

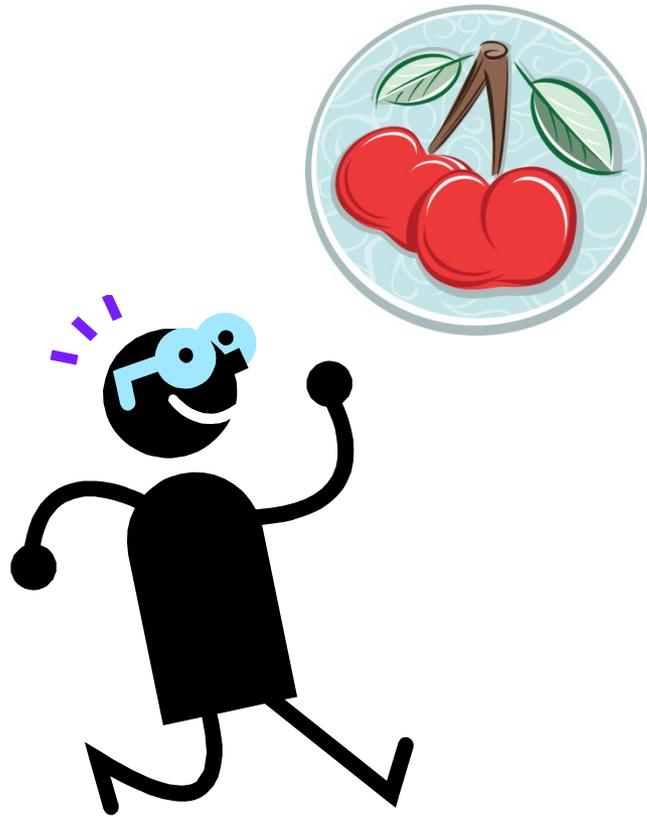
Better Strategies for Analyzing Narrative Data in Peacebuilding Evaluation

Reina C. Neufeldt, PhD

University of Waterloo / Conrad Grebel University College

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A short story of poorly used narrative data



Better Strategies

Phase 1: Setting the stage

- Transcribe your interviews
 - Verbatim text
 - [what I think she said]
- Read your interviews
 - Record your initial observations

Strategy One: Take better care of the data

Better Strategies

Phase 2: Coding and Analyzing the Data

Reread transcripts carefully

- word by word, line by line

Coding – round 1

- Label key ideas, phrases, sentences, paragraphs (e.g. activities, emotions, opinions)
- Focus on what is most relevant
- Filter with pre-existing categories or be open-ended

Example

B: Did this project change the way members of the community interacted?

R4: When [Maria*] first came to talk with the women in the community, we did not listen to her. She was a young woman who had barely come of age, and we did not think that she would have much to contribute. But she kept coming back to the market and speaking with us in the marketplace. She ate with us. She laughed with us. Slowly we came to realize that Maria was not as young as we thought.

B: Mmmhmm...and, then?

R4: A small group of women in the marketplace decided to go with Maria to speak to [the leader] and to set up a time and place to meet the others. And after that, things began to change. We started meeting together and allowing the other women back into the market. Slowly, slowly things changed. We began to talk together. And then we began to sit together. Finally, we began to eat together again. It had been many years since we had shared food.

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Better Strategies

Coding – round 2

- Cluster codes into larger categories (or themes)
- Keep, drop, combine codes
- Label your larger categories (or themes)
- Check your categories by going back to the data
 - Ask: Does this label make sense?

Analysis of coding: how do the categories relate?

Example

Respectful Engagement

Came back
Spoke to us
Ate with us
Laughed with us

Trust-building

Trust-building with CSO worker

We did not listen
We came to realize
Decided to go

Trust-building with other women

Allowed back to the market
Began to talk...

Strategy Two: Careful, comparative coding of interview data

Better Strategies

Phase III: Write-up

- Explain your coding methodology
- Explain your choices
- Support your interpretation with extensive use of quotes (put quotes in an appendix if it doesn't fit in the report...)

Strategy three: more thorough reporting of interview data