

# Qualitative Research: Thinking Ahead to Chapter 5 While Working on Chapter 4

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# Agenda

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Chapter 5: Discussion Chapter in Context

Results-Only Thinking

What are Data?

Results-and-Discussion Thinking

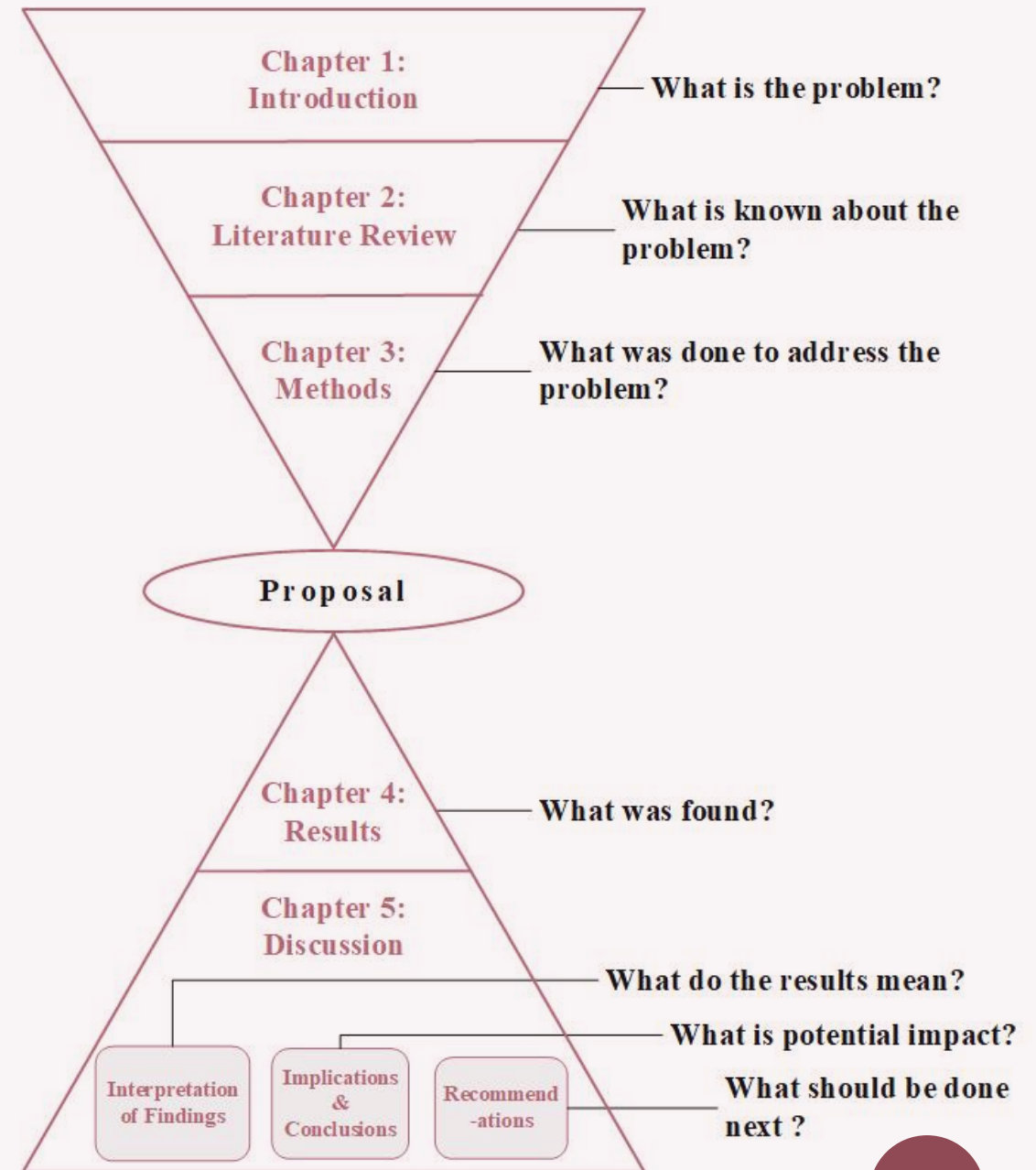
Data-Coding Journal

Helpful Phrases for Writing Chapter 5



# Chapter 5: Discussion Chapter in Context

- Broad, general, and literary
- Involves answering three basic questions:
  1. What?
  2. So what?
  3. Now what?







# “Results-Only” Thinking: Presenting Data Acquired From Participants



The cognitive focus is limited to presenting information acquired from participants during the data collection process.

# “Results-Only” Thinking: Present Data Acquired From Participants



- *Chapter 4 content* should be focused only on the presenting of the study results. Chapter 4 subsections for a qualitative study generally include:
  - description of data collection,
  - description of data analysis, and
  - presentation of results by research questions or themes.
- However, compartmentalizing *researcher thinking* to “results only” interrupts the natural flow of the cognitive process involved in analysis.
- “Results-only” thinking isolates *information acquisition* from *knowledge generation*.



# What are Data?

- “Data are best understood as representations of observations, objects, or other entities used as evidence of phenomena for the purposes of research or scholarship.”
- “Data have no value or meaning in isolation. They can be assets or liabilities or both. **They exist within a knowledge infrastructure—an ecology of people, practices, technologies, institutions, material objects, and relationships.** All parts of the infrastructure are in flux with shifts in stakeholders, technologies, policies, and power.”



Borgman, C. L. (2015). *Big data, little data, no data: Scholarship in the networked world*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.





# “Results-and-Discussion” Thinking: Conversing Data into Knowledge



The cognitive focus is expanded to include the theory of anthropomorphism for the purpose of conversing information into knowledge.

# Epley's (2014) Theory of Anthropomorphism

- Definition of anthropomorphism: Attributing human characteristics to non-human agents or objects (i.e., animals, hurricanes, computers, or cars)
- Epley's (2014) three triggers for recognizing humanlike minds in nonhuman agents:
  - it looks like a mind,
  - **can be explained with a mind**, or
  - is closely connected to your own mind. (pp. 65-66)
- Using anthropomorphism when speaking about a computer having a “mind of its own” is more than metaphoric talk.
- Literal neural processing is involved, increasingly so the more unpredictable the non-human agent or object.



Epley, N. (2014). *Mindwise: How we understand what others think, believe, feel, and want*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf



# Epley's (2014) Description of Anthropomorphism as Cognitive Ability

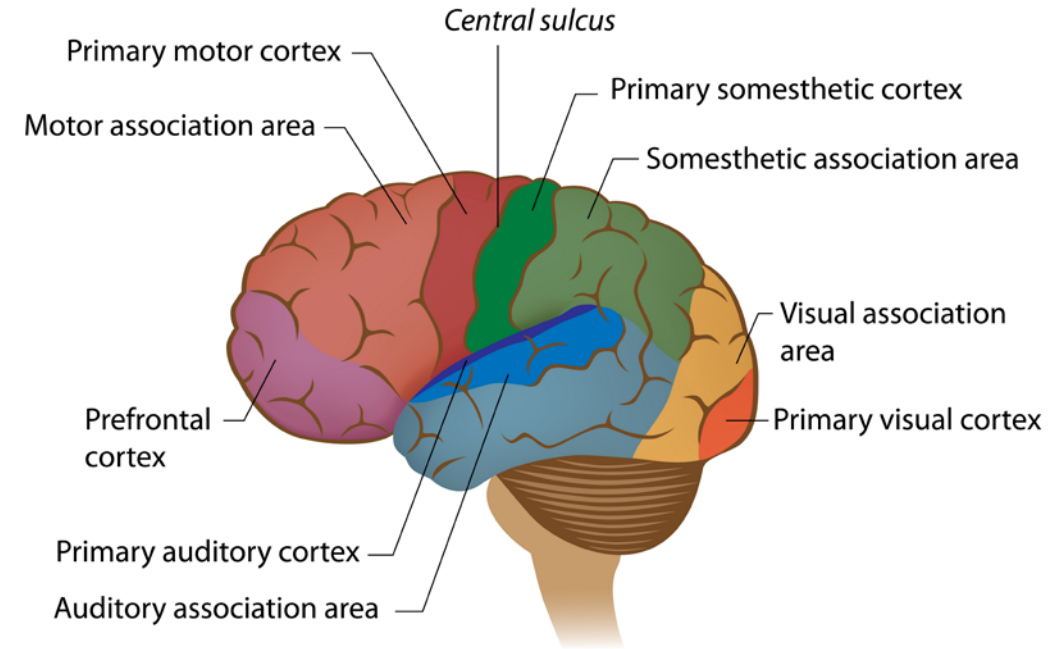


For centuries, our willingness to recognize minds in nonhumans has been seen as a kind of stupidity, a childlike tendency toward anthropomorphism and superstition that educated and clear-thinking adults have outgrown. I think this view is both mistaken and unfortunate. Recognizing the mind of another human being involves the same psychological processes as recognizing a mind in other animals, a god, or even a gadget. It is a reflection of our brain's greatest ability rather than a sign of our stupidity. (p. 81)



# Anthropomorphism and Brain-Based Research

- The medial prefrontal cortex (MPFC) is engaged when using your sixth sense (intuition), helping you make inferences about other persons'
  - thoughts,
  - motives,
  - attitudes, and
  - emotions
- fMRI scans reveal that the MPFC is also engaged when people are engaged in thinking about an unpredictable object (i.e., computer or car).
- Epley (2014) explained the MPFC is engaged when a person is trying to understand an unpredictable object. By attributing a mind to the computer, for example, the person can use his sixth sense to attempt to make meaning (understand/explain) out of the unpredictable object (or phenomenon).



# Epley's (2014) Explanation of Anthropomorphism's Functional Purpose



This functional purpose of mentalistic language, of describing something as if it has a mind, tells us two very important things about when minds emerge in both humans and nonhumans. First, they tend to emerge when someone has explaining to do... and from our attempts to explain a phenomenon when no other obvious explanation exists. (p. 75)



# “Results-and-Discussion” Thinking: Conversing Data into Knowledge



- Chapter 5 subsections for a qualitative study generally include:
  - interpretation of the findings,
  - recommendations,
  - implications, and
  - conclusions.
- “Results-and-Discussion” thinking is a creative process of using the mind to understand or explain aspects of a phenomenon by engaging in discussion with the data within their **knowledge infrastructure**—the “ecology of people, practices, technologies, institutions, material objects, and relationships” (Borgman, 2015).







# Data Coding Journal: Capturing Insights Emerging from the Data

Journaling the “Ah-Hahs” and “Uh-Ohs”  
While Working on Chapter 4

# Data Coding Process: Ground Rules for Managing Cognitive Load

- **No disturbances:** Remove cell phone from your workspace, turn off landline ringer, close Microsoft Outlook or other email/scheduling programs, and post a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your closed door. For family members and others who may be inclined to contact you, give advance notice when you will be unavailable during data coding sessions.
- **Display purpose and RQs:** Post study purpose statement and research questions where they can be quickly referenced throughout the analysis process.
- **Refamiliarize yourself with the literature:** Review your Chapter 2 literature review before beginning a data coding session and have a printed copy easily accessible.



# Data Coding Journal: Capturing Insights Emerging from the Data



## "Ah-Hahs"

- Alignment of results with study theoretical framework
- Results extending theory
- Considerations of other theoretical frameworks
- Results consistent with literature
- New contributions to the literature



## "Uh-Ohs"

- Misalignment of results with study theoretical framework
- Results contradicting theory
- Considerations of other theoretical frameworks
- Results inconsistent with literature
- Possible reasons for no new contributions to the literature



# Journaling Questions to Consider While Working on Chapter 4

1. Your study's **RESEARCH QUESTIONS!**
2. How well do your results fit with the study's theoretical framework?
3. Are there other theoretical frameworks that better explain your results?
4. Do your results suggest any ideas on how theory could be extended?
5. How do your results agree with the research literature? What might explain these similarities and agreements (i.e., population, sample, geographic location, research design, data collection instruments)?
6. How do your results disagree with the research literature? What might explain these controversies and disagreements (i.e., population, sample, geographic location, research methodology/design, data collection instruments)?
7. Are new contributions to the research literature emerging from your findings? What makes them new?
8. If no new contributions are emerging from your results, what are possible reasons for this?





# Helpful Phrases for Writing Chapter 5 Discussion

## Discussing Similarities/Differences of Results with Literature

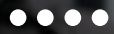
- a. “Findings from this present study showed/revealed...”
- b. “These findings agree/are consistent with those of Thompson’s (2018) specific to...”
- c. “Study results indicate/suggest...”
- d. “However, Smith and Jones (2017) came to a different conclusion. They found...”

## Recommendations for Future Research Questions

- a. “Given the results from this study and the research literature, here is what is known about ...”
- b. “However, knowledge is lacking in some areas...”
- c. “Therefore, future research should address the following questions...”



# THANK YOU



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