# 26 NOVEMBER 2025: WORKSHOP ON RESEARCH INTERVIEWS

Linguistic Society of NZ

Conference 2025

# WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

- ► Registration

- ► **Opening** by Prof. C. White

- ► **Session 1** – Planning an interview
  - ▪ *Morning tea*
- ► **Session 2** – Conducting an interview
  - ▪ *Lunch break*
- ► **Session 3** – Transcribing & analysing interview data
  - ▪ *Afternoon tea*
- ► **Session 4** – Presenting & publishing results

# PLANNING AN INTERVIEW

- ▶ **Introduction**

- ▶ **Examples**
  - ▪ Interactional sociolinguistics
  - ▪ Narrative and Video-Stimulated Interviewing
  - ▪ Oceania oralities - storian

- ▶ **Group work**

- Who's in the room?

- What kinds of things are interviews especially good for exploring?

  - Complex, messy, human answers

  - Attitudes, opinions, beliefs

  - Experiences, stories, identities, culture

  - Metalinguistic reflections…

# WARM UP

**What do interviews do that other methods don't?**

They let people think out loud and express thoughts and feelings in the moment

- They allow for **depth**: Why? How? What does it mean?

- Tacit knowledge surfaces – articulated **richness**

- They help in building **profiles** and **maps** from the perspective of the interviewee

- They produce data that allow for different types/levels of analysis/interpretation

- They are customisable for best data collecting outcomes

# WHY INTERVIEWS?

| In-person interview | Rich rapport; facial expressions and gestures; easier trust-building; depth for emotional topics | Requires travel/space; can be intimidating; environment harder to control |
|---|---|---|
| Online video interview | Convenient; remote access; visual cues still available | Interruptions; Wi-Fi issues; reduced sense of presence |
| Audio-only interview | Feels safer/anonymous; good for sensitive topics; less self-conscious | No visual cues; harder to sense discomfort; rapport may take longer |
| Written interview | Reflective answers; tidy verbatim text; good for participants who prefer writing | Slow; lacks spontaneity; difficult to probe naturally |
| Notes-only interview | Useful when recording isn't allowed; flexible in field contexts | High data loss; filtered interpretation; no verbatim linguistic detail |

# MODES

Be intentional

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Open questions** | "Can you tell me about your experience learning English?" | Broad, unrestricted responses; letting participants choose what matters. |
| **Narrative invitations** | "Can you tell me the story of how you started speaking Samoan at home?" | Rich stories, timelines, emotional arcs; identity and meaning |
| **Walk-me-through questions** | "Can you walk me through what happens when you switch languages at work?" | Processes, routines, tacit knowledge |
| **Meaning-making questions** | "What do you think it means when your students mix languages in class?" | Interpretations, attitudes, beliefs; ideological framing |
| **Contrast questions** | "How is the way you speak with family different from the way you speak at university?" | Differences, boundaries, social distinctions, code-switching |
| **Stimulus questions** | Showing a picture: "What does this image remind you of?" | Triggered memories, reflections, emotions; surfacing unprompted ideas |

# ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS

Be strategic

**Structured**

- ▸ A fixed list of questions asked in the same order, with little to no deviation
- ▸ Good for consistency, comparison, and when you need the same information from every participant

**Semi-structured**

- ▸ You have a guiding schedule of questions, but you follow interesting threads, change the order, and add follow-ups
- ▸ Good for balancing comparability with flexibility and depth

**Long conversational interview**

- ▸ More like a guided conversation than a questionnaire. You have themes in mind, but the participant's story shapes the flow
- ▸ Good for rich narratives, identity work, emotional topics, and exploratory research

**A continuum from fixed to flexible**

# STRUCTURE

Let it breathe

- A loose tree, not a rigid list
- Warm-up → Core → Deep → Wrap-up
- Make space for follow-ups
- Know your big 3–4 questions by heart
- End well:
  - Anything you wanted to add?
  - What happens now
  - Thank you – I learned a lot

# THE SCHEDULE

Let it flow

| | |
|---|---|
| **Respect for boundaries** | Allow skipping; notice discomfort; move on without pressure; check in gently. |
| **Care for emotional wellbeing** | Identify sensitive topics; offer breaks; monitor for distress; provide support contacts. |
| **Private, safe interviewing environment** | Choose confidential spaces; avoid public venues for sensitive topics; allow participants to choose a safe location. |
| **Transparency about who sees the data** | Explain who listens to audio; clarify how quotes may be used; offer transcript access if promised. |
| **Culturally respectful practice** | Use appropriate greetings; allow relational warm-up; adapt questioning to cultural expectations. |
| **Time awareness** | State interview length upfront; check in mid-way; offer breaks; finish on time. |
| **Clear debrief and withdrawal options** | Summarise key points; remind them of withdrawal period; provide contact details; explain next steps. |

# ETHICAL PLANNING

Not just paperwork

# YOUR PLANNING SHAPES YOUR INTERVIEW

Every choice you make beforehand changes the data you will get

# THE INTERACTIONAL SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH

Interview is not a mere triangulation tool but a rich reservoir of data in itself.

- Interested in what + how things are being said **and** what is left unsaid (contextualization cues) (Gumperz, 1982, 2015)
- Co-researchers *not* Subjects
- Interactions *not* Interrogations

# IS & PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: THE CASE OF SOCIAL MEDIA JOURNALISM

How and why professionals communicate the way they do?

How do Social Media Journalists **do** their professional identity?

**Ciara (8-C-BBC)**

"**You need to be a really good journalist and you also need to have a passion for social media** […] I think you have to be, you have to, you do need to, you need to have you know **that gut instinct to be a good journalist** and then you need to know we are social media, so you need both. Like I think some people think that it's easy…but it's **it's really *not* easy** […] if anyone thought, you know, what goes into that, like they just wouldn't assume, they just think, "Oh you're just grabbing an article and you're posting on Facebook, what's the big deal?". **But there's a huge amount of like background information to do right you know and that's what the BBC wants to do, to do it right.**"

# PLANNING AN INTERVIEW UNDER THE NARRATIVE INQUIRY APPROACH:

▶ **What is it?**

  ▶ an *INVESTIGATIVE* approach allowing for narratives to develop during interviews

      *(e.g. Bell, 2002; Brown, 2004; Hignett, 2021)*

▶ **Why choose this method?**

  ▶ If you want to dig deeper to explore any underlying factors/reasons of X

  ▶ It provides opportunities for personal stories containing 'rich' data (surpassing 'time' and 'place')

  ▶ 'Reflection' trigger: useful for creating an understanding of participants' motivations

  ▶ If you want to give 'voice' to (a group of) participants (previously under-researched or overlooked?)

  ▶ *Consideration*: Ethics (e.g. age-groups, identity reveal, emotional support)

# PLANNING AN INTERVIEW UNDER THE NARRATIVE INQUIRY APPROACH:

▸ **Mode**

  ▸ In-person or Online? (*consider* availability/time, ambient factors (e.g., location, 'noise'), technical issues)

  ▸ Taking notes or Recording? (*consider* time-consuming transcription issues & your research planning)

▸ **Schedule of questions**

  ▸ Warm-up questions: 'demographic' framing & 'grand-tour' topic framing *(e.g., by sending 1 or 2 questions ahead to stimulate thinking around the topic)*

  ▸ Set up an interview *guide* to stay on track but remain open for other Q opportunities

  ▸ Consider taking your questions/IV-guide for a trial-run

  ▸ *Consideration*: Be open for 'deviations' yet remain alert to TIME

# PLANNING AN INTERVIEW UNDER THE NARRATIVE INQUIRY APPROACH:

▶ **Question-types (allow for narrative continuation)**            *(see also Session 2)*

　　▶ *How?/Why?/Tell me about the time that…/"Can you give an example of X?"*

　　▶ Planned prompts: revisiting special experiences/events ("*What was this like for you?*")

　　▶ Auto-driving: a 'hook' to elicit rich personal stories (e.g. "Br*ing an item that reminds you of X…" but make sure it is purposeful!*)


▶ **VSI: Video Stimulated Interviews**

　　▶ *Recall*-stimulus and Reflection tool (through e.g., video-excerpts)

　　▶ *Retrospective* reflections on past experiences: creating a quasi-longitudinal effect

　　▶ Opportunity data triangulation

　　▶ *Considerations*:
　　　- time-consuming (sifting through data to find the 'right' excerpt(s) for VSI);
　　　+ stimulating **RTA** in the early stages of research project        *(see later also Session 3)*

# STORIAN / TOK STORI
# OCEANIA ORALITIES APPROACHES

- Oceania Oralities Framework (Sanga & Reynolds 2024, Sanga et al. 2025)
  - Tok stori (Melanesia)
    - Storian (Vanuatu)

- Relationality-as-connection

- Reciprocity-as-exchange

- Gender-as-separation   (Sanga et al. 2025)

- Paying close attention to texture of (oral) communication

- Language choice to avoid hierarchical associations



Figure 1. The Oceania oralities framework by Sanga and Reynolds (2024).
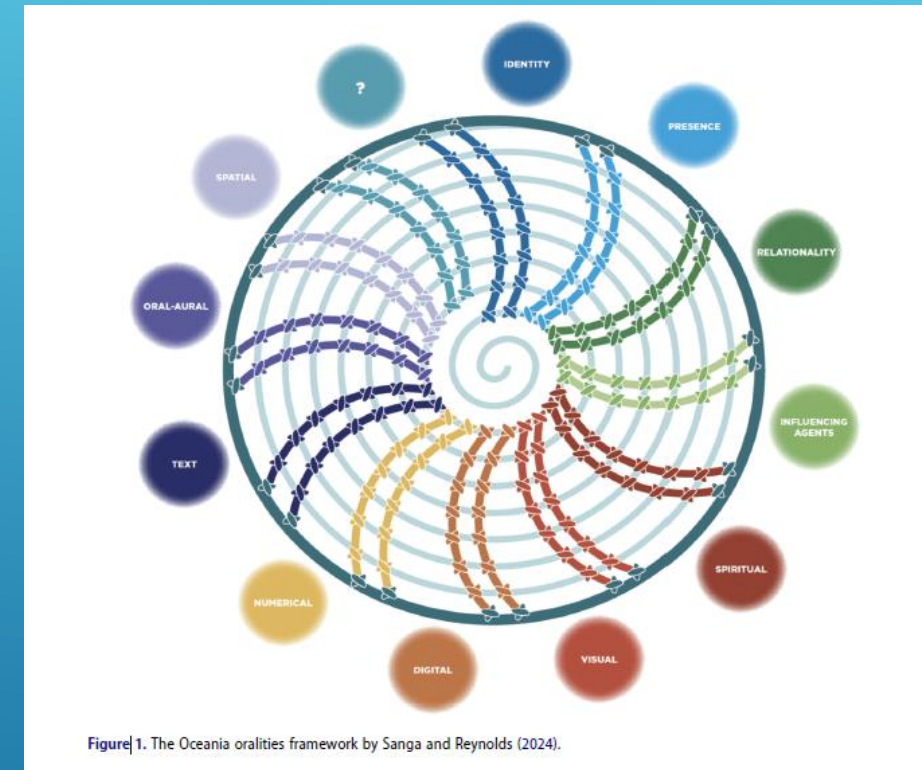
# STORIAN / TOK STORI
# OCEANIA ORALITIES APPROACHES



- **Interviews with young Vatlongos speakers**
  - everyday language use
  - language acquisition over the lifetime
  - emotional responses to languages
  - metalinguistic awareness of variation and change
  - language support strategies
- **Flexible but purposeful schedule**
  - 10 questions with follow ups and multiple variants
  - Starting with participant motivation
  - Questions informing workshop planning
  - Managing affect in endangerment context
- **Piloting via online written interviews on Facebook messenger in 2020**
  - Refining wording of questions
  - Adding questions to address additional topics of interest

Ridge 2025a, 2025b

# REFERENCES

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***Recall stimulus to triangulate data***

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***VSI as a tool to stimulate recall and reflection***

Van Braak, M., De Groot, E., Veen, M., Welink, L. & Giroldi, E. (2018). Eliciting tacit knowledge: The potential of a reflective approach to video-stimulated interviewing. Perspect Med Education. (Vol.7. pp. 386-393). https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-018-0487-9

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***Oceania Oralities Framework***

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Sanga, K., & Reynolds, M. (2024). Telling it like it is: A framework exploration of Oceanic Oralities through the example of tok stori. In Y. Waghid & A. Al-Asfour (Eds.), *Values, education, emotional learning, and the quest for justice in education* (pp. 168–189). Brill.

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# PLANNING AN INTERVIEW: GROUP WORK

▶ Get into groups of max. 5 people

▶ Get to know your participants (each other!)

▶ Choose a research question

▶ Plan an interview schedule for a **five minute** interview

**Example research questions**

▶ What motivates people to study linguistics?

▶ What are the most salient features of New Zealand English?

▶ If linguistics was taught at high school, what would be the most important topics to teach?

# CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

- ▶ **Introduction**
- ▶ **Examples**
  - ▪ **Eliciting stories in semi-structured interviews**
  - ▪ **Conversational approach to the long interview**
- ▶ **Group work**

# CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

## Positionality

- Interviews are co-constructed; your stance influences meaning-making. Recognize power, privilege, and interpretive authority.

## Dimensions of Positionality

- Ontological/Epistemological stance: How do you view knowledge?
- Insider/Outsider continuum: Shared vs. divergent identities
- Intersectionality: Gender, ethnicity, institutional role

## Impact on Data

- Shapes rapport, question framing, and participant narratives
- Influences what is said, how it is said, and what remains unsaid

## Reflexive Strategies

- Keep field notes on your assumptions and interactional choices
- Use meta-commentary during interviews to surface dynamics
- Explicitly address positionality in methodology section

# CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

## Technical Calibration

- Test audio fidelity, backup systems, and transcription tools
- Ensure data security compliance (GDPR, institutional ethics)

## Interactional Tone

- Align tone with research paradigm (e.g., conversational for IS)
- Avoid leading questions; use open prompts for co-construction

## Opening & Closing Strategies

- Opening: Establish shared purpose, clarify consent, frame roles
- Closing: Invite meta-reflection ("How did you find this process?")

## Pilot Interviews

- Use pilots to refine question sequencing, detect interactional trouble spots
- Analyze pilot transcripts for turn-taking patterns and stance markers

# Semi-structured interviews

- How structured?
  - List of questions by theme vs prompting notes
  - More open can lead to better storying
- Learn about the person you are interviewing
- Why did they agree to be interviewed?
  - Do they have a story they wanted to share?
- Be a good listener
  - Seek connections to your purpose, delve deeper
  - Circle around key concepts
- Show empathy, respect and interest

# EXAMPLE 1: ELICITING STORIES

*A guided conversation designed for depth*

- Long, flexible interview (2–6 hours, often in segments)
- Grand-tour questions + floating prompts
- Guided by an 'itinerary,' not a script
- Reveals cultural categories and shared meanings
- Large, uninterrupted storytelling
- Depth emerges through time, attention, curiosity
- Streamlined alternative to full ethnography

# EXAMPLE 2: THE LONG INTERVIEW

## 2. Grand-Tour Questions

▸ Broad, open prompts that set the topic without constraining it. e.g., "When you think about 'family', what comes to mind?" or "Walk me through the last time you bought a major household item."

▸ These questions reveal respondents' default cultural categories.

## 3. Floating Prompts (McCracken's core tools)

▸ **Contrast prompts:** "How is X different from Y?"

▸ **Category prompts:** "What types are there?"

▸ **Special incident prompts:** "Tell me about a time when…"

▸ **Autodriving:** Respondent comments on photos/objects they provide.

▸ These prompts surface hidden cultural logics.

## 4. Long Narrative Arcs

▸ Interviews run 2–6 hours to reach deeper layers.

▸ Key terms and cultural meanings only emerge over time.

# THE LONG INTERVIEW
a 'streamlined ethnographic instrument'

# REFERENCES

McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Sage Publications.

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# CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW: GROUP WORK

- Test your recording set up
- Take turns in different roles:
  - Interviewer
  - Interviewee
  - Observers
- Five minutes per interview
- Five minutes for feedback

**Reflection questions**

- How did it feel to be in each different role?

- What questions worked well or less well?

- Is there anything another interviewer did that you'd like to try doing yourself?

# INTERVIEW DATA

- **Introduction to transcription**
- **Transcription practice**
- **Introduction to analysis**
- **Examples**
  - **Reflexive thematic analysis**
  - **Interviews in language documentation**
- **Group reflection**

# TRANSCRIPTION

**What do you want to transcribe to address your research questions?**

▶ **How closely or loosely?**

▶ **Phonetic detail? Phonemic? Orthographic? Abbreviated?**

▶ **Hesitations?**

▶ **Repetitions?**

▶ **Pauses?**

▶ **Timings?**

▶ **Interactional features?**

▶ **Multimodal features?**

▶ **Identifying information?**

**How will you use your transcription?**

▶ **Will you refer back to audio/video?**

▶ **Will you quote directly from your transcription, or edit for presentation?**

# AUTOMATED TOOLS FOR TRANSCRIPTION

Automated transcription tools increasingly available:

- Save a lot of time
- Increasingly accurate
- Increasingly able to handle different speakers, varieties of English etc.

But:

- You and the participants need to know exactly how the data will be used
- Work best for standard varieties of major languages
- Can obscure linguistic variation and creative expression in favour of the average/standard
- Correcting output is time-consuming and less rewarding
- For many researchers, transcription itself is an important part of their workflow

# AUTOMATED TOOLS FOR TRANSCRIPTION: WORD

**Word 'Dictate' function**

▶ **300 minutes included in Microsoft 365 licence, more available**

▶ **"Your audio files are sent to Microsoft and used only to provide you with this service. When the transcription is done your audio and transcription results are not stored by our service."**

▶ **Works best on Word on the Web (not desktop)**

▶ **Home > Dictate > Transcribe > Upload audio**

▶ **Choose language**

▶ **Takes a short time to produce transcription**

☐ **Depends on internet speed, length of recording**
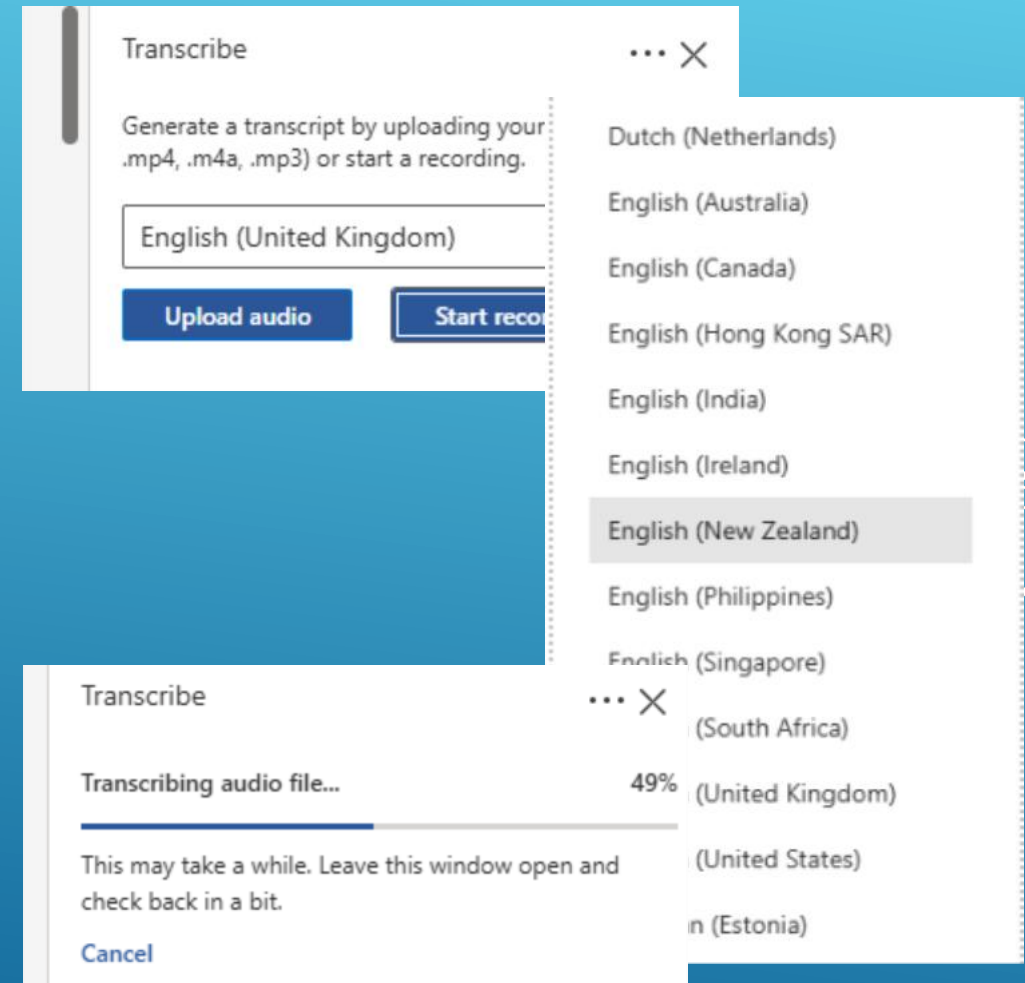
# AUTOMATED TOOLS FOR TRANSCRIPTION: WORD

**Word 'Dictate' function**

▸ **Once processed, choose 'Add to document'**

▸ **Choose whether to include Speaker and Timecode info**



00:01:23 Speaker 2

I do want to say how fun the linguists were though.

00:01:27 Speaker 2

And have a genuine passion for what they were talking about.

00:01:31 Speaker 1

Okay.

00:01:31 Speaker 2

Even if it went over my head.



Very, very small details.

Just text

With speakers

With timestamps

With speakers and timestamps

Add to document ⌄    New tra



Transcribe                          ··· ✕

LinguisticsInterview 1.wav

00:00:00                          00:01:40

1x    ◁|    ▷    |▷    ◁))

00:00:01  Speaker 1
Thank you for agreeing to speak to me today.

00:00:04  Speaker 1
I know that you're from a different disciplinary background, but I was wondering, what's your impression of linguistics as a discipline?

00:00:13  Speaker 2
Very dry.

00:00:15  Speaker 1
Very dry.

00:00:16  Speaker 2
Yeah.

00:00:18  Speaker 2
Very, very small details.

00:00:25  Speaker 1
Okay, so more details focused than other disciplines, you think?

Your transcript is saved. You can close this pane and the document and come back to it later.    ✕

Add to document ⌄        New transcription

# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION

If automated tools work well, why bother transcribing manually?

▶ Limited language provision

▶ Can miss variation that might be focus of linguistic analysis

▶ Transcription itself can be important as a reflective and embodied encounter with recorded interview data

▶ Transcription usually involves initial stages of analysis

But:

▶ Can be very time-consuming

▶ Some workflows can be repetitive, frustrating and error-prone

  ○ e.g. pausing and repeating playback

Tools developed in language documentation can help shortcut these frustrations, without losing benefits of manual transcription

# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION: ELAN

**ELAN and .eaf (ELAN annotation files)**

▸ **Produced by The Language Archive MPI**

▸ **Time-aligned annotations**

  ○ **Allows rapid playback of segments in audio and video**

  ○ **Waveform and spectrograph displays**

▸ **Flexible hierarchically structured annotations**

  ○ **Transcription, translation, comments, coding, tokenisation**

▸ **Powerful search and concordance tools across multiple files**

▸ **Standardised XML format**

▸ **Lots of export formats and interoperability**

  ○ **Text, tables, subtitles files**

  ○ **To FLEx, Toolbox, Praat**

▸ **Relatively steep learning curve to get set up**
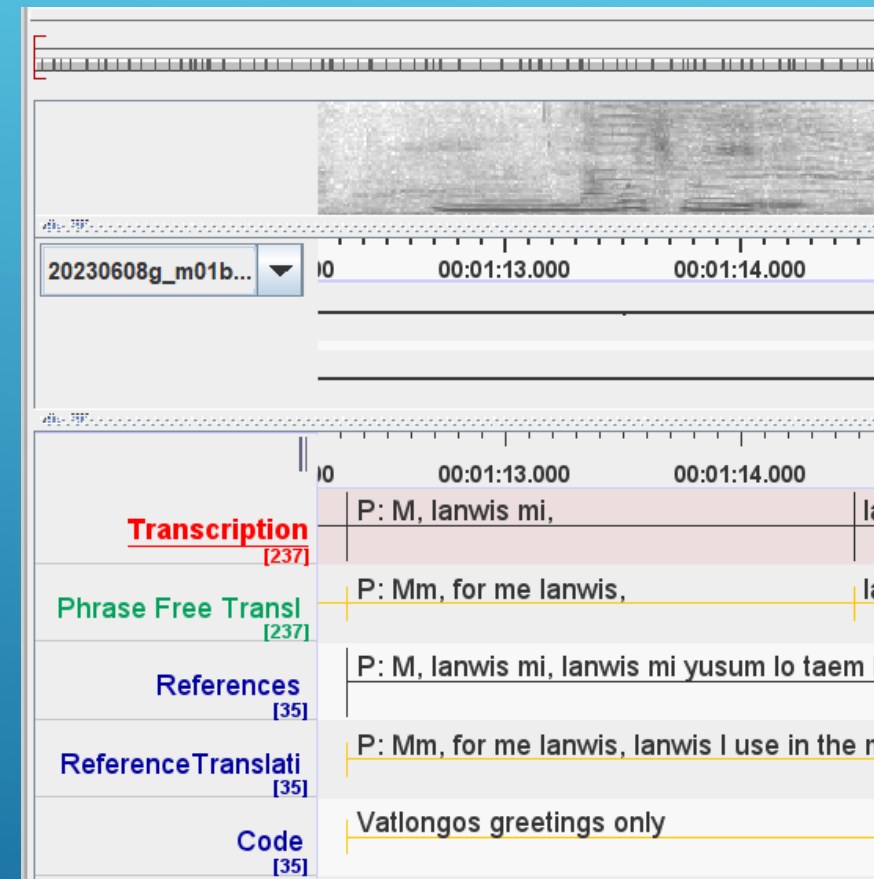
# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION: SAYMORE

**SayMore**

- ▸ **Produced by SIL (Bible translation org)**
- ▸ **Designed for language documentation and archiving**
- ▸ **Good for keeping files organised**
- ▸ **Especially good auto-segmentation tool for transcription**
  - o **Quickly segments audio and creates simple .eaf file**
  - o **Aims to generate segments between 1 and 10 seconds long**
  - o **Looks for pauses where volume is relatively low**
  - o **Splits at midpoint of pause**
  - o **Doesn't leave any gaps between annotations, so no information is lost**
  - o **Is robust for noisy recording environments**

(Tom Bogle, p.c. 25/09/2025)

# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION: SAYMORE

**Step one: Set up project**

▶ **Open SayMore and create a new project**

▶ **Give your project a name**

    ○ **it creates a folder structure in Documents, but you can move this elsewhere**

▶ **Fill in project information**
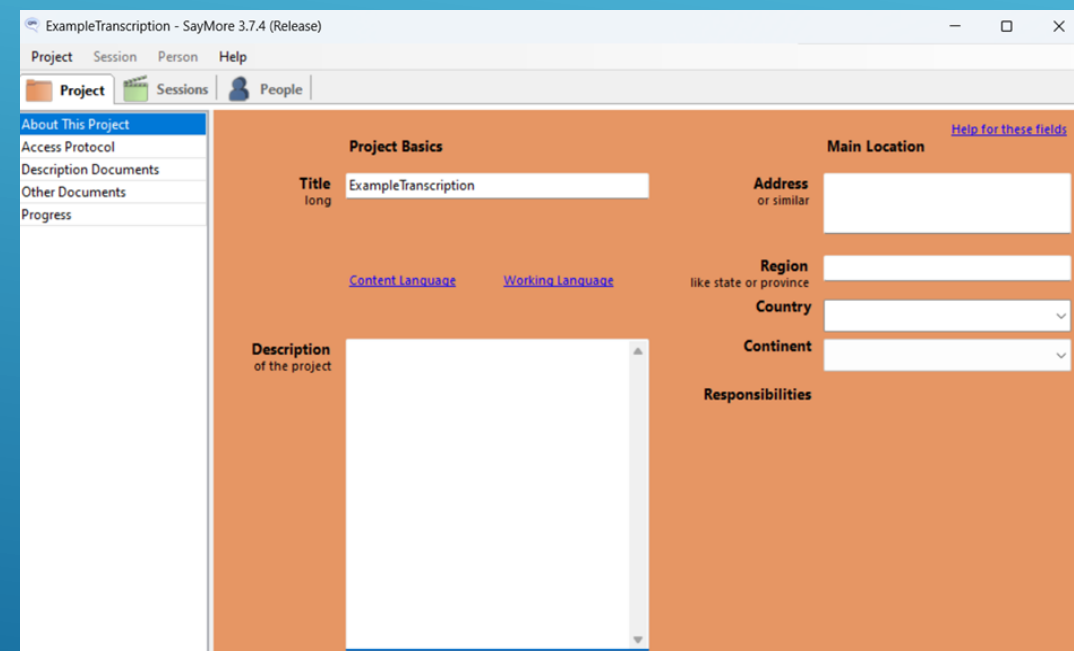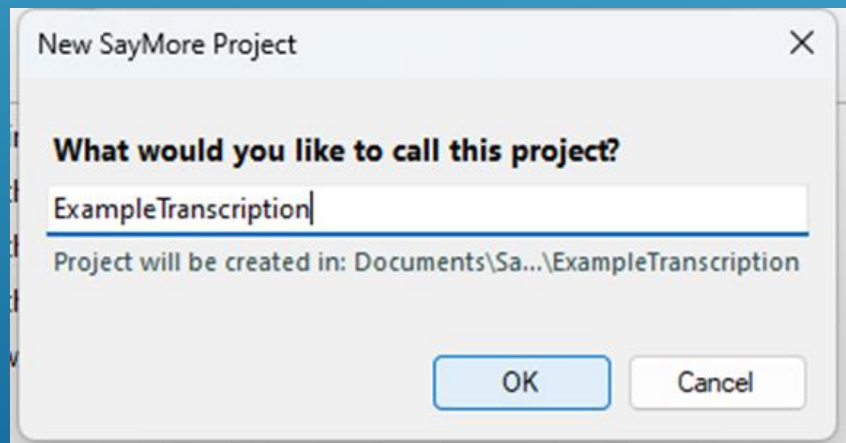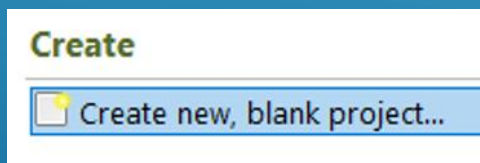
# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION: SAYMORE

**Step two: Create a session**

▶ **Navigate to 'Sessions' tab**

▶ **Click 'New' (bottom right)**

▶ **Give the session an 'ID'**

▶ **Fill out more information**

▶ **To add information about People, add a new person using the People tab**

# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION: SAYMORE

**Step three: Add recording**

▸ **Choose 'Add files' (top right)**

▸ **Or drag and drop into files list**

▸ **Use 'Rename' to give a consistent file name**

▸ **Bottom right display changes depending on file selected**

　　○ **First tab is media player**

　　○ **Extra information in other tabs**
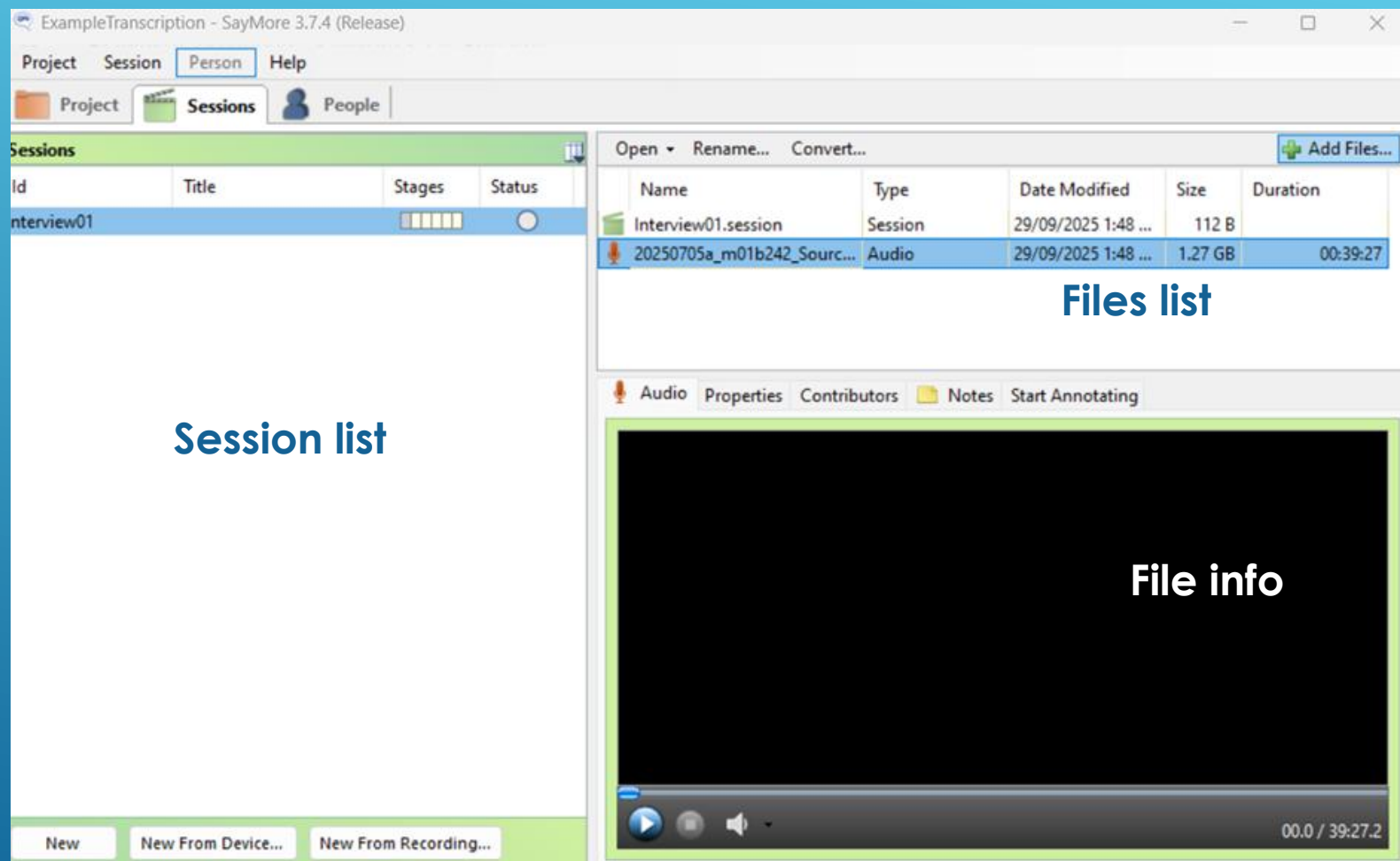
# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION: SAYMORE

**Step four: Create annotation file**

- ► **Choose 'Start annotating' tab in bottom right**
- ► **(If you have an unusual file format, it will first give you an option to convert to .wav)**
- ► **Select 'Use auto segmenter'**
- ► **Click 'Get started'**
- ► **It will take a short time to generate the annotation file**
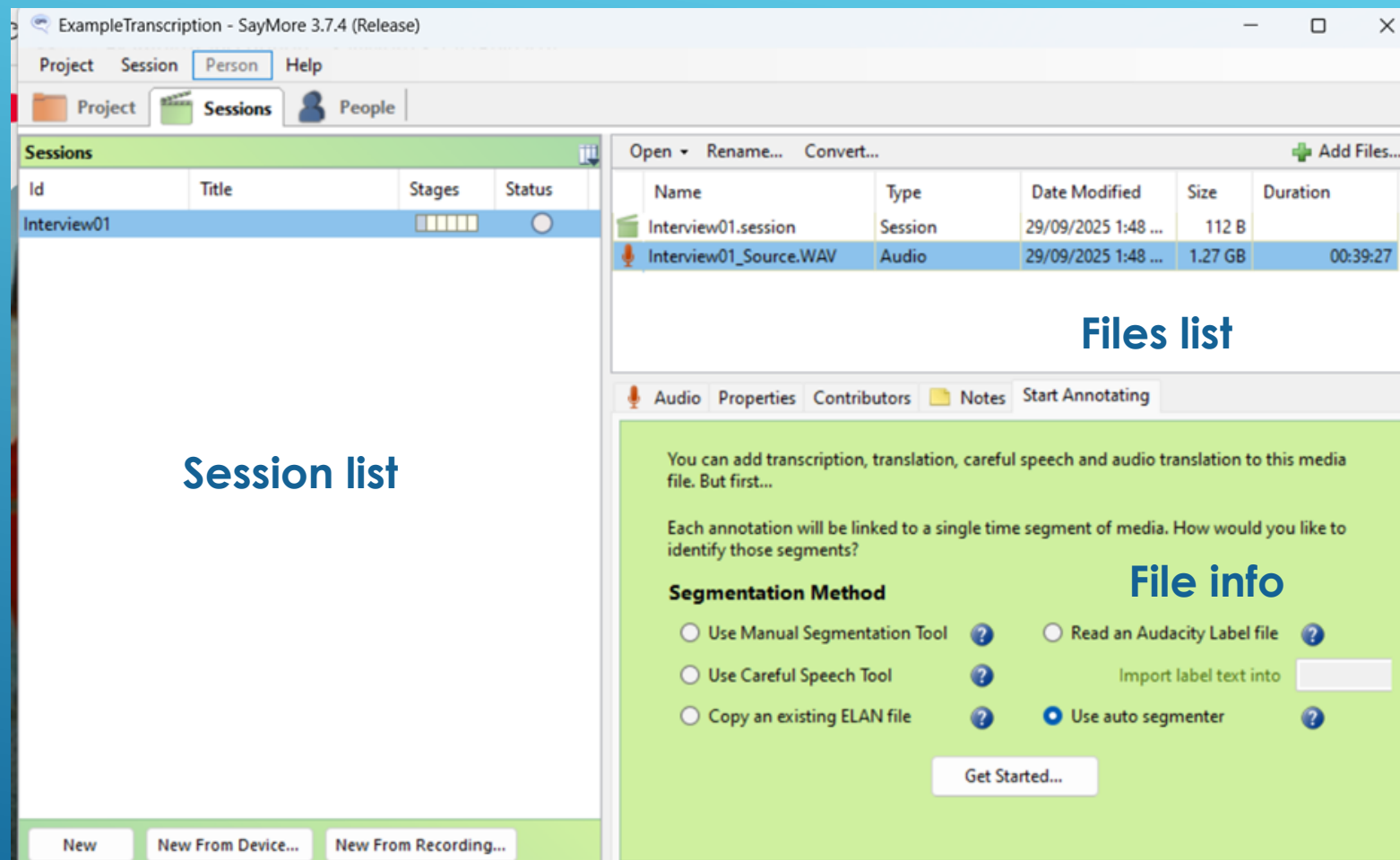
# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION: SAYMORE

**Step five: Transcribe**

▶ **In the file list, select the new annotation file**

▶ **The bottom right shows two columns: transcription and translation**

  ○ You can adjust view so that this has more of the display

▶ **When you click each row, the segment will play on a loop five times while you transcribe**

▶ **Manually adjust segmentation using 'Segment'**

▶ **If you need more complex annotation, you can open the file in ELAN by double clicking the annotation file**

# TOOLS FOR MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION: SAYMORE

**Step six: Export**

▶ **Choose 'Export' tab in bottom right to see options**

▶ **.csv Spreadsheet is most comprehensive**

▶ **Plain text is most readable – transcription followed by translation**

▶ **Or you can open in ELAN**
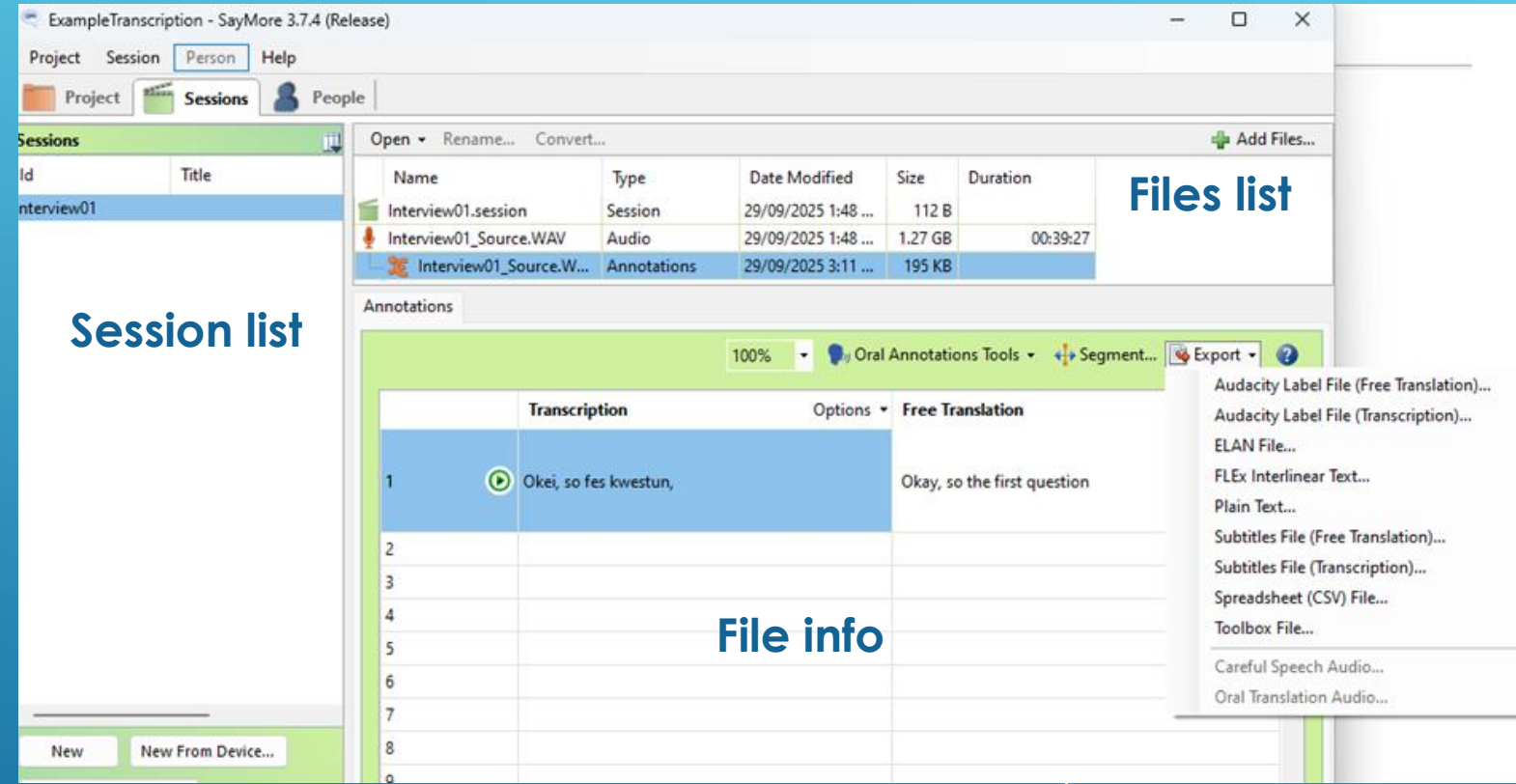
# TRANSCRIPTION PRACTICE

- Find your files
- Try Word Dictate function
- Try SayMore
- Try ELAN

**Reflection questions**

- How listenable is the audio?
- How reliable was auto-transcribe?
- How it feel to transcribe manually?
- Did transcribing get you thinking about analysis?

# DATA ANALYSIS - WHAT IS IT?

**Data analysis is:**

➢ **Exciting, challenging, messy and unpredictable!**

**The process involves making sense of a large volume of data, interpreting them, and reporting on them in a "coherent and compelling manner" (Duff, 2008, p. 159)**

*One might "be tempted to present the data in its rawest state because it is closest to the reality of the setting... it is essential to understand in writing about data to understand why raw data cannot simply be left as it is, and why a researcher must organize it and develop a strategy for writing about it" (Holliday, 2002, p. 100).*

**Data is evidence to support the arguments and should be deployed strategically.**

Figure 5.1 From data to text

[a] corpus of raw data

rationalized sections of messy reality

[b] thematic organization of data

[c] text of data analysis section or chapter

extracts from data, and discussion, incorporated under each thematic heading to form the basis for the argument

once removed from 'reality'

further removed from 'reality'

even further removed from 'reality'

# SOME COMMON QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS APPROACHES

## Discourse analysis

- *How language is used to construct meaning and social realities within a specific social, cultural, and political context.*

## Narrative analysis

- *The construction of narratives that capture people's lived and imagined experiences (see Gary Barkhuizen's work).*

## Content analysis

- *Systematic classification/categorisation to describe data and patterns.*

## (Reflexive) Thematic analysis

- *Goes beyond content analysis to focus on interpretation and conceptualisation (see Braun & Clark, 2022).*

# DATA ANALYSIS – INDUCTIVE VS DEDUCTIVE

**Inductive**

> Starts with the data
> Build up codes and themes from the ground up
> Allows flexibility and is suitable for exploratory approaches
> Ideal for new research areas or when you don't know what you expect to find and want to remain open

**Deductive**

> Starts with the pre-determined codes
> Codes are based on existing theories or frameworks
> Theory driven, structured approach
> Ideal for testing hypotheses or applying existing theories to data

# DATA ANALYSIS PROCESSES: REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS (RTA)

▶ **What is it?** (*Braun and Clarke, 2022, pp. 4-5*):

  ▶ The *TA* part: "a method for developing, analyzing and interpreting patterns across a qualitative dataset".

  ▶ It involves systematic processes of data coding to develop ***themes*** *(= the ultimate <u>analytic</u> purpose)*.

  ▶ The *REFLEXIVE* part: "reflexivity involves a disciplined practice of critically interrogating what we do, how and why we do it, and the impacts and influences of this on our research".

▶ ***Considerations:***

  ▶ Offers an accessible and robust method for those new to qualitative analysis.

  ▶ These are offered as process *guidelines NOT* to be treated as rigid rules.

# REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

A 6-phase process *(Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 35-36)*

1) **Familiarizing yourself with the dataset**

   *"From the earliest data collection and transcription stages…data analysis is already taking place"* (Duff, 2008, p. 159).

2) **Coding**

3) **Generating initial themes**

4) **Developing and reviewing themes**

5) **Refining, defining and naming themes**

6) **Writing up**

# RTA CODING

- Coding is not a process of summarising *all* your data.
  - *"The challenge is to be explicitly mindful of the purposes of your study and of the conceptual lenses you are training on it – while allowing yourself to be open and reeducated by things you didn't know about or expect to find" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56).*

- Organic and evolving process

| General guideline | Principle | Example |
|---|---|---|
| Don't just copy the data | A code label should reduce the mess of the data, and summarise the meaning you're identifying in the data extract. | A code label like 'choice is important' summarises an idea that is often more loosely or fluidly expressed in data (and from semantic to latent levels). |
| Identify the particular angle of the meaning | A good code label should not be too broad, and should contain some indicator of the specific meaning in the data. | A code label like 'choice' potentially captures very contradictory meanings related to choice, and is too broad to be effective. Better code labels would indicate what specifically was stated or evoked around choice in a particular segment of data – such as 'choice is important' or 'it's not always a choice'. |
| Indicate your analytic take somehow | A code label often contains some indication of your interpretative take – what you think is particularly important or interesting about this particular meaning. | Rather than being based in the meaning-frameworks expressed by the commentators, a code label 'having choice is what is *ultimately* important' captured *our* analytic take. Although the commenters rarely expressed it in quite these terms, *having* choice was regularly expressed in a way that framed it as the most important principle of all. |

(Braun and Clarke, 2022, p. 60)

# THEME DEVELOPMENT

➢ *A theme captures the shared meaning of codes, united by a central organising concept.*

➢ A topic summary is *not* a theme.

➢ Don't get too attached to early themes, allow refinement

 ➢ focus on the process and the journey, not the destination

➢ Themes do not emerge…

➢ Use visual mapping

➢ No more than six themes (with sub-themes – no more than three levels)
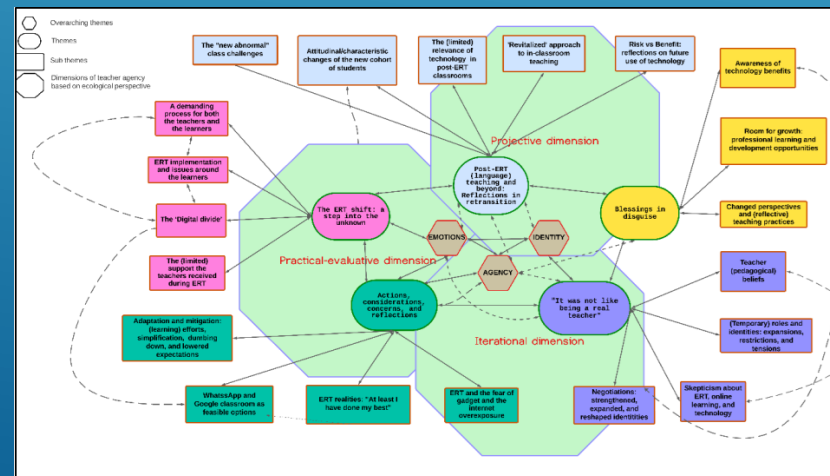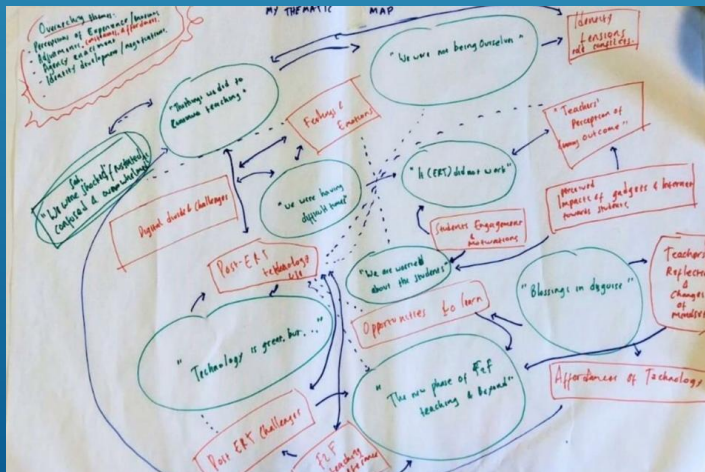
# MEASURES OF QUALITY

➢ **Trustworthiness:**

➢ *Credibility, confidence in the findings;*

➢ *Dependability, consistency of the findings;*

➢ *Confirmability, or the extent to which the findings are free from researchers' biases;*

➢ *Transferability, or how well the research may be applicable to other similar, contexts.*

➢ **Follow a robust procedure**

➢ **Take your time and be reflexive**

➢ **Report on each step and provide a detailed outline of the process including visual examples.**

➢ **Clear interpretation, selection of data to support interpretation**

(Bingham, 2023, p 1)

► **Why choose this method?**

► It can identify any other factors, features, barriers, etc. that would not have been discovered at 'first sight'

► It factors in any theoretical, paradigmatic assumptions on the topic (*of course*), *while at the same time…*

> ► It **respects** and **reflects** subjectivity of **participants** (i.e., *their own accounts* of their attitudes, opinions, and experiences as faithfully as possible) → **'giving a voice'**

> ► It **acknowledges and embraces** the **reflexive influence of the researcher's interpretations** on those accounts
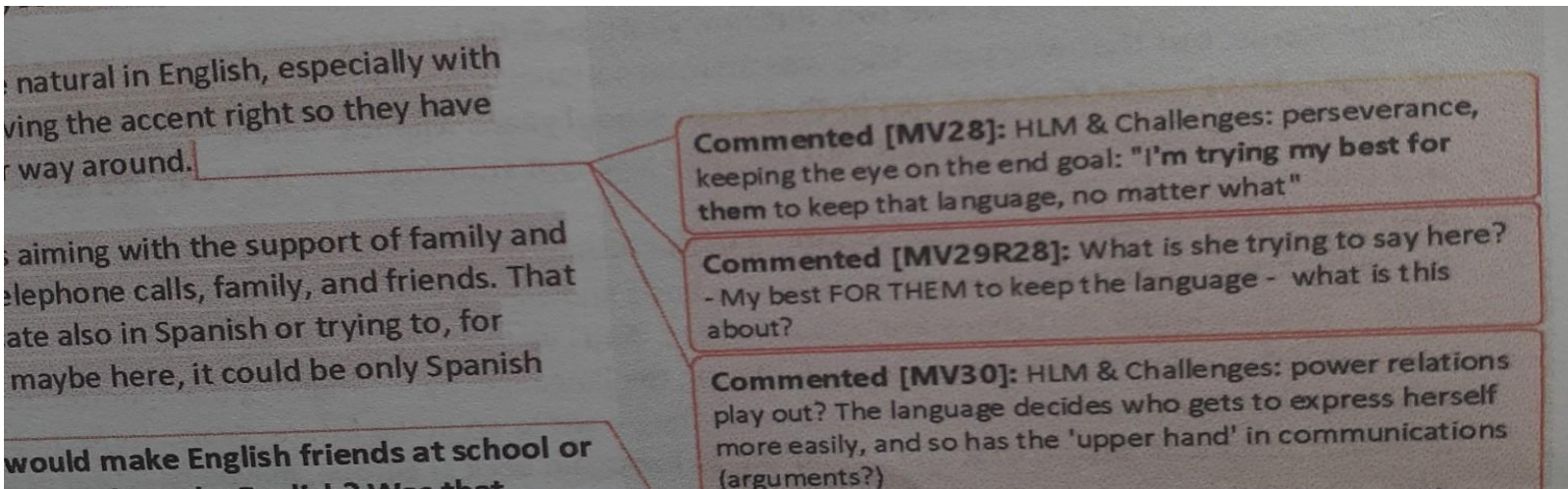
# REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS (RTA)



▶ **Example 'reflexive influence' of the researcher**
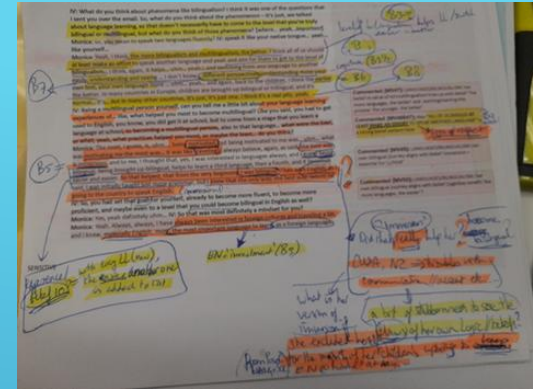
*"The research triggered deep reflections with all parties involved. It allowed my participants to recount very personal memories of the HLM practices while narrating their perspectives on these over time"*

- **(one) conclusion in the report >** *"Both generations also experienced feelings of social isolation and a sense of non-belonging,* **where language would make them feel "the foreigner" in their respective L1- or L2-identity,** *or, to stay in Block's (2007) terms, made them* **"feeling a part yet apart".**

*"The interviews also brought about some reflections on my own experiences as an immigrant"*

- **Considering your own 'field of experience' >** *"my personal experience as Dutch immigrant to NZ has always left me quite surprised about the fluidity of my own identity and language use. …* **I acutely became aware of my Dutch heritage and language which had me sometimes feeling more Dutch than I had ever done in the Netherlands, experiencing the two worlds of feeling a part yet feeling apart."**

Based on research report: *Heritage language Maintenance and Family Relationship Dynamics: a children's perspective* (Gorter & Berardi-Wiltshire, 2025)

# Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA)

▶ **So, what does it look like?**

   *MESSY!*  ⟶

   (until it all becomes clear!)

▶ *Considerations:*

   ▶ Do not expect a linear progression through the phases when doing RTA!

   ▶ Very intuitive process, requiring a *constant* reflexive mindset of how/why you do/choose things

   ▶ Journaling to help your thinking around your 'researcher'-interpretations → helps you searching for further latent and semantic interpretations of the data
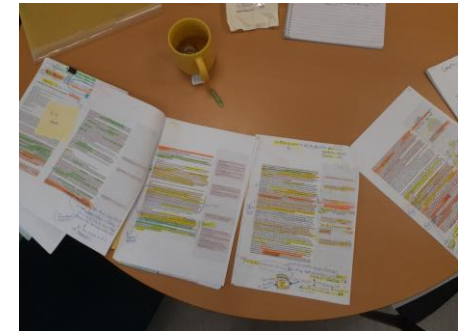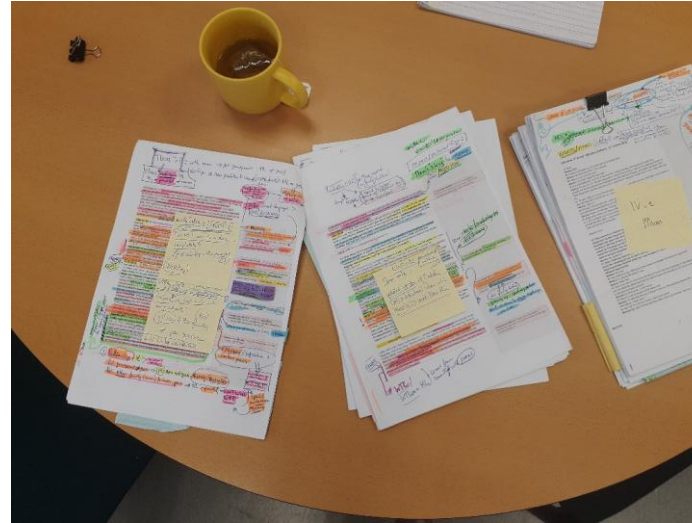
# 'INTERVIEWS' IN LANGUAGE DOCUMENTATION

Most of the essential tasks of language documentation fall under the heading of what we've been calling 'interviewing' today.

➤ Wordlist gathering
➤ Recording 'natural texts'
➤ Analysing these texts (primarily to understand lexicon and morphosyntax)
➤ Text-based elicitation

# ELICITATION BY TRANSLATION?



42. Rice can be bought in the market.
    bəgás   məlán   dot   tíndah.
43. Rice cannot be bought now.
    bəgás   ka²áy   məlán   tibán. = ka²áy nə kəlán it bəgás, tibár
44. Rice could not be bought yesterday.
    karáh   nəkəlán   it   bəgás   kəgápon.
45. This is the child that will eat the fish.
    itún   yànyugán   mənán   it   sədá².
46. This is the fish which the child will eat.
    itún   sədá²   kánən   it   yànyugán.
47. This is the knife with which the child will cut the fish.
    itún   ladín   ipaták   (ilapá²)   it   yànyugán   it   sədá².
48. This is the room which the child will enter.
    itún   siŋlád   sóldan   it   yànyugán.
49. This is the branch on which the bird landed.
    itún   sánah   inəponán   it   bəgít. // itu it sánah nan...

# TEXT-BASED GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS

**Disadvantage:**

▶ **More time- and labour-intensive**

▶ **Data isn't as easily comparable across languages**

**Advantages:**

▶ **Tends to yield more naturalistic language data**

▶ **Less vulnerable to language consultants mirroring grammatical features from a stimulus language**

▶ **Forces researcher to engage with cultural context, community knowledge & beliefs**

▶ **We find things we weren't already looking for!**

# /ba/ in Tagalog – a question-marking particle

May mga travel tips **ba** kayo para sa matagal nang hindi umuwi sa Pilipinas?

*Do you(pl) have travel tips for someone who hasn't been back to the Philippines in a long time?*

Pwede po **ba** mag dala ng powerbank sa pal flight

*Can one bring powerbanks on Philippine Airlines flights?*

Bakit **ba** di natatapos ang problema natin sa BAHA?

*Why don't our problems with FLOODS end?*

Napanood nyo na **ba** to?

*Have you(pl) watched this yet?*

# /ba?/ in Palawano – the same thing?

But:



16. isn't that so?   kay ba?



**Concordance Results**

| Ref | Occurrence |
|---|---|
| Show All | Show All |
| Ampon 1.11 | ;e taw ne' dangay dye, "Kay mo **ba'** in banar ama'. Ama' mo banar, do'on nga, don |
| Beksan 1.5 | ;ang ney ano, kelenitat penga'an **ba'**, pengina'an. Kerawa ney megkeka'an. Boda' it |
| Bentetal 5.2 | Da' sogid ko, "Ew. Yan ne **ba'** pelan yen." |
| Biras (p 10.6 | benwa." mit biras ye. Nepanew **ba'** nenonson. |
| Biras (p 18.2 | po' ye," mit esawa ye. "Mera'at **ba'** inyet megpemisi'. Nang me'enan ket empo' ye. |
| Biras (p 19.13 | ;biring kersada' nang eme? Eme **ba'** banar i' pinsi'an mot itwe?" |
| Biras (p 2.1 | "Na' ano **ba'**, ibinggey daken it na'nan kong menge taw anet |
| Biras (p 20.1 | "Na' ato **ba'** e. Ato nga e." |
| Biras (p 22.1 | "Na' negpedo'long **ba'** daken," min ye "ke' tangked neng reges ye. Ke |
| Biras (p 23.4 | "Kalo' nesa'bo ne a? Itoldowa' **ba'** damen don nang eme?" |
| Biras (p 25.1 | "Kay **ba'**. Ido'long mo kami do'on." |
| Biras (p 26.4 | :ipag ye na' menge yegang. "Ato **ba'** e." Meni'dong-si'dong i' tyen, keraway megkeb |
| Biras (p 30.3 | ng ono ney negkamang, tegeyen **ba'**, nang ono ne i' nengdyadi it ama' moyo, nang n |
| Biras (p 33.1 | i', mit tyet esawa ye, "Itoldowa' **ba'** daken, nang eme banar." Tangked ne' reges ye |
| Biras (p 4.1 | "Kera **ba'** biras. Nang ga'ay mo, anyen ba yen. Anyen na |
| Biras (p | et biras mera'at, kenye get kera **ba'** at kenyey menonga na' mera'at. Maw nang me |

# TEXT-BASED GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS

**Disadvantage:**

- **More time- and labour-intensive**
- **Data isn't as easily comparable across languages**

**Advantages:**

- **Tends to yield more naturalistic language data**
- **Less vulnerable to language consultants mirroring grammatical features from a stimulus language**
- **Forces researcher to engage with cultural context, community knowledge & beliefs**
- **We find things we weren't already looking for!**

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# GROUP REFLECTION

**Reflection questions**

- What kind of analytical approach would you use for your project?
- How did your interviews go?
- Anything you'd do differently?
- Any initial ideas?

# 26 NOVEMBER 2025: WORKSHOP ON RESEARCH INTERVIEWS

Linguistic Society of NZ

Conference 2025

# PRESENTING AND PUBLISHING INTERVIEW RESEARCH

- ▶ **Writing up interview methodologies**
- ▶ **From thesis to articles**
- ▶ **Editor's perspective – Victoria Chen**
- ▶ **Question time**

# WRITING UP INTERVIEW METHODOLOGIES

- ▶ Explain what you did in a way that is clear, rigorous, and defendable

- ▶ Tell the story of your **decisions** — why you chose this method, how you carried it out, and how those choices produced the **kind of data** you now have

- ▶ Refer back to your researcher's **journal** – if you've done your job well, it's all in there

- ▶ **Tailor your writing** to the output and audience (e.g. Thesis Vs. journal article)

# THE RATIONALE

- Editors and examiners want to know
  - **Why were interviews the right tool for your research questions?**
  - **How did they fit into the study's design?**
- This is where you make the case that your questions required depth, nuance, personal narratives, attention to identity, etc.
- And that interviews complemented other instruments (if any) well.
- Use literature about approach/instruments to support your points.
- Continue to **weave in your rationale at in every section of your methodology** section.

# THE INTERVIEW

Do not just tell, justify. Why was each choice the right choice? Think in terms of the data it yielded, the ethical standards it maintained, the efficiency of the process, etc.

1. **Participant recruitment and sampling**: who, criteria, how many, etc. Remember: for interview studies, sample size is about diversity of perspectives and depth over breadth.

2. **The interview procedure**(s): the mode, the structure, the duration, the place, kinds of questions, piloting, positionality, rapport, etc.

3. **Recording, transcription and data management**: How did you handle the data and why? Transcription process, member checking, storage.

# THE ANALYSIS

- Begin with the broad analytical approach (Discourse? Content? Thematic? Narrative? Etc.). **Why was this the most suitable approach given your aims?**

- Continue with the analytical procedure: **what did you do to turn data into findings?**

- Continue to highlight the coherence of your choices, e.g., "The semi-structured interviews were designed to produce comparable narratives that could be analysed thematically."

- Be concise but don't skim on key decisions. "More detail on analysis needed" is a common request from examiners and editors.

# ETHICS & REFLEXIVITY

- Your rationale really matters here, but the focus shifts **to protecting the participant** as well as **the integrity of your data**. What decisions were made with these aims in mind?

- Reflexivity acknowledges: power dynamics, your role in shaping responses, the effect of the mode (online vs in-person, any constraints in time, environment, or rapport, etc). Links to limitations.

- Frame these not as confessions, but as evidence of thoughtful research practice leading to the best possible outcome, not just for the study, but for everyone involved.

- End the section with one or two sentences showing the whole logic:

"Together, these decisions shaped a dataset that was rich, context-sensitive, and aligned with the study's aim of exploring X. The interview approach allowed participants to contribute deeply reflective accounts that formed the basis of the analysis."

- Remember
  - You're not just telling us what you did — you're showing us why it made sense to do so given what you wanted to achieve
  - Examiners don't expect perfection. They expect clarity and honesty.
  - You can justify nearly any methodological choice, as long as you actually justify it.

# CLOSING

# FROM THESIS TO PUBLICATIONS

- From 'big' to 'small'
  - Thesis: 80-100,000 words
  - Articles: 6,000-10,000 words (standalone without context of thesis)

- How to go about slicing the pie?
  - Maximise publications from your thesis

- Key things to consider:
  - Novelty, original idea
  - Currency - engaging in current debate(s), new research gap, new context.
  - Key contribution
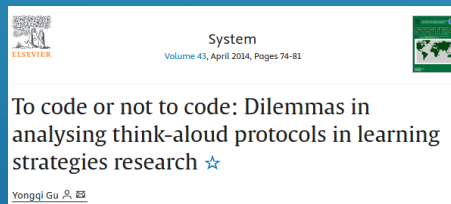  - Clear take home message for readers

# CONCEPTUALISING YOU CONTRIBUTION AND 'SLICE'

1) **Topic areas of literature: Systematic, critical literature review**
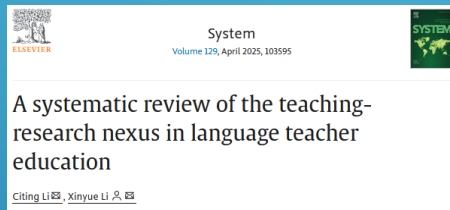


2) **Methodology:**

# CONCEPTUALISING YOU CONTRIBUTION AND 'SLICE'

3) **Research Questions**

4) **Participants**

5) **Different rounds of interviews**

6) **Findings**

7) **Discussion points**

8) **Audience:**

- **Who do you want to communicate with? Are there different audiences that you want to share your research with?**
  - **Practitioners, policy-makers, local journals, researchers...**
- *What do you want to share with each audience? What is appropriate to share with each audience?*

# CONCEPTUALISING YOU CONTRIBUTION AND 'SLICE': WHAT FEEDBACK HAVE YOU RECEIVED?

1) **Supervisors**
   - **What feedback have you received from your supervisors?**
   - **Seek their advice...**

2) **Conference presentations**
   - **What elicited engagement and discussion?**

3) **Examiners' reports**
   - **What were examiners most impressed with?**

   *I encourage you to publish the research so it can reach a wider audience.*

   *I would encourage you to write articles that flesh out the different influences on professional identity affecting teachers like XXXX in contrast to teachers at rural schools (like XXXX). These individual teacher differences are fascinating...*

   *In your view did the careful and well documented thematic analysis turn out to be a contribution of your study? How might you more clearly identify this as a contribution in future publication of your work?*

# GETTING STARTED

1) **Be clear about your idea**

2) **Review relevant journals:**
   - **Consider**
     - **Your reference list – which journals do you cite?**
   - **For each journal:**
     - **Aims and Scope**
     - **Recent articles published**
     - **Editors, Editorial Board**
     - **Instructions for Authors (word limit etc.)**
     - **Journal metrics (indices, publication timeframe)**
     - **Submission process and costs**

3) **Choose the most appropriate journal**
   - **Write your article targeted specifically for the journal and journal requirements**
   - **Seek advice, get others to read**
   - **Have a back-up plan**

# SESSION 4 BEGINS HERE

# REFERENCES

**For:**