Grounded Theory

Wilhelm A. S. Damsleth

2023-03-21 / IN5000 Guest Lecture

Agenda and Learning Outcome

In this lesson, we will go through…

- Some theory

  - What is GT?

  - GT Pros&Cons

  - GT Primer ("crash course")

  - Comments on codes

  - Comments on sources

- Some static examples

- Simple coding exercise

After the lesson, you will…

- Know about Grounded Theory as a methodology

- Understand the basic principles of Grounded Theory, its pros & cons

- Be able to attempt simple GT analysis of data

Strauss, Anselm L. (1987)
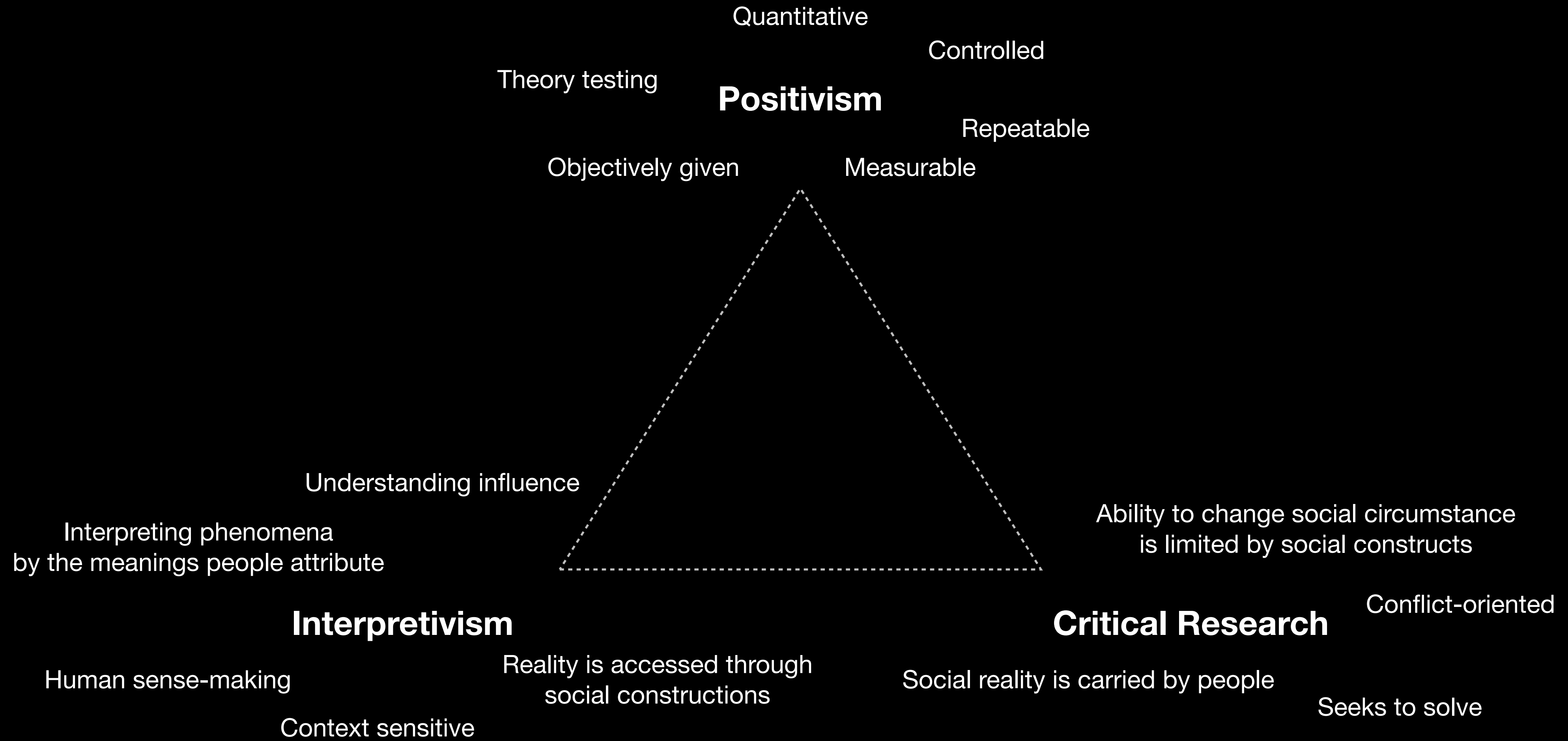*"Qualitative Analysis For Social Scientists"*
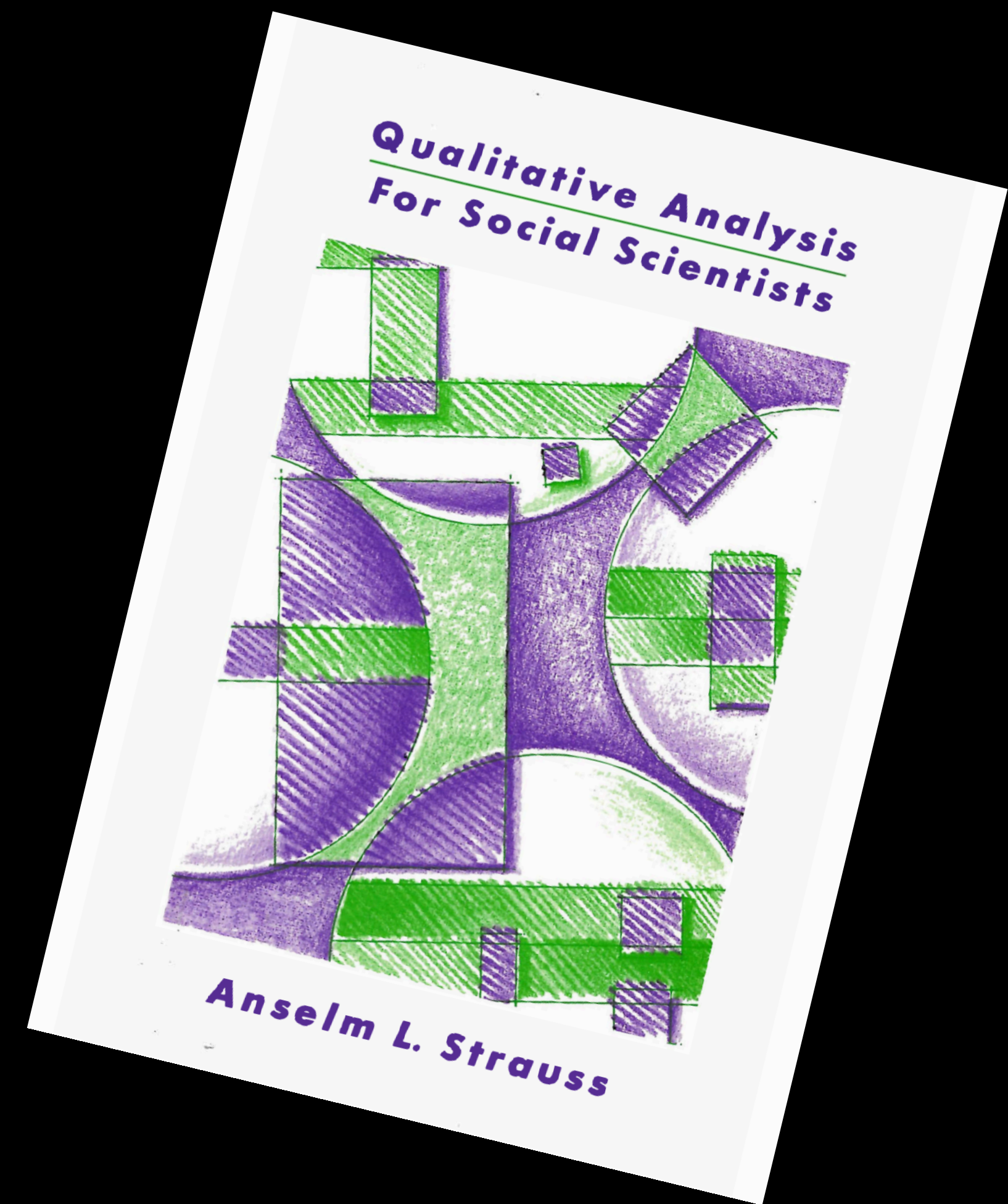
GROUNDED THEORY IS

- A methodology and analytical approach for developing theory that is *grounded* in your data

- A generative process

- An opportunity to learn more than the sum of your data

- An opposition to *read-then-do-then-write* (Crang & Cook, 2007)?

GROUNDED THEORY ISN'T

- Grounded Theory is not journalism*

- Grounded Theory is not a quantitative analysis*

- Grounded Theory is not an excuse

* Grounded Theory − Quantitative Journalism?

Quantitative

Controlled

Theory testing

Positivism

Repeatable

Objectively given   Measurable

Understanding influence

Ability to change social circumstance
is limited by social constructs

Interpreting phenomena
by the meanings people attribute

Interpretivism   **Critical Research**

Conflict-oriented

Human sense-making   Reality is accessed through   Social reality is carried by people
                            social constructions

Seeks to solve

Context sensitive

GT Analysis: Main Elements

1. Concept-Indicator Model

2. Data Collection

3. Coding

4. Core Categories

5. Theoretical Sampling

6. Comparisons

7. Theoretical Saturation

8. Integration of the Theory

9. Theoretical Memos

10. Theoretical Sorting

(Strauss 1987, p. 23)

GT Primer
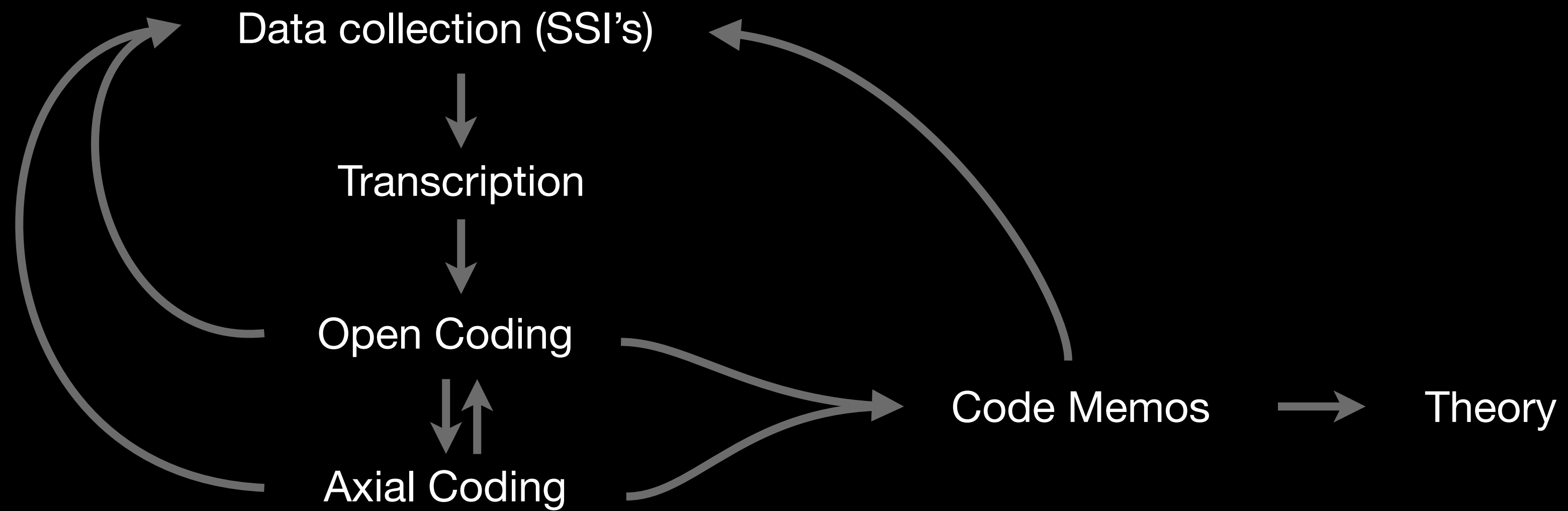
Transcribing

- Accurate and precise data forms the crucial base of GT analysis

- Accuracy – Nuances

- "Transcribing sucks"

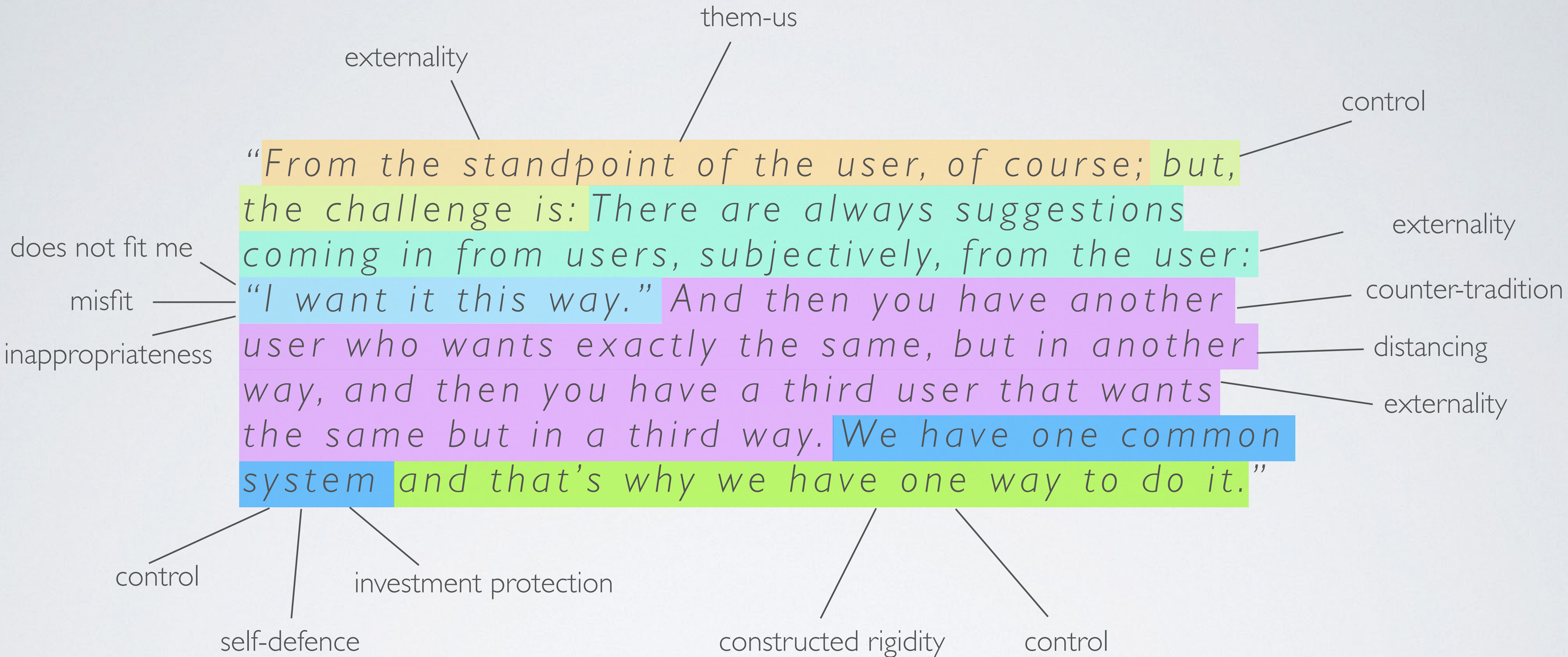 - Deal w/ it!

- Use a good template
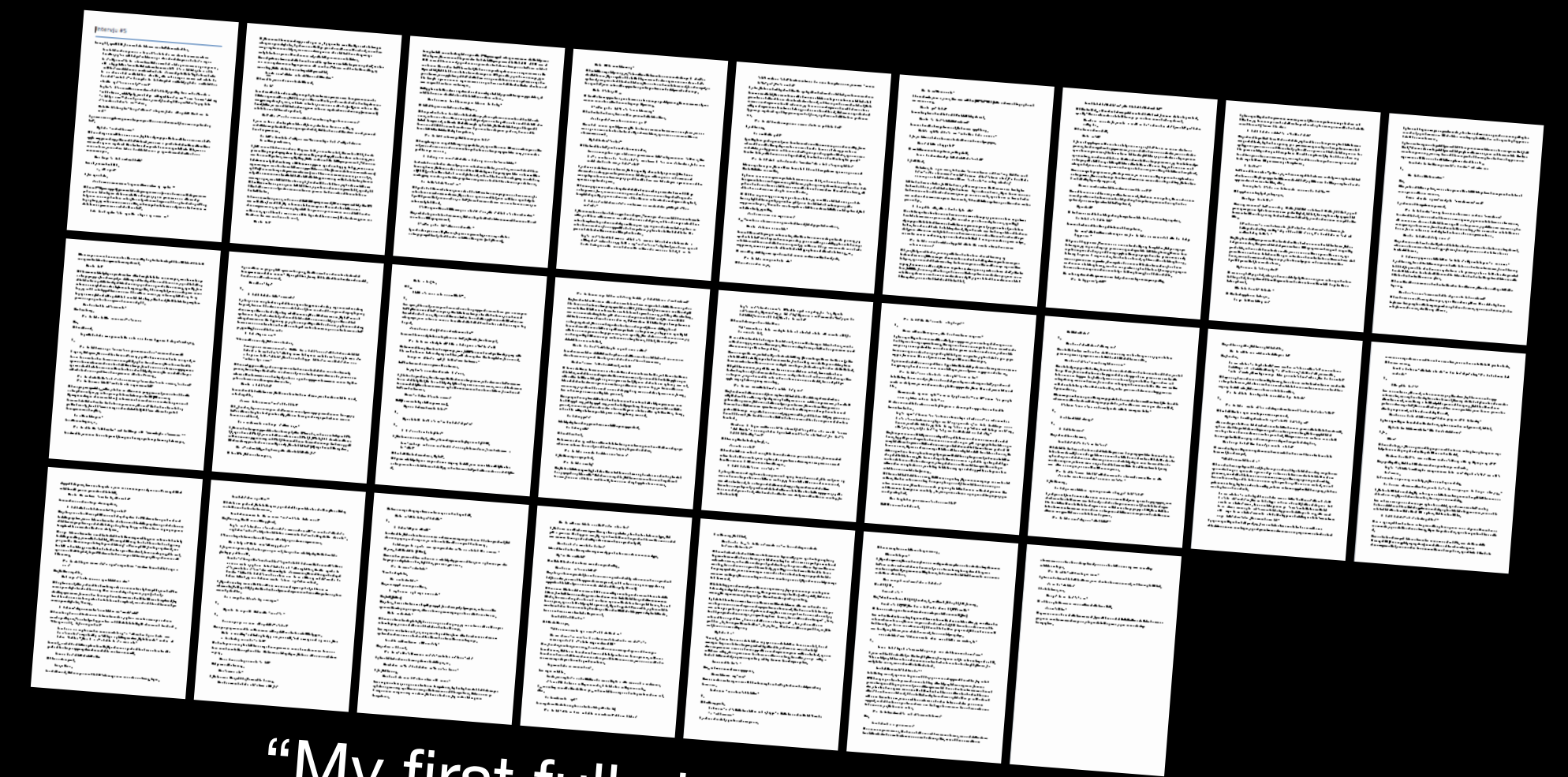
"My first fully transcribed interview"
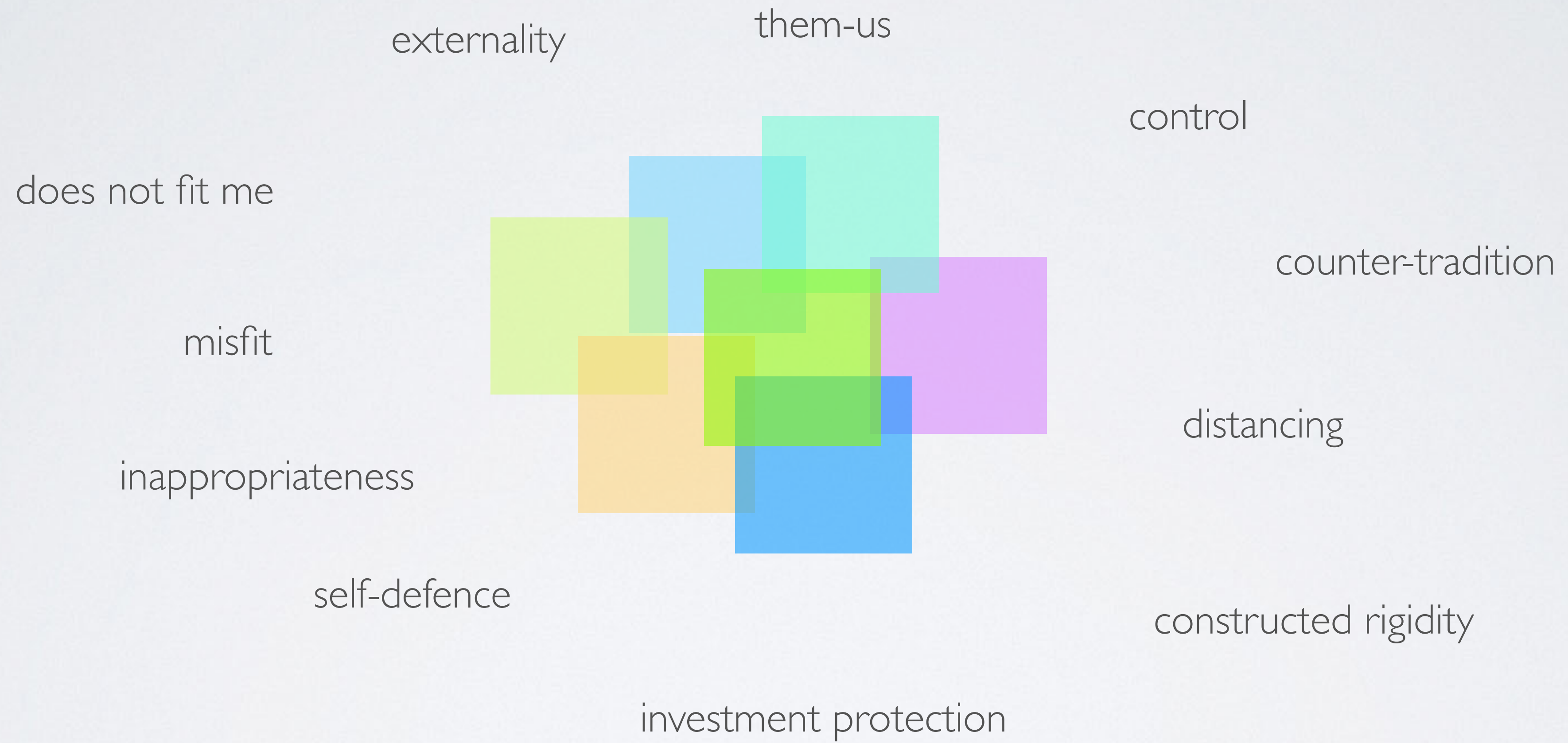1:26:56 – 25 pages – 11.009 words
… one of many.

Open Coding

"Coding. The general term for conceptualizing data; thus, coding includes raising questions and giving provisional answers (hypotheses) about categories and about their relations. A code is the term for any product of this analysis (whether category or a relation between two or more categories)."
(Strauss 1987, p. 20)

- Analyze and assign codes to your data

- Use *constructed codes* or *in vivo* codes

- Coding paradigms (Strauss 1987, p. 27-28)

  - conditions
  - interaction among the actors
  - strategies and tactics
  - consequences

"*From the standpoint of the user, of course; but, the challenge is: There are always suggestions coming in from users, subjectively, from the user: "I want it this way." And then you have another user who wants exactly the same, but in another way, and then you have a third user that wants the same but in a third way. We have one common system and that's why we have one way to do it.*"

externality

them-us

control

does not fit me

externality

misfit

counter-tradition

inappropriateness

distancing

externality

control

investment protection

self-defence

constructed rigidity

control

Codes

externality

them-us

control

does not fit me

counter-tradition

misfit

distancing

inappropriateness

self-defence

constructed rigidity

investment protection

	Codes in use	References coded
Interview 7	69	434
Interview 8	89	369
Total		803

- Coding is highly personal

- Coding paradigms (Strauss 1987, p. 27-28)

  - conditions
  - interaction among the actors
  - strategies and tactics
  - consequences

	Interview 7	Interview 8
Too difficult	17	19
Avoiding Microwork	11	11
Constructed Rigidity	20	2
Control	19	3
Working Around	9	13
Telephone	11	10
Manual Routines	11	9
Not my job	11	9
Time-consuming	8	12
Competency	14	5
Manual Automatization	14	5
Competencial inadequacy	6	11
Fails to Automate	8	8
Future System	14	2
Detective work	2	13
Faith in the Construct	13	2
Backstage, No Knowledge of	11	3
Bad UI	9	5
Compliance	7	7
ERP System by Name	12	1

Axial Coding
## ("Grouping" or "Categorizing" along Dimensions)

Dimensionalizing: A basic operation of making distinctions, whose products are dimensions and sub dimensions.

Category: Since any distinction comes from dimensionalizing, those distinctions will lead to categories.

(Strauss 1987, p. 21)

- Group codes into categories that have axial variability represented in the codes

colleague   BD   E   C   A   upper management
_____
              computer system developer nearness

irrelevant   C A   E   B   D   highly relevant
_____
              computer system relevance for my job

Suggests: *Are computer systems developed by upper management perceived
   as less relevant in the users job than those from colleagues?*

New!

Are computer systems developed by upper management perceived as less relevant in the users job than those from colleagues?
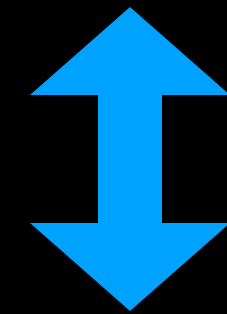
Are computer systems developed by colleagues perceived as more relevant in the users job than those from upper management?

Memoing and Analysis

- When discovering a relationship between concepts (codes), categories and dimensions – write a memo!

- Code Memos are linked to one or several codes, categories or relationships

- Write Code Memos immediately when the idea(s) strike(s) you! Do NOT wait – the idea is fleeting, your data is not!

- Code Memos – or paper to publish? No form requirement – only structure required!
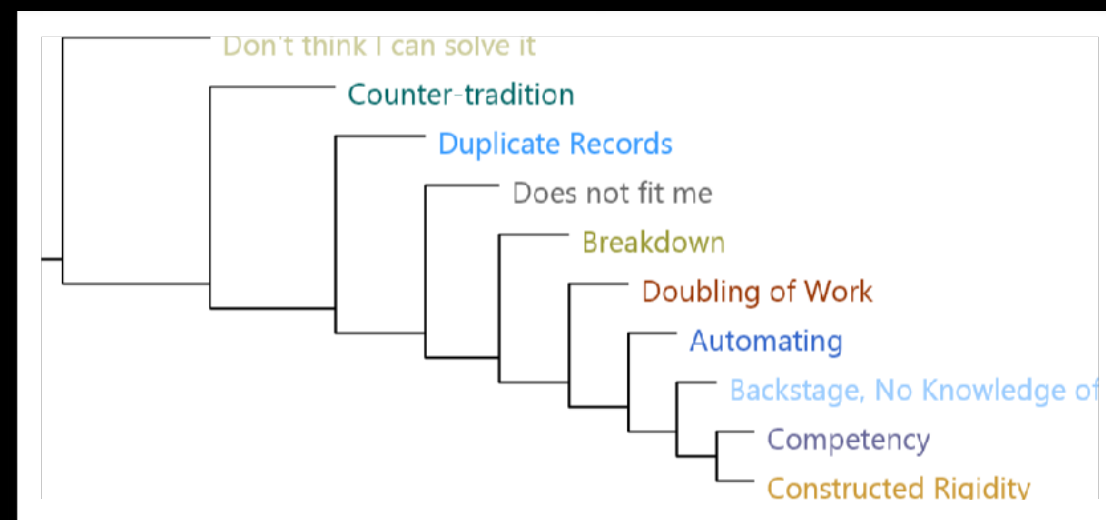
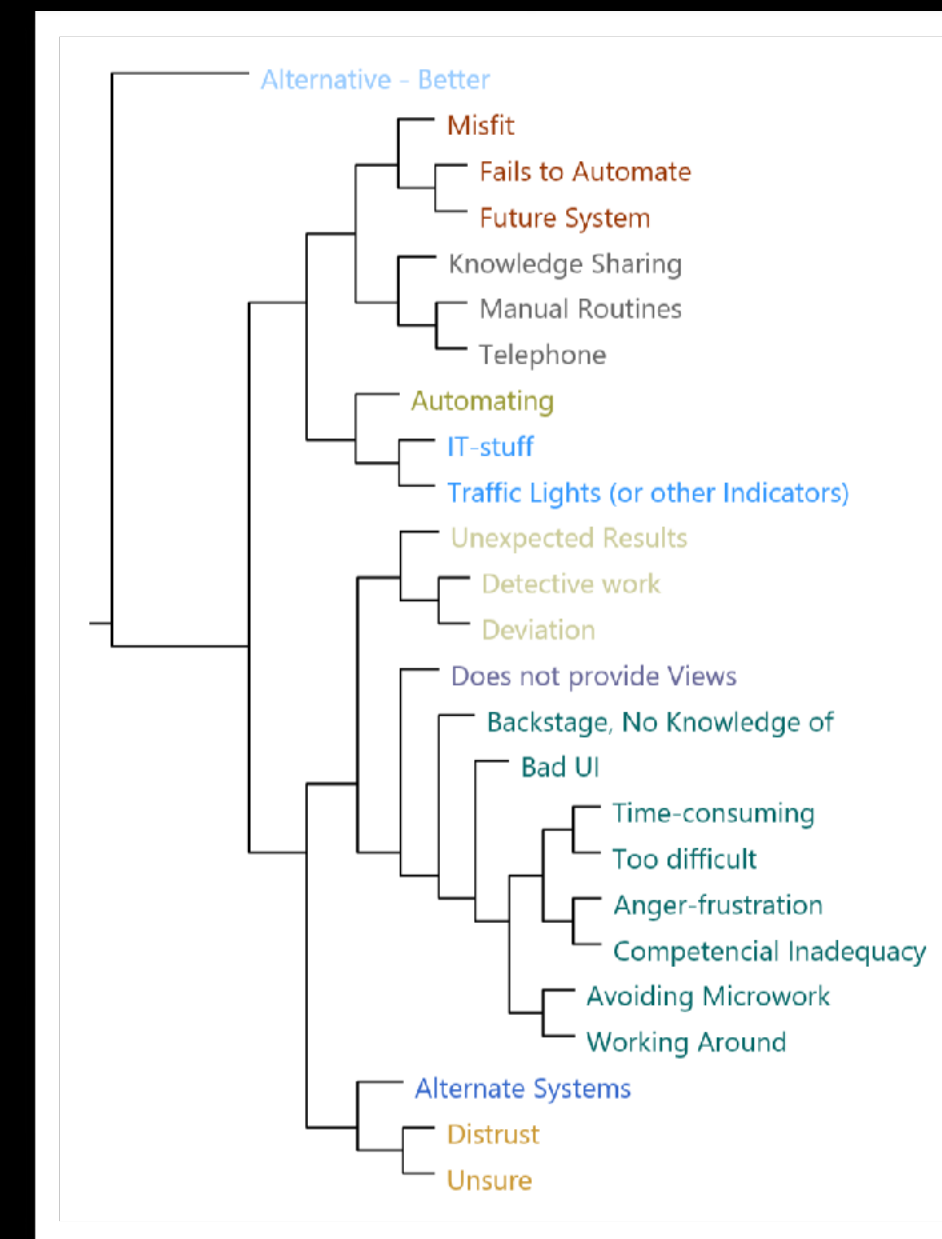Continuous analysis

Continuous tuning
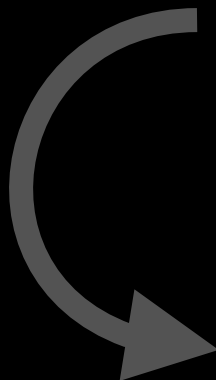
Integrative Diagrams
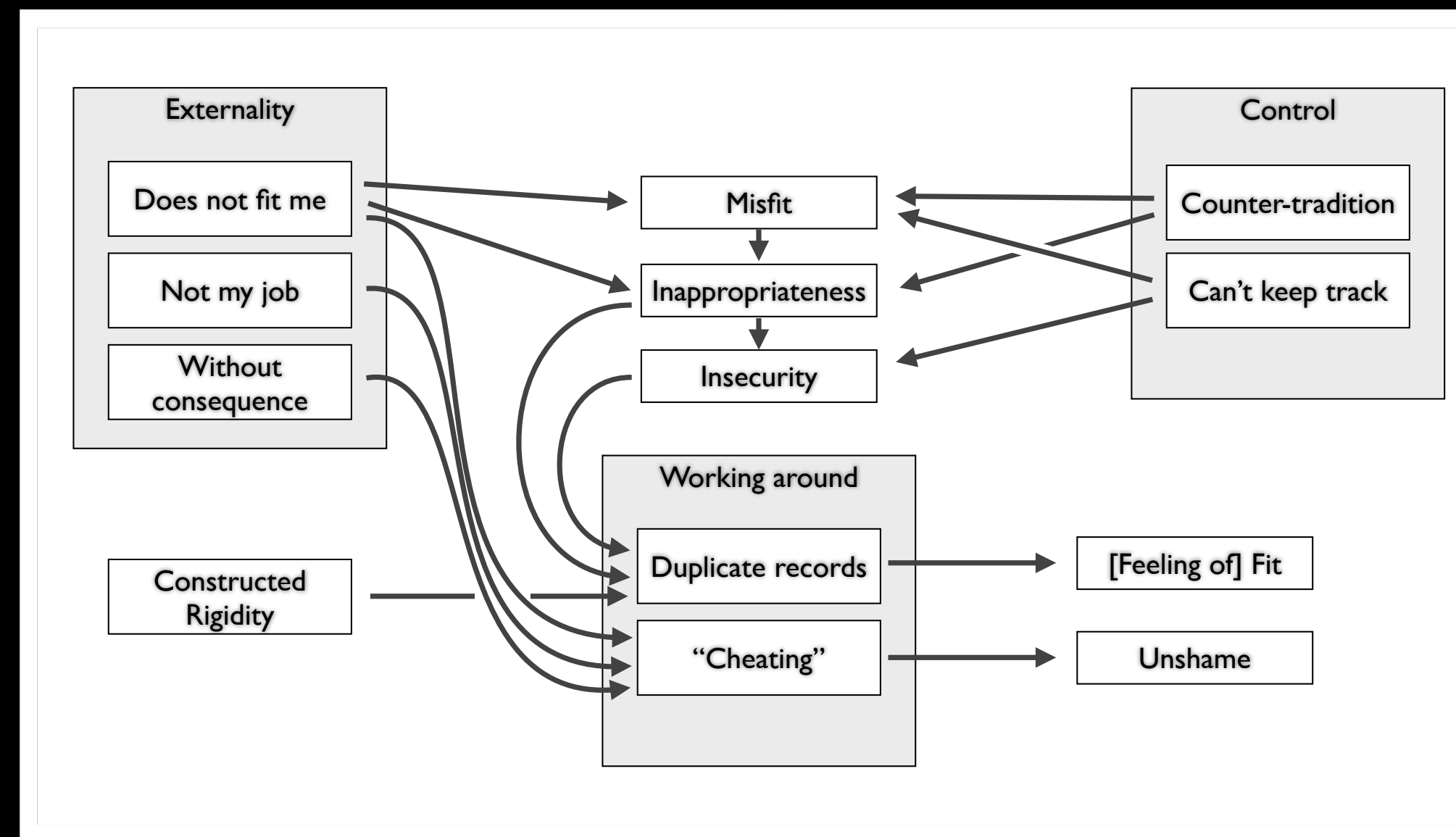
Programmatic Analysis

Weak or no correlation

Strong correlation

Quick Comments on Codes

- Micro-coding

- Macro-coding

- Ten codes, a million codes?

- "Let the codes come to me and do not forbid them, for the Grounded Theory belongs to such as these!"

- It's easy to keep using the same codes – and dangerous

- Remember axial coding!

MORE Quick Comments on Codes

- Codes will crystalize while coding.

- What happens to new codes you discover while coding? Should you go back and re-code the rest of the data in this light? Again? And again?

  - Keep going until the theory is saturated!

- You will get successively more codes with higher granularity as you code

- Go back? When is enough?

Do not group the codes too early!

and

One occurrence of a particular code can be ten times as meaningful as ten occurrences of another code

On Sources

Great Sources	Good Sources	Challenging Sources	Poor Sources
Interviews – transcribed!	Routine descriptions	Participatory/Passive Observation	Interview notes
More interviews – go back!	Job descriptions	Video	Abridged interviews
Academic texts	Internal documents, policy documents	Focus groups	
	Other unprepared texts	Prepared statements	
	Source code	Press releases, journalist work	
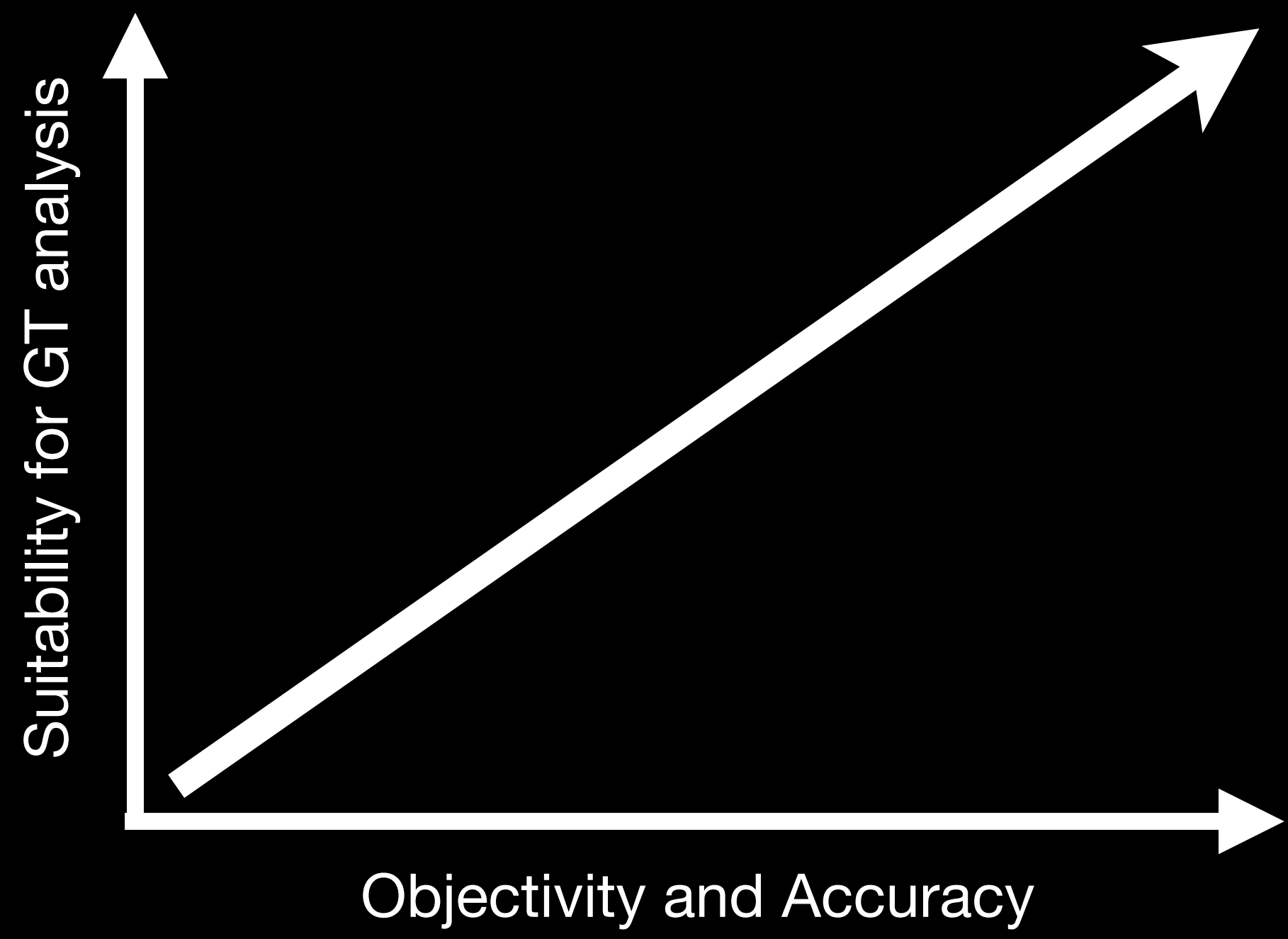
What about quantitative data?

↓

You can use it – to support or contradict your findings!

GT Pros&Cons

Pro	Con
(Usually) Great results!	Takes a lot of time
Grounded Data	Takes a lot of work
The discovery of more than the sum of your data	Can give false trails
Free styled, suitable for many sorts of outputs	Can't use all your results
Combines well with many other methodologies	Needs immersion
You don't need to know for sure what you're looking for	You can't know for sure what you're looking for

UNIVERSITETET I OSLO

NVivo

English version
of this page

Nvivo

- Hjelp og
  veiledninger

NVivo er en nokså kompleks programvare som kan brukes til å kode
tekst, lyd, bilde og video. Du kan også bruke NVivo til å transkribere.

Om NVivo

NVivo er en kompleks programvare for kvalitative forskere som blant annet kan brukes
til å kode tekst, lyd, bilde og video.

NVivo er en programpakke med analyseverktøy for kvalitative forskere. Denne kan
være til god hjelp i hele forskningsprosessen; fra problemformulering, organisering av
ulike typer data, koding og samarbeid med andre forskere, til systematisk
analyse/teoribygging og konklusjoner.

Hvis du har behov for å behandle et rikt datasett med ustrukturert informasjon (for
eksempel intervjuer, logger, bilder og video), kan NVivo være hensiktsmessig.
Programmet "automatiserer" en del manuelle oppgaver assosiert med kvalitativ
analyse, som å klassifisere/organisere informasjon.

Simple Coding Exercise

Coding Obama and Trump Inauguration Speeches

Everybody who does Grounded Theory
will end up doing it wrong.

And that's okay.

KEEP
CALM
AND
CODE
ON

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