



[DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.7774044](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7774044)

Sharing qualitative research data and materials - workshop

Qualitative Research meets Open Science
EUR Open and Responsible Science Campaign

March 29, 2023

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What is qualitative data?

- Non-numeric, unstructured
- Participants determine initial conceptual response categories
- Primarily ordinary language data (can be shared most easily)



- Examples at EUR
 - Methods: interviews, focus groups, participant observation, document review
 - Data types: audio, video, transcriptions, field notes, documents

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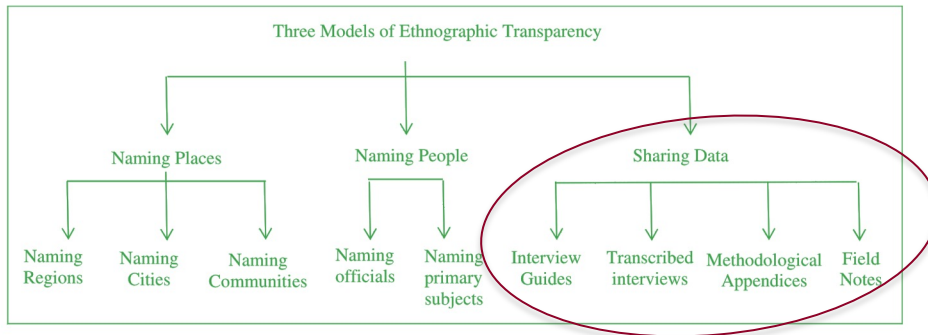
Why share qualitative data?

- Obligation Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018)
 - “data is open and accessible to the extent possible and remains confidential to the extent necessary”
- Benefits for science and society
 - Enables others to examine justification and comprehensiveness of claims
 - Enables other investigators to conduct novel research with the same dataset
 - maximizes the scientific findings from a project
 - reduces the burden placed on participants (especially from underrepresented communities)




Why share qualitative data?

- To provide analytic transparency – improving access to the interpretive process through which scholars come to their conclusions
- To stimulate collective reflection and learning
 - e.g., sharing interview questionnaires allows students and colleagues to see examples of successful work and finalized interview guides
 - e.g., students transcribing field notes as training opportunity



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Discussion

- What is reproducibility/replicability for qualitative methods?
 - *If* replication is a desirable goal, then transparency is a required step 
 - But, even without a commitment to replication, openness is necessary for readers to assess how scholars drew observations from sources, attached meaning to them, and identified them as analytically significant to their research



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Discussion

- What information do you need for understanding published research?

- What is needed for reusability?

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Challenges of sharing qualitative data

- Inherent subjectivity of qualitative data
 - Hard to understand beyond original researcher
 - Risk of misinterpretation or incomplete interpretation by others



- Objectivity may not be the goal, other perspectives valuable
- Full data provide more context than shared results / selections

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Challenges of sharing qualitative data

- Sharing sensitive data could harm study participants
- De-identifying and documenting data is time-consuming
- Anonymizing data may introduce inaccuracies and confusion



- Anonymization and access restrictions necessary
 - Budget for these tasks in projects
- Choose anonymization scheme carefully

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What to share and what to archive?



Data Repository:

- Data package with curated data
- Used materials, e.g. protocols, informed consent form (NOT signed)
- Usually NO personal data
- ...
- README file



Archive:

- Raw data AND processed data
- Ethical review approval
- Informed consent forms (signed)
- Any other project documents (agreements, etc.)
- ...
- README file

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What to share?

- Everything that helps to understand data, analysis, and to justify claims and/or that is suitable for re-use
- Interview questions
- Observation guides
- Topic lists
- Coding queries
- Field notes
- ... et cetera
- Transcripts or recordings: possible, but can be tricky
- Starting with materials is already a big step forward



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Practical steps for preparing data to share

- Anonymization of qualitative data
 - Plan ahead
 - Ask for consent to share pseudonymous version
 - Instruct participants (e.g., not mentioning full name on record)
 - Remove direct and indirect identifiers from transcripts
 - Use pseudonyms or generic descriptors to edit identifying information

INT: So, really, it's as I said to you: I want you to tell me what you can remember about Mr Jeavons' [15 - Delete and replace with [your husband's]] care in the last week of his life ... or about Mr Jeavons [16 - Delete and replace with [your husband]] in the last week of his life.

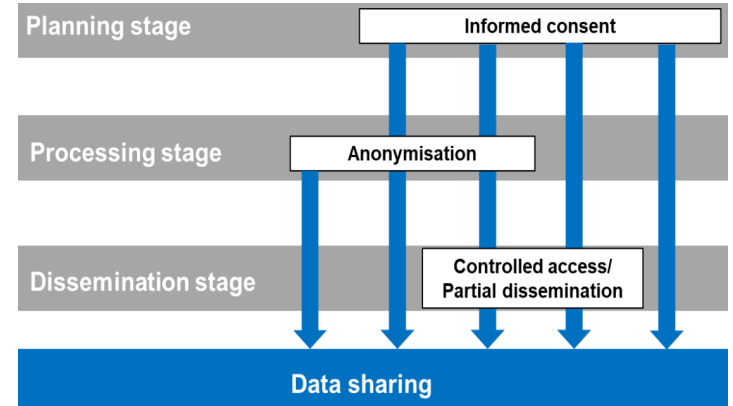
RESP: Yeah, erm, 11 days, Tom [17 - Delete and replace with [he]] was in St Barbara's Hospice [18 - Delete and replace with [the hospice]] for the last 11 days of his life so...

Picture: [CESSDA Expert Guide](#)

The logo for Erasmus, featuring the name 'Erasmus' in a stylized, handwritten cursive font.

Practical steps for preparing data to share













- Anonymization should be considered together with:
 - Informed consent (see [EUR templates](#))
 - ask for consent to share personal data
 - be careful when promising full anonymization
 - Controlled access
 - restricted access (e.g., only for academic research, training, upon request)



Picture: [FORScenter.ch](https://www.forscenter.ch)

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Consider level of access and processing when sharing

		Level of processing		
		Raw data	Redacted data	Summarized data
Level of access	Closed			
	Controlled			
	Restricted			
	Open			









Examples of data with different levels of openness

		Level of processing		
		Raw data	Redacted data	Summarized data
Level of access	Closed	<i>photographs of faces, interview videos</i>	<i>ethnographic field notes of sensitive events</i>	<i>data embargoed until publication</i>
	Controlled	<i>interview transcripts w/ names + locations</i>	<i>internal government documents</i>	<i>excerpts of photographs and field notes of political event</i>
	Restricted	<i>images of a political event</i>	<i>thematic coding of focus group transcripts</i>	<i>Interview excerpts including thematic codes</i>
	Open	<i>public policy documents</i>	<i>ethnographic field notes</i>	<i>summary of thematic analysis of interview transcripts</i>

The Erasmus logo is a stylized, handwritten-style signature of the word "Erasmus" in black ink, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Some practical takeaways

- Start planning early on 
- Prepare your data for archiving and re-use 
- Document your data, keep it organized 
- Richly describe your data 
- Anonymize carefully 
- Focus on materials over actual data 

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Resources and support

- Erasmus University Rotterdam:
 - [Research Data Management pages](#)
 - [Legal Support pages](#)
 - [Informed consent templates](#)
 - [MyEUR Privacy pages](#)
 - [EUR DMPonline](#) (for drafting data management plans)
 - [EUR Data Repository](#) (for sharing data)
- Other resources:
 - [Qualitative Data Repository - guidelines](#)
 - [CESSDA Data Management Expert Guide – Qualitative coding](#)
 - [Finnish Social Science Data Archive – processing qualitative data](#)
 - [FAIR for Qualitative Data course](#)



Questions















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Exercise: what to share?

- How to group data and materials in the processing and access matrix?
 - What data to share in raw, redacted or summarized form?
 - With what kind of access levels (closed, controlled, restricted, open)?
- Use your own project as an example or use one of the example projects on the next slides
- Discuss in subgroups
- Explain why you chose certain groupings

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Processing and access matrix:

		Level of processing		
		Raw data	Redacted data	Summarized data
Level of access	Closed			
	Controlled			
	Restricted			
	Open			



Example case I

O'Neill, Maureen. 2017. "High performance school-age athletes at Australian schools: A study of conflicting demands".

Qualitative Data Repository. <https://doi.org/10.5064/F6ZP448B>. QDR Main Collection. V1

- Data and materials:
 - Project summary / Data abstract
 - Ethics application and approval
 - Abstracted transcripts
 - Word frequency counts / word clouds
 - Interview schedule
 - Blank consent form
 - Interview transcripts
 - Code structure / summary
 - Endnote library

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Example case II

Huis, A.M.P., Wendt, B. , Hulscher, M., Huisman-de Waal, G.J, Hautvast, J.L.A. (2020). Exploring infection prevention practices and its determinants in Dutch home-based nursing care, 2019-2020. DANS. <https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-zz3-aszh>

- Data and materials:
 - README
 - Methods
 - Observation guide
 - Coded observations
 - Topic guide focus groups
 - Focus group coded quotations

- Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) output

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