CALD PAR Action Research Workshop 3

Day Two Thematic Analysis Activity

In this activity we will use thematic analysis as a way (a method) of making sense of the examples of challenges and successes reported in Stories from the Field (our data) yesterday.

The primary aim is to identify 1 or 2 themes from some of the Stories from the Field presentations thus taking those reflections a bit deeper towards analysis and making sense of that information or `data'.

We are looking for patterns of similar ideas and practices reported across the different presentations. Then, consider if you can group any of these smaller topics and codes together to create themes. This is a very early way for us to make sense of the information we have from our project work.

In this exercise there are no right or wrong codes, categories or themes. We are exploring and make sense of the data together but because we all bring our own `lens or gaze' to the data we may have different interpretations of its meaning. Record all the diverse views and ideas of what the information means and bring it back to share and report to the bigger group as part of this activity.

After lunch we will do another activity to consider what, if any, are the connections or tensions between these themes and how we might use our interpretations/ analyses of all of your stories from the field to inform the findings recorded in the ANROWS final report.

Instructions

- At tables of up to 4 projects, with no more than 8 people, read through, discuss and reflect on the Stories from the Field presentations given by each project yesterday.
- For those projects that have a written copy of their presentation – they can bring out that written copy. For those that do not have a written copy, please note down the main examples of successes and challenges from your presentation.
- With someone taking notes on the paper provided, discuss how to group together examples from the Stories from the Field that hold a similar intention and meaning. Each person at your table can read through the written Story or their notes and highlight text with similar ideas or meaning. This is called coding. Try to use a different highlighter colour for different ideas.

- With deeper reflection and analysis about how the codes can be grouped together and how they relate to your action research, codes can develop into **themes** that can help answer your research questions or give insight into your topic.

For example: two projects describe training sessions about relationships and family violence. They both coded the training session yellow because they are similar activities. One of the projects decided to approach the training through the language of respectful relationships. The other project used the term family violence in their first training sessions and adapted it to talk about parenting in later sessions because they received negative reactions to the language of family violence. An example of a theme arising is how projects are adapting language to engage community members in discussions about family violence.

Further Information

You can view some short videos and read about the idea of thematic analysis and the process of coding at the following sites:

Thematic Analysis an Introduction. Dr Victoria Clarke (UK) and Professor Virginia Braun (New Zealand) 2018 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zFcC10vOVY&t=8s

The Cottage Health Evaluation Toolkit: How to analyse and interpret data, specifically the methods of analysing quantitative data in a table on p.5.

The Better Evaluation website's resource on how to do thematic coding, which includes an example to help users understand the process.