



Notes

The following guidelines cover the transcription, translation and anonymization of qualitative interviews in the CFAS Wales project. These were available to all researchers on the CFAS Wales project, however these were guidelines only and were adapted by each project lead to suit their needs. The specific processes used for each topic may therefore vary from each other and these guidelines.

Transcription Guidelines:

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, the transcriber will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to confirm that they will adhere to the principles of anonymity and confidentiality. The transcriber will agree not to speak about the content or nature of the interviews to anyone outside of the research project.

The project requires full verbatim transcription, preserving extra verbal material captured on the recording (such as the speaker's use of intonation, pauses, rhythm and hesitation) as well as the actual words spoken. Information from all characters in the recording should be transcribed, including those of the interviewer, with characters clearly identified in the transcript. The aim of the full verbatim transcription is to keep the additional meaning conveyed in the original interview, providing contextual information relating to the words spoken. The only exception to this is with regards to 'back channel utterances' from the interviewer during participant speech. For example, occasions where the researcher says words/utterances such as "yeah", "I see", "right", "mmhmm" whilst the participant is speaking are used to encourage the participant to continue speaking, and transcription of participant's speech should not be broken up by including them.

Each document should include a cover page as outline below. A header should be included on every page with the participant number and the research site on the left, and the transcriber name and the date the transcription is completed on the right. Page numbers should be included on the right side of the footer on every page. Times New Roman, font size 12 should be used, with researcher dialogue given in bold.

Each character should have a unique identifier. The interviewer should be identified using the letter I, all other participants should be identified by gender (M/F) and then an assigned number (i.e. M1, M2, F1, F2 etc). Dialogue from each character should be entered on a new line. Punctuation should be used as for normal written prose, however, grammar should not be altered or 'tidied up'. All elisions, false starts, mispronunciations, slang, repetitions, grammatical errors, long pauses, nonverbal sounds and background noises should be included. The following symbols will be used:

Symbol	Explanation
...	Three dots indicate ellipses and elisions.
[]	Square brackets indicating the beginning (I) and end (J) of overlapping talk.
(.)	A dot enclosed in parentheses indicates a short silence.
(())	Double parentheses enclose transcriber's comments – e.g. noises in the background ((door slams)), the tone of the participant ((Laughing)) etc.
()	Empty parentheses indicate that some talk was not audible or interpretable at all.
:	Colons indicate an elongated syllable; the more colons, the more the syllable or the sound was stretched.

When the transcription is complete the transcriber will use Truecrypt to encrypt the document, using the password agreed when negotiating the work, and email the encrypted file to the site contact. On receipt of the transcript the site contact will confirm with the

transcriber that it is safe for them to delete and destroy all copies of the interview (i.e. the interview recording and interview transcript). If there are large parts of the recording that the transcriber cannot hear, understand or decipher, or if there are any concerns or questions about the transcription guidelines, the transcriber should contact their site contact immediately.

The quality of transcription will be monitored by comparison of the transcribed interview to the audio recording by a member of the Qualitative CFAS Wales team, with regular feedback given to the transcription team.

Translation Guidelines:

The translation will reflect the intended meaning of the content rather than a word-for-word translation. Any words/phrases that the translator feels are not easily translated will be recorded in the translation log, stating the word or phrase, the location of this word in the transcript, whether the original word has been left in the transcript (original) or if a rough translation has been made (translated), and a detailed description of what the word or phrase means.

Anonymisation Guidelines:

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, the anonymiser will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to confirm that they will adhere to the principles of anonymity and confidentiality. The anonymiser will agree not to speak about the content or nature of the interviews to anyone outside of the research project.

To ensure confidentiality the anonymiser will anonymise the data after it has been transcribed so that individuals are not identifiable from the data. Anonymisation will be conducted in accordance with the levels of confidentiality agreed with participants, as set out in the consent form. It is important that the content and meaning of the interview is not lost during anonymisation, in this regard information should not be removed or blanked out, but should instead be replaced with appropriate pseudonyms, replacement terms, vaguer descriptions or codes.

Direct identifiers, such as the name of the participant, should be replaced with a pseudonym, whilst others named by the participant should be replaced with information pertaining to the relationship to the participants (e.g. wife, brother, female friend). Where more than one person mentioned has the same relationship these should be differentiated by numbers (i.e. brother 1, brother 2, brother 3 etc).

Addresses and geographic locations should be replaced with meaningful descriptive information that typifies the location (for example, Manchester could be replaced with the descriptive 'Northern metropolitan city in England'), and names of businesses should be replaced with a descriptive of the business (e.g. Tesco could be 'a leading supermarket chain', Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board could become 'the main public hospital in the area').

All replacements, aggregations or removals made should be recorded in the anonymisation log (outlined below). A separate log sheet should be completed for each participant transcript. Physical copies of the anonymisation log will be kept separately from the anonymised data files. Electronic copies of the anonymisation log will be encrypted using Truecrypt software.

For quality assurance a second anonymiser will check a sample of anonymised transcripts, with regular meetings between anonymisers across sites to ensure consistency in the types of coding and codes used. The degree to which anonymisation was possible should be indicated on the interview coversheet, reporting if the interview has been fully anonymised, partially anonymised, or that the interview has not been anonymised at all. Where full anonymisation would result in too great a loss of data content (and the interview is therefore either partially anonymised, or not anonymised), transcripts will be encrypted using Truecrypt, and access restricted.