, J, S, I, M, and myself were all grad students OR professors.)

② INTERVIEW with "T" in T's living room

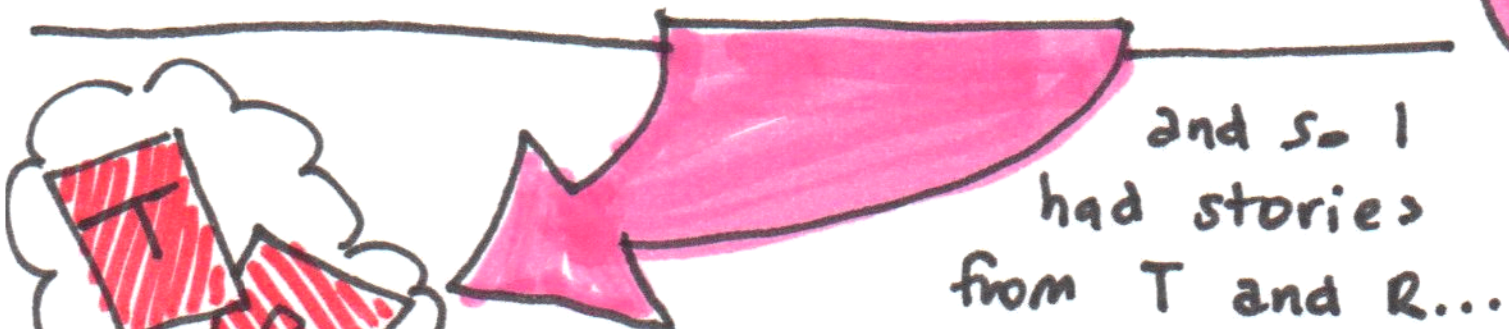


Then I turned T's transcript into a 1-page story prompt about T's teaching story, using T's own words. I used that in a...

③ INTERVIEW with "R" in R's office



R's story was condensed into a 1-pager too.

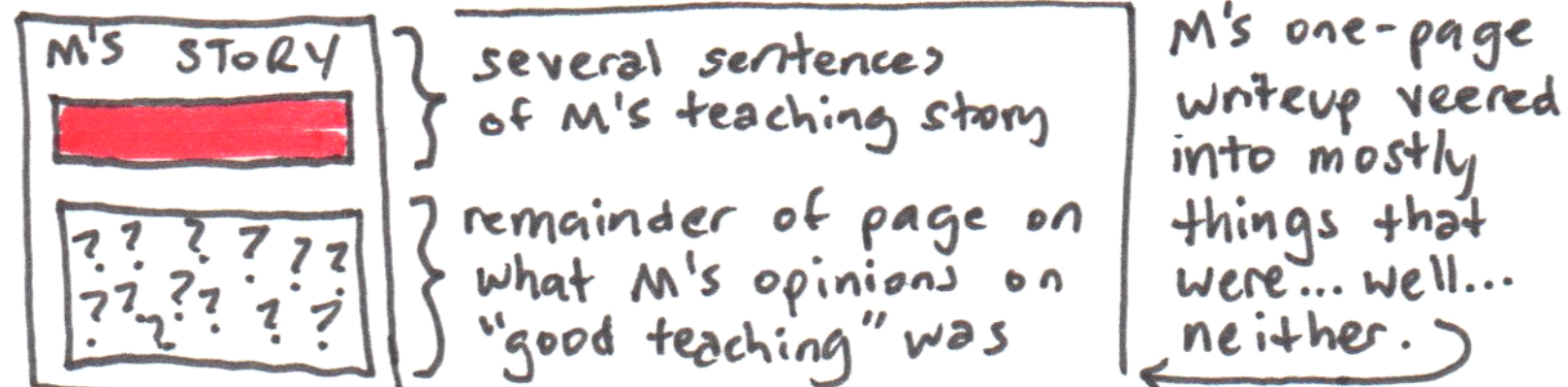


and so I had stories from T and R... which I gave to M (a grad student and former K-12 teacher). I asked M to write her story in response to T and R so I could see the difference between written and oral storytelling in this scheme. I then used M's story for...

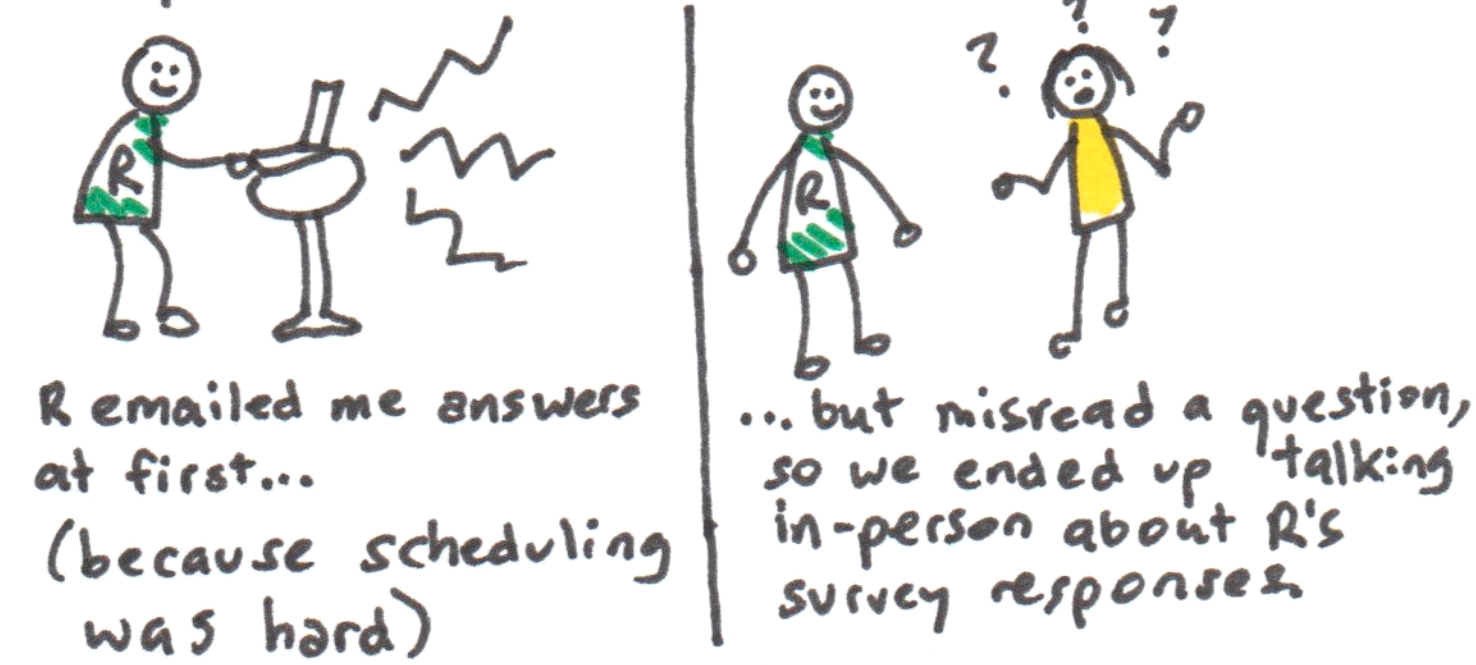


⑥ DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

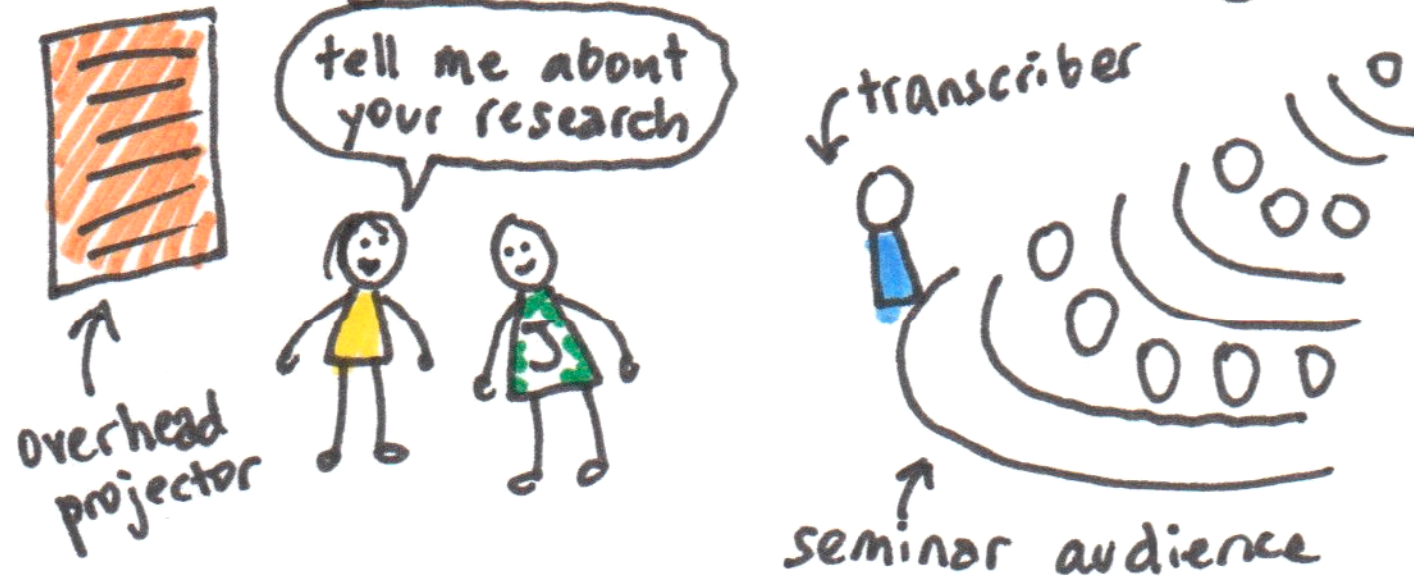
... and found I had to leave that data out of the larger "realtime transcription" and "curricular change experience" studies because



④ GROUNDED SURVEY with "R" on R's experience with the transcription



⑤ OBSERVATION (participant) with "J" as part of a realtime-transcription-interview demo during a department seminar I gave



Here's what I found.

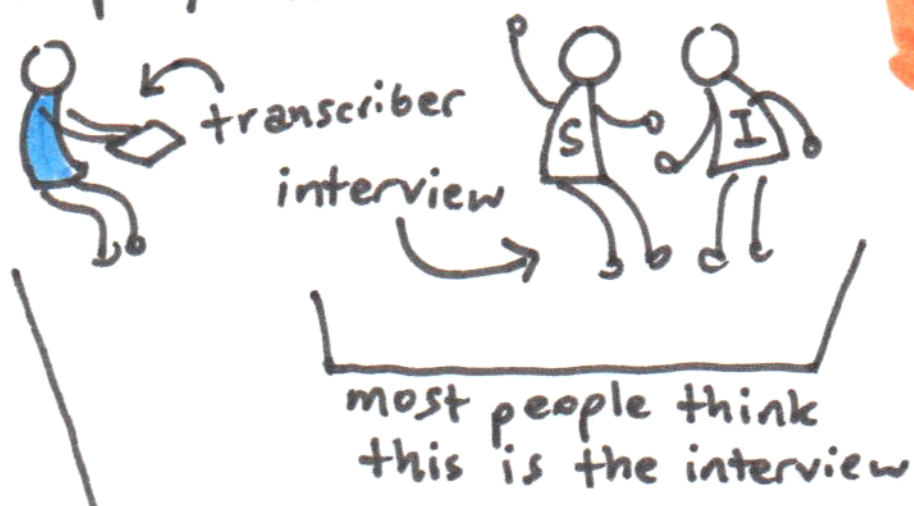
* I didn't conduct phone/online interviews, but that might be an interesting extension.

1 Transcription in realtime during in-person* interviews is a professional^(A) human^(B) service that soon fades^(C) into the background.

Physically, this makes sense. Transcribers are usually off to the side (or even outside the room), typing things that wirelessly go to the transcript display screen.

And sometimes the screen itself isn't easily viewable by the participants.

this part of an interview is accessible to more people



most people think this is the interview

but we can also slice the world so that the interview is this bucket

...or this bucket, and so on.

(A) PROFESSIONAL.

I was looking for cues of "oh, she's capturing this"

I didn't feel I needed to monitor what she typed

Having confidence in a transcriber's (demonstrated) skill allows interviewees (and interviewers) to not "monitor" the captions and thus attend to other things.

One interviewee noted that the verbatim realtime nature of the notes (the professional skill the transcriber was trained to have, and a rare + difficult one) was key.

Words are important. Everyday languages in cultures are important.

moving into the "professional" realm transcribers, like interpreters, plumbers, or doctors, are semi-interchangeable.

(B) HUMAN.

It's important to know the transcription is human and not mechanical so it can be treated with respect.

Is that okay for you?

Ok, thanks.

What's your name?

It was nice to have some rapport with the transcriber.

AND!

BUT!

I liked that it was a human. That the human had a name meant she was human. But knowing her name wasn't important. It just identified her as a real person.

After proper respect is given and professional trust established, the transcriber...

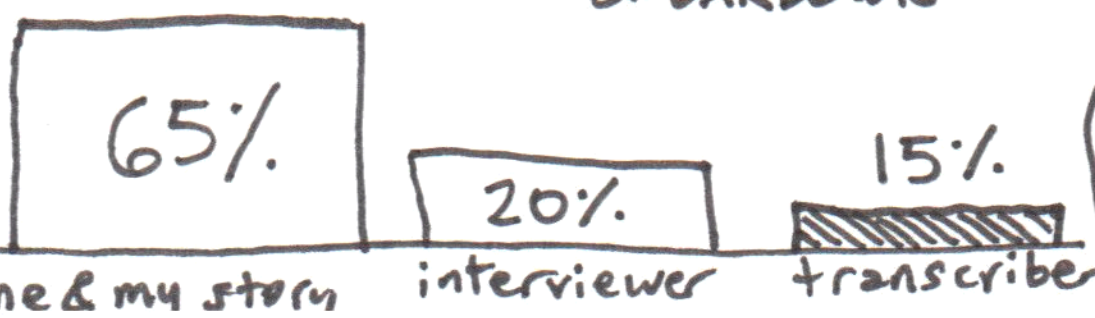
(C) FADED TO THE BACKGROUND pretty quickly.

when they do their job well, you almost forget they're there.

Q: How did you react [to being transcribed]?

A: Ignore!

INTERVIEWEE REPORT OF ATTENTION BREAKDOWN



EXCEPT FOR

- o typos
- o "I'm about to say a difficult-to-spell word or name this person might not know"

I was watching part of it but not while I was talking

Q: If you were to do [another interview with me on this] how important would it be to you to have the same transcriber? **

A: Hard to know for sure - my sense is that... it probably wouldn't be that important... a 2? (out of 5)

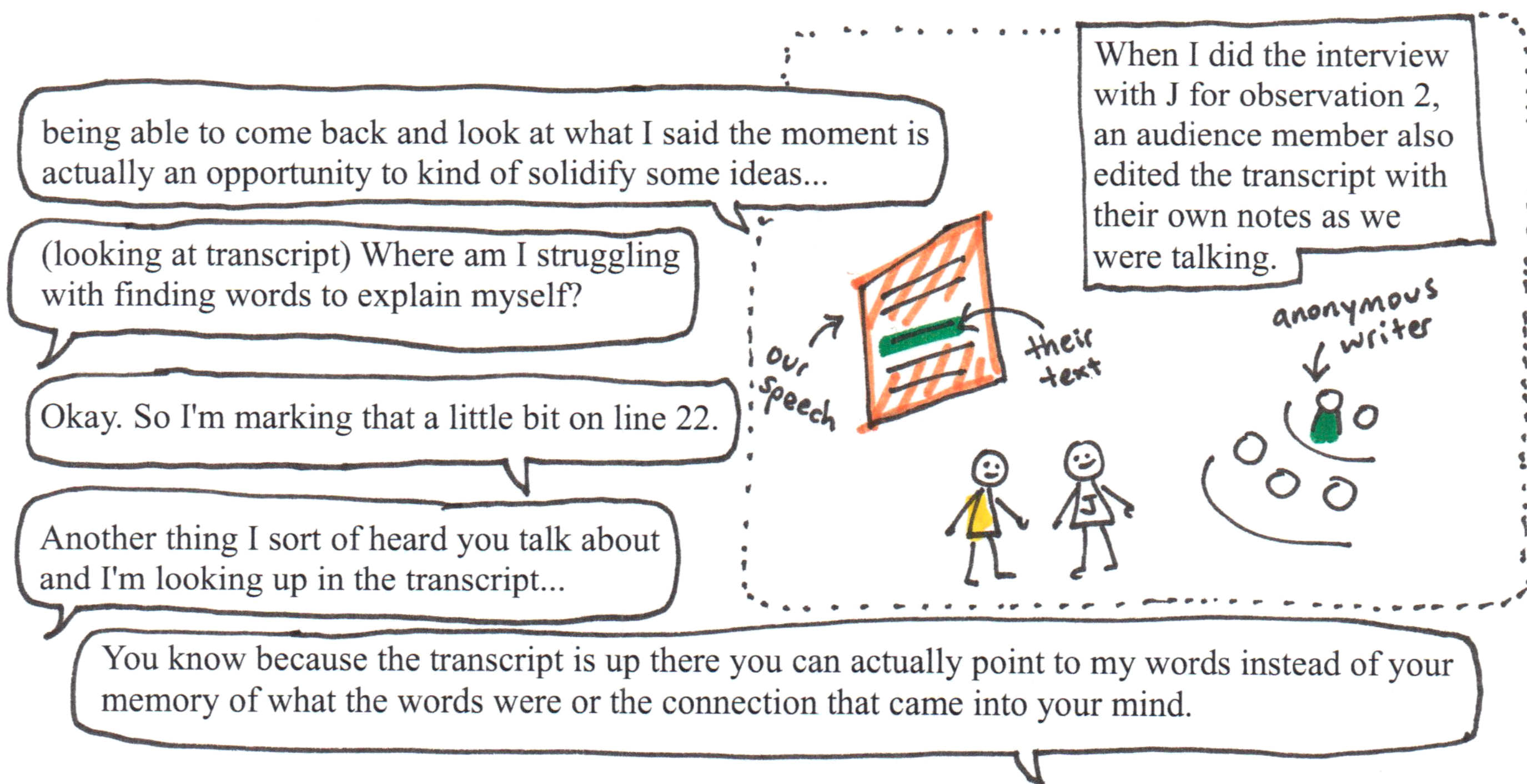
** Transcription of the data was done by 3 different people with different equipment + methods.

With the transcriber faded to the background,

2 The transcript becomes a central artifact around which interviewer and interviewee (and others) can interact.

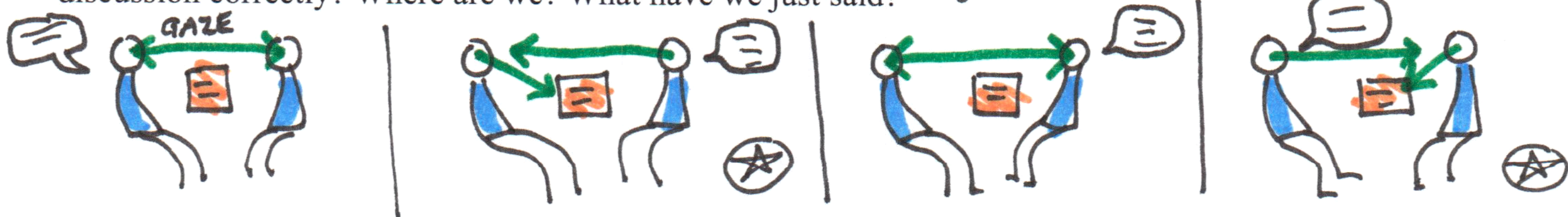


This is nothing particularly new – concrete artifacts have been used as central focus points in conversations for ages. However, the *precise words of the discussion* are often not the *physically present artifact* under discussion.



Even breaking eye contact with the other people in the room and looking briefly at the screen can be an interaction with the central artifact that helps a participant engage more with the in-person interaction. It's like a quick navigational check-in on a conversational GPS: am I following this discussion correctly? Where are we? What have we just said?

Note how eye contact here can be briefly broken (the starred panels last less than a second) and then re-established. It's like glancing at a clock.



This was demonstrated clearly during Observation 1, an interview between two grad students.

Finally, because the shared artifact is the words being spoken,

3 Grounded indigenous coding becomes possible.

This is several things.

① A blurring of data collection + analysis

(When does one start and the other end?)

Not unique to this setup, but highly visible.

② A guaranteed member-check session.

③ A blurring of who is a "researcher" or a "participant."

(you're both analyzing data) *and so are they.*

④ Remote participation.

(see prev. page, right about...)

Realtime transcription services like CART (Communication Access Realtime Transcription) allow participants to view, analyze, and edit data *during and immediately after* an interview, leading to *coding* (a form of analysis) that is both *grounded* in a concrete artifact and *indigenousto* the data collection process. **Grounded indigenous coding** is a rich mode of collaborative reflection.

(from <http://radicallytransparentresearch.org/manifesto>, written by Mel Chua in April 2013)

Sometimes watching the text made me think more.

...reading the transcript as a way to follow my own story

Having one's thoughts externalized as a concrete artifact that's shareable by others can help participants reflect.

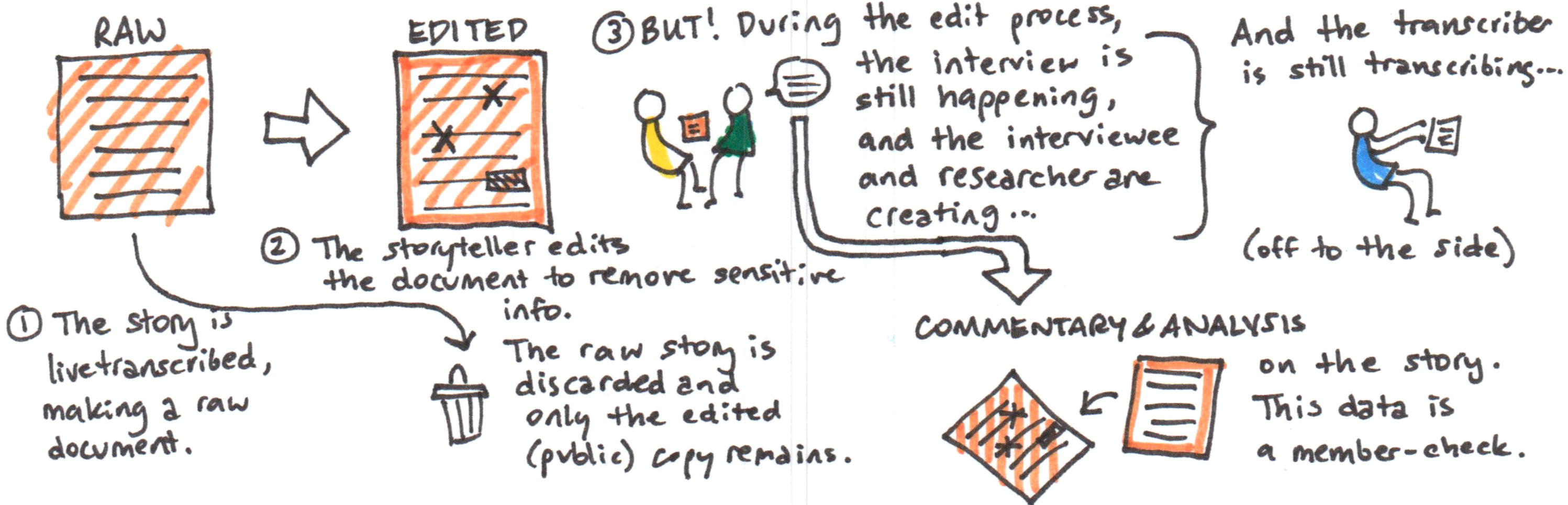
[the transcript is] a benefit... a memory device.

here.

Since interviewers often struggle with low response rates on the member-check portions of studies, moving the member-check into the interview itself lowers the effort needed to *actually* have a co-constructed analysis.

You have me now. Use me now.

What does the process look like?



after hearing this

I should find better ways to explain the process to my subjects at the start, though. (So I created <http://radicallytransparentresearch/manifesto> as a first draft.)

At the beginning I think it is useful to understand just a bit of why the interview is being done this way - perhaps as a unique way of doing research.

Comic text + words by Mel Chua

REFLECTION

When writing up the final data story, I had two recurring thoughts: (1) All these ideas web together, and a linear pure-text presentation doesn't seem to do them justice, and (2) Geez, I'm leaving out a lot... but I must, because otherwise this will encompass the whole world, so I might as well slice up the boundaries somewhere, and they might as well be 4-6 pages long.

I ended up deciding that I wanted to expound on one question and a 3-point answer. The question was “what happens in an interview when you use realtime transcription?” and the answers were (1) the transcriber is a professional human service that soon fades into the background, (2) the transcript becomes a central artifact that interviewer and interviewee interact around, and (3) the realtime element enables grounded indigenous coding (which I discussed in more detail in my midterm, and continue to explore in separate works).

For a while, I struggled with different text layouts of those four points. I decided early on that I would put each point on one page (thus ending up with a 4-page document), but even focusing on one page didn't seem to work – when you write in text, you need to put one thought or quote after another, so each thought can only be “next to” two others – the one before it and the one after it. But the data was far, far more interlinked in my mind – and visual, and spatial, and physical. In some cases, I've actually printed out transcripts, cut out phrases, and shuffled them around on the kitchen table or the floor to make sense of their relationships. And some of the data that I had in my mind – but hadn't captured very well in text – *was* visual and spatial; the physical layouts of the rooms I did the observations/interviews in, transcripts and artifacts flowing from one interview to another... these would work far better in pictures.

So I started drawing pictures. And eventually, I ended up doing the whole thing as a sort of comic book. I was still constrained to 8.5”x11” sheets of flat white paper and a pen and some markers (because that's all I had on hand), but it was liberating to be able to play with my data that way, and handwriting the text forced me to be *very* concise and attentive to exactly what I wanted to write down. For a while.

By the end of the second page, I was starting to think that this experimental format was fantastic, but had some obvious drawbacks. First, it would be very hard to edit. I could tell already that what I was making had a “rough draft” quality to it and that I could do far more storyboarding, sketches, etc. to polish the presentation – but that meant redrawing everything, and my average rate of comic-book production is well over an hour per page – perhaps even twice that – because of how many decisions need to be made before setting pen to paper.

Second, it wasn't text-searchable, which would make it hard to draw on for insights and snippets of text in the future. And third, it was a *giant* timesuck. Hand-writing quotes made me more attentive to that data, yes – but at this point, I wanted to get it *done*. So I began typing a hybrid document for the last 2 pages, leaving blank spaces for the drawings I wanted to do. It wasn't the same; I felt myself getting less deeply into the ideas I was typing than if I'd handwritten them, probably because I was spending less time on each idea (I type much faster than I write, and I could also copy-paste now). But on the other time, I was spending less time on each idea, so the comic got done *far* faster – the last 2 pages took perhaps a total of one hour, combined, to produce. This seems like a reasonable tradeoff for making drafts of “comic book” outputs in the future, but I'd want to draw final editions by hand or find a more attractive way to format them (or hire someone).

At this point in my studies, I'm rolling the idea of “grounded indigenous coding” into my dissertation proposal – which is *not* centered on grounded indigenous coding or realtime transcription, but simply uses it. It is, instead, focused on how faculty make sense of their own roles during the course of curricular revisions that incorporate design into a 4-year engineering or technology curriculum, and how sharing faculty stories across institutions shapes that sensemaking. I've learned my lesson about building a study that is “too meta.” It doesn't make sense to do a research project about research techniques which requires you to make up another research project in order to do it – that's putting the cart before the horse. Instead, do a research project and *use* the technique, and then go back and study what happened and how that technique influenced it.

Ah, long-range planning and patience development. I suppose I still need to work on that.

ANALYSIS BUDDY PROCESS WRITING 1: MELANIE

I asked Melanie to do something a bit odd for my dissertation pilot data (the project I am doing for this class), since she's mid-quals and I wanted her to... well, not-die from overwork. My interviews have subjects responding to short versions of each other's narratives (if I may use the binary words of researcher/subject for convenience). In other words, I'm not sitting there asking them questions; they're reading a condensed version of someone else's story and then starting the telling of their own based on that.

Since Melanie is also a teacher, I asked her to read both narratives (narrative A, and narrative B responding to A) and write her own narrative C responding to both. I'll use Melanie's response as the document to analyze in my data corpus -- it's very different than the data I got through interview (and I will only be interviewing people in my dissertation, since the data I get is far richer in extended conversations).

The mind-flip came towards the end, when she started painting pictures of what she thought my interview subjects (A and B) were like. I suddenly realized that I hadn't put identifying information like gender, age, etc. in the interview -- and it was fascinating to see what her guesses were. She pegged A accurately as a creative-minded, initially-unsure but growing-in-confidence grad student, but thought B was a man because of "his" adamant declamations (both, in fact, were female). We ended up having a discussion on what it would have done to her perceptions of the story to know that B was also female, and what information I might want to put in the narratives for when the faculty read it. I hadn't been conscious of this before, and now I'll make the conscious choice to not include a bio at the start of every narrative, because then the subjects will be responding more directly to the stories rather than some mental image of a person that fits into certain categories.

ANALYSIS BUDDY PROCESS WRITING 2: KATE

Kate read the transcripts very, very differently than I -- or Melanie -- did, although that's to be expected as we're three different people. She read them with her "experienced teacher" hat on the entire time, as if she were sizing interviewees T and R up as potential mentees, and her comments could have been construed as teaching advice rather than research analysis. They'd have been right at home at a "how could subjects T and R improve their teaching?" case study discussion in a teacher training course.

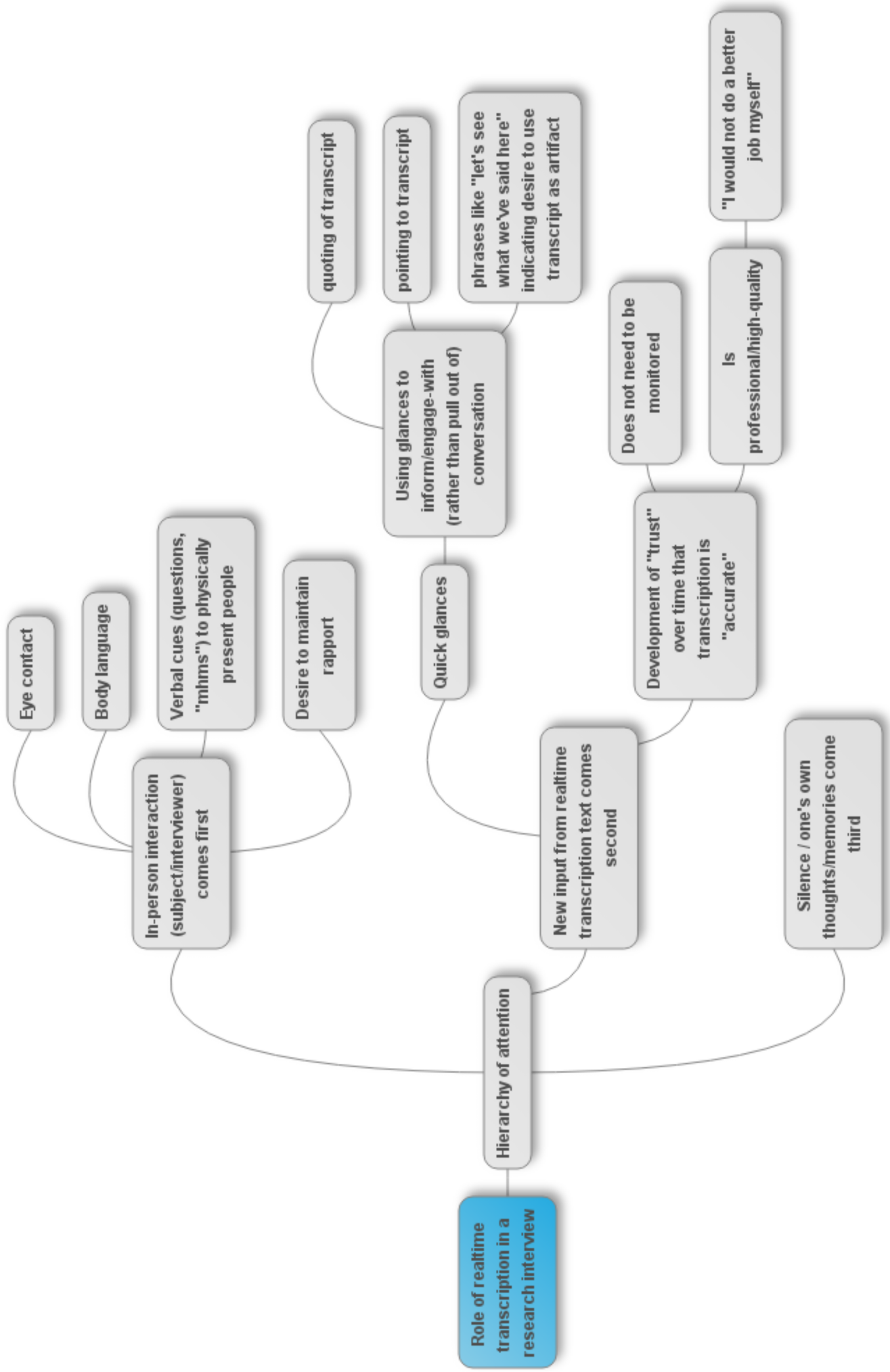
Because of this approach, and also because she only had the words and no description of delivery/appearance/personality, she painted a different picture in her mind than I had in mine after talking with T in person. Interview subject T was an insecure teacher -- "not even confident enough to ask questions yet" -- who needed 1:1 mentorship to be forced to come out of her comfort zone, because she was avoiding "digging deeper" in her teaching. I noted that T had appeared very confident during her interview, but admitted that could in fact be a sign of comfort rather than excellence -- T had reached a low plateau, and could improve only by going through a place she couldn't push herself into on her own.

Kate critiqued teacher T on the basis of what she (Kate) thought was "good teaching." A had said she let students know about her unorthodox teaching methods up front so they can switch sections if they wanted to, and I (Mel) had read this as a positive: blunt honesty, student choice. However, Kate critiqued it heavily for not being student-centered, because she would have found a way to work with the students in her existing section. Neither of us is "right" or "wrong" -- it's actually interesting to see the disagreeing voices, the multivocality. I will be allowing multiple people to publicly analyze my dissertation data, and hope that exactly this sort of multivocality will emerge, and that seeing others' positions will help us realize where our own assumptions stand.

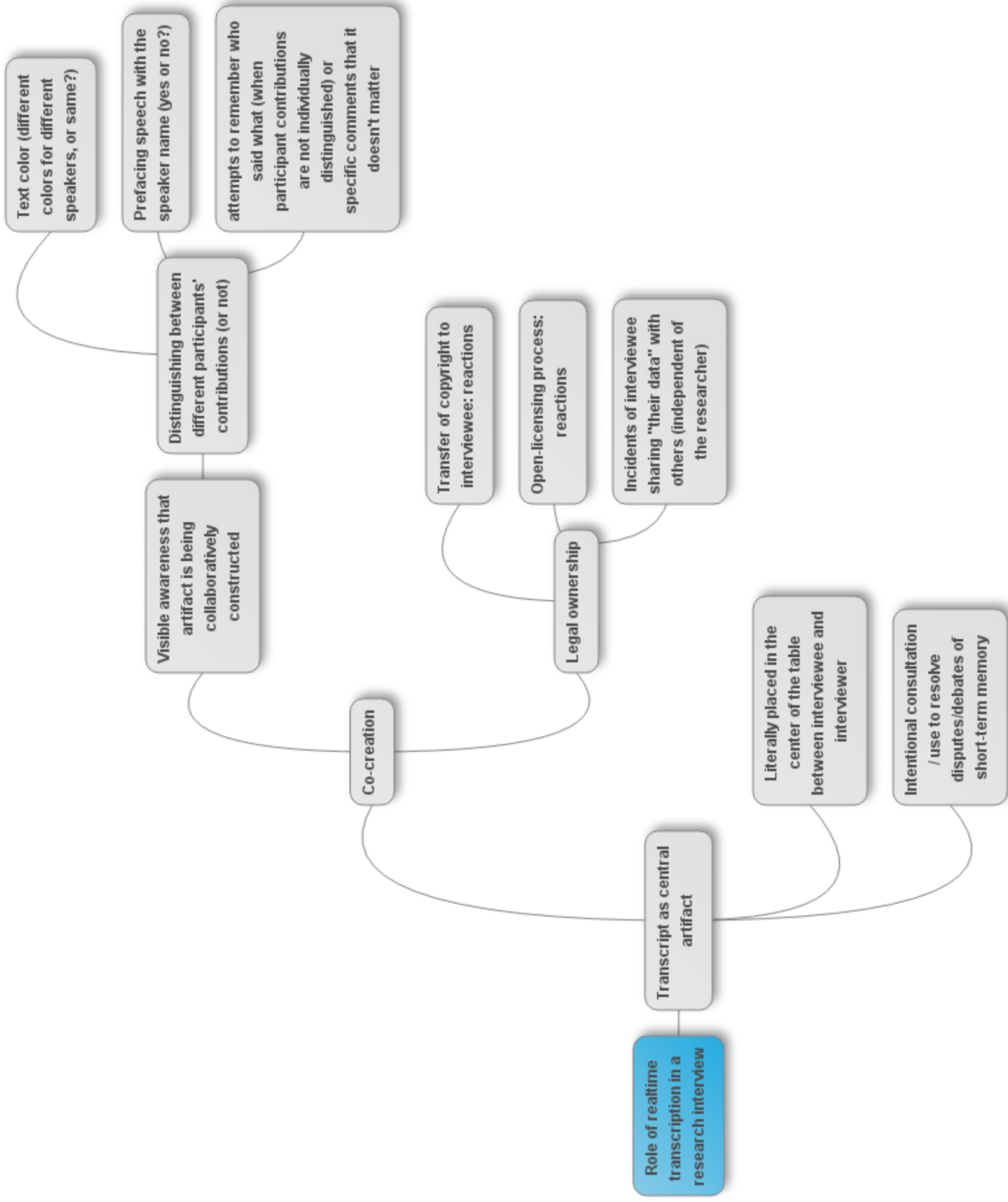
Similarly, Kate critiqued subject R for spending half her (condensed) interview "whining" about the deficiencies of the course she'd inherited. Kate agreed with R's approach in the second half -- "yes, that's how I would design my course too" -- and I think she may have mixed up "this is

good/rich data" with "I share the perspective of the subject." (You can disagree with what a subject says, *and* it can be excellent data.) I'll also need to watch out for -- and comment on -- exactly that phenomenon when other people (especially those without qualitative research training) are commenting on and analyzing the data.

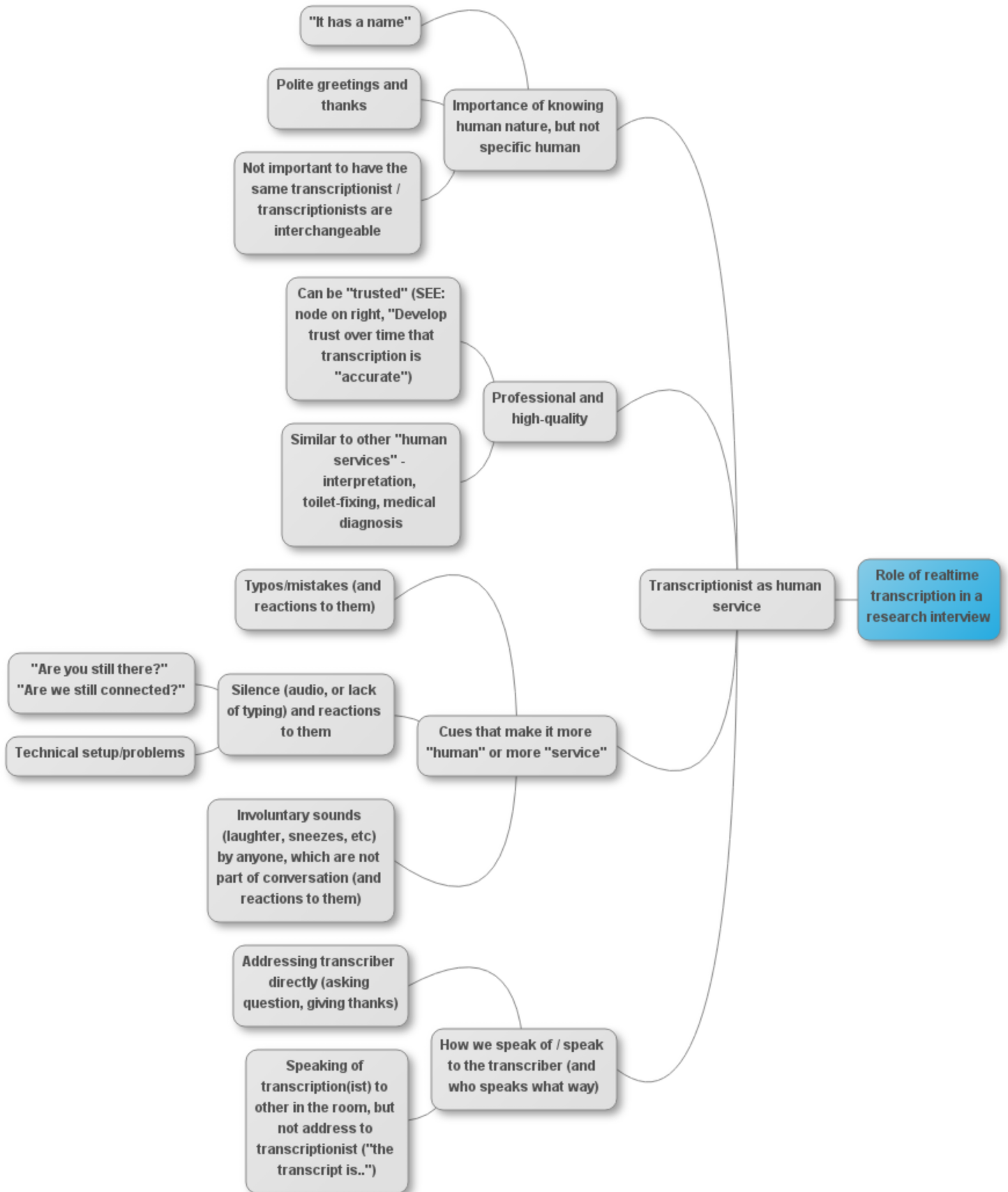
In order to that, I'll need to have high levels of meta-awareness and stepping-back distance when others are going through my data. I easily slip into "I am Mel, and here is my opinion" -- which is not a bad thing! But I need to make it clear when I am speaking from my personal belief, and when I am trying to step away from what I think is "my default perspective" to see multiple perspectives or try on the perspectives of others. It'll still be my perspective. It can never be a "neutral" perspective. But I can try more consciously to be aware of and step out of my normal modes of thinking and be closer to "moderator mode" than "another participant" -- although I also am not fond of the whiff of separation/privilege/authority that creates.



11a-synoptic-subpart1.png

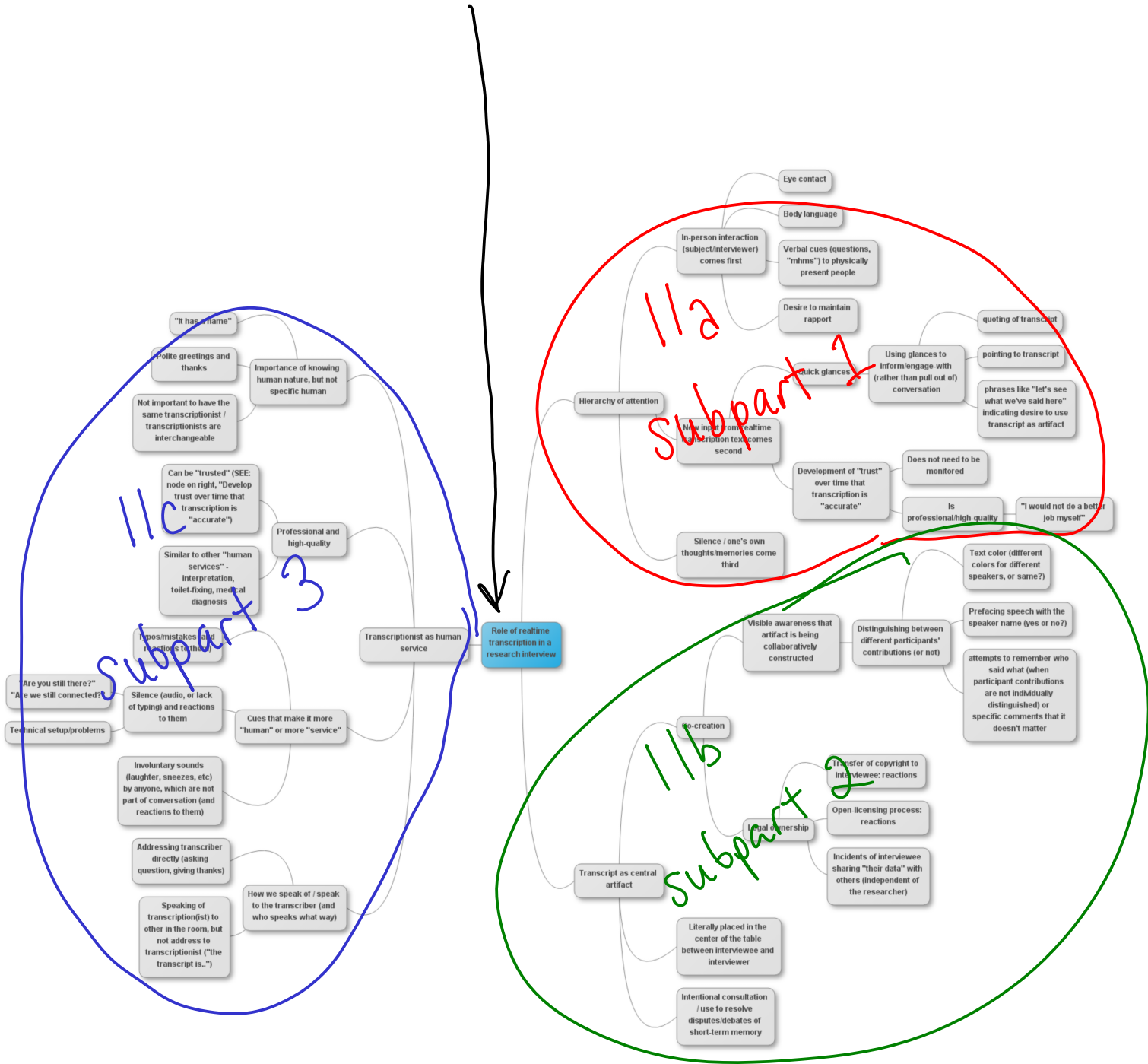


11b-synoptic-subpart2.png



SYNOPTIC CHART KEY

Central node label: "Role of realtime transcription in a research interview"



Notes on Molecular Girl – Mel Chua

First reaction: after reading the title and the start of the abstract, I groaned inwardly.

Ordinary experience encrypted into academic words. I understand that sometimes this theoretical translation helps us get ideas into formats that give us more affordance for articulating and transforming it into a different sort of understanding. At the same time, I needed to warm-up my brain's buffer to hold the pictures that the abstract words would be weaving inside my head -- the paper wasn't going to hold those thoughts or imagery for me. (p1)

At the same time, this sounds like what I'm doing -- "engaging in different collaborative strategies of deconstructive writing and talking" and resisting the image of philosophy as an "independent, intellectual, disembodied, and masculine-coded endeavour." There are some nice, sticky phrases: "the tactile embodiment of collaborative deconstructive research strategies" is about pulling things into the real world, the messy, sweaty, contradictory world. While I strain against the language (perfectly understandable, but not the way I want to write myself), I also nod at the actions explained by the message. (p1)

The paper quickly paints a picture of the academy as a place where people are aware of existing inequalities and beginning to embrace and call for different sorts of dialogues, even conflicting dialogues, that represent and draw out more of the multivocality of the world. (p2-4)

We're reading a case study by a teacher who was asked by students from a variety of disciplines to help them (the students) reflect on their own analytic practices; this case study is being written after the class, as the teacher sits down at the end of a long semester trying to figure out how to capture it all (p4-5).

I still don't understand where the image of the "molecular girl" comes in, and I'm 1/6th of the way through the paper. She's used this phrase multiple times, but always in isolation, no explanation nearby that I can see or understand.

The first thing the author takes up is feminism, bringing in citations of Deleuze and Lloyd

and others to shore up the arguments that philosophy has mostly been thought of as "male," with "female philosophy" standing as an outsider, an oxymoron, in the space. (p7-8) 9 of the 10 students who requested the class were female (p 9), but females don't necessarily make an activity feminist -- and "feminism" is painted as "embodied" or "collaborative" in contrast (or opposition?) to the male. Even if the paper says that "in terms of feminism... women are not bound to the category of Women subordinated to Man, nor to the image of philosophy as Man," it still set up its argument with "HERE IS MAN!" and then "in contrast, we are feminist!" so I would say it actually falls into the same trap it describes.

As I read on (p 11-12) I'm struck by now... normal this all seems. Of course you'd work together, using distributed collaboration tools if you have to. You'd publicly document your process to make visible your thinking along the way. You're trying to get yourself aware of and possibly out of your old habits of thinking. Of course it's challenging -- more challenging for some than others. Of course it's wrestling, contradictory, something that "hits us," transformative. How else would you work? (Why are you writing this down? How can this possibly be a journal paper?) At the same time, I realize this way of working isn't normal, that it hasn't been documented in formal scholarly spaces nearly as much as it might be, and that writing "obvious" (to me) papers like this will be how it becomes more of a norm across academia, how my own work in this vein can become more accepted.

As the paper continues to describe how students experimented -- different screen layouts, looking at "dominant and resistant discourses" (p 13), and so forth -- I start to grate at the ex post facto nature of the paper. I want to be shown, not told -- I'd rather have the present-tense written, real-time plungings-in of the students and their experiments in the raw voice of the experimenter-in-the-moment, not with a third-person narrator saying "this is what we found" after the fact, the chaos neatly described. Deleuze is repeatedly invoked, invoked, invoked -- my eyes start glazing over when I see his name. Maybe it's the gloriously sunny afternoon coming through my window, reminding me that I'd rather be outside than at my computer; maybe it's the tiredness at the end of a

long day, but I'm not being caught by this paper right now; my reading is starting to accelerate into skimming-speed.

Finally (p 16) we might have an explanation of what "molecular girl" means -- this seems promising! It can "be understood as a collective researching body -- assemblage, producing increasingly more articulations to widen the realities of the data." In other words, a non-unanimous collaboration, a multivocal one. "Molecular girl" happens to be the phrase they agreed on to describe it -- probably "girl" for the feminist angle (why not "woman"?) and "molecular" for the breaking-up-into-millions-of-tiny-pieces action they felt, but this is the guess of an outside observer reading this paper quickly one exhausted afternoon.

Here's an interesting phrase (p 19): "the ethics of our collaborative work was about being able to trust in a love of the practice itself by the others... without intention to produce a qualitatively 'better analysis' or positioning oneself in specific ways as a researcher." (It's a draft copy, and things are struck out and underlined -- it's hard to tell how I should capture a quote, which is appropriate for the deconstructivist "molecular girl" approach while I am reading. Also, the writing is not quite as terribly academic as I'd feared, except for the long invocations of Deleuze.) It talks about (p 21-22) forces shaping a work, the occupation of a work in almost-violent imagery -- you get the sense they're conscious of this violence but trying to minimize their own, while knowing that some form of violence is always present in manipulation needed for greater understanding.

I'm not sure what the conclusion was, though. The author has basically taken us on her own thought-stream (much as I am thought-streaming into this document right now) regarding the experience.

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