

## Data Analysis and Coding Scheme

Due April 17

The first step in finding a focus for your ethnographic inquiry essay is to think about your fieldnotes and interview responses as data that you can begin to categorize and use to find patterns and themes.

Here is a process to begin to organize your fieldnotes as data:

1. Read through all of your notes, interview transcripts, and expanded fieldnotes at **least two times**. I recommend that you read once from the first notes to the last and once from the last notes to the first. As you read, notice when and where you become particularly interested in what you have written and when you start to see patterns of ideas. **Circle, mark, highlight, or note these passages in some way.**
2. Review the passages you have highlighted or think of a way to categorize them into 3-5 groups based on how they are connected (e.g. immigrant changes in language, immigrant changes in identity, immigrant changes in relationships to home). Then, **NAME those categories or patterns and make a list of them.** That list of categories becomes your "**coding scheme.**" You should have 3-5 key ideas named as "**codes**" in your coding scheme. If you have too many, you won't find patterns. If you have too few to start from it will all turn into a big glob of goo (that is a technical term from ancient rhetoric ;-).
3. Make a separate section in a new document for each of your named **codes**.
4. Copy and paste the specific moments from your fieldnotes and interview transcripts that provide examples of each code or category in the appropriate code section. This method will provide you with a handy list of everything you have noted that is related to a particular code.
5. As you mark or make lists of examples for each "code" from your fieldnotes think constantly about what you are finding. What are the larger connections between ideas? What do you think these patterns/ideas might mean? Do you see any connections to your secondary source material? Write ideas down as they come to you. As you connect the dots of your pattern, you may begin to understand where your essay could "land," which implications become most compelling to you. If you want to brainstorm visually, make a mindmap of each code/theme and what you associate with it from your primary data and secondary source material.
6. Write a one or two paragraph explanation of what you think is the most interesting thing you have found about the categories/codes/patterns in your research - WHAT are they? What are the characteristics of those patterns? What meaning have you discovered in your research - about your research site? About your research questions? About yourself?
7. Turn in your document with codes, examples from data, and the 1-2 paragraph explanation as you "Data Analysis and Coding Scheme" assignment - **due April 17 (50 points).**