Transforming Transcripts Into Stories: A Multimethod Approach to Narrative Analysis

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Abstract

Stories are essential realities from our past and present. As the primary sources of data in narrative research, interview transcripts play an essential role in giving meaning to the personal stories of research participants. The pragmatic narratives found in transcripts represent human experience as it unfolds. Analyzing the narratives found in interview transcripts thus moves beyond providing descriptions and thematic developments as found in most qualitative studies. Crafting stories from interview transcripts involves a complex set of analytic processes. Building on the first author’s personal experience in working on a doctoral thesis employing narrative inquiry, this article presents a multimethod restorying framework to narrative analysis. A step-by-step progression within the framework includes choosing interview participants, transcribing interviews, familiarizing oneself with the transcripts (elements of holistic-content reading), chronologically plotting (elements of the story), use of follow-up interviews as a way to collaborate (an important procedure in narrative inquiry), and developing the story through structural analysis. It is hoped that this article will encourage other researchers embarking on narrative analysis to become creative in presenting participants’ lived experiences through meaningful, collaborative strategies. This article demonstrates the fluidity of narrative analysis and emphasizes that there is no single procedure to be followed in attempting to create stories from interview transcripts.

Keywords

interview transcripts, multimethod restorying framework, stories, narrative analysis

Introduction

Narrative research is a type of qualitative method that is understood from spoken or written texts describing accounts of events which are chronologically connected (Czarniawska, 2004). Narrative research can be described as a methodology of studying individual lived experiences as a source of knowledge in and of itself that warrants deeper understanding (Clandinin & Huber, 2010; Mitchell & Egudo, 2003). “Narrative inquirers study individual experience in the world, an experience that is storied, both in the living and telling that can be studied by listening, observing, living alongside another, writing and interpreting texts (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, pp. 42, 43).” Narrative inquiry emphasizes relational engagement between researcher and participant by co-creating participant’s experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Haydon, Browne, & Riet, 2018). Co-creating stories with study participants allows the researcher to live alongside the participant and listen to their stories. The most common methods used in the narrative process are interviews and conversations (Joyce, 2015), while some researchers use artifacts, visuals, and observations to initiate a conversation (Bell, 2003). Often these interviews and conversations are represented in the form of personal narratives (Hawkins & Saleem, 2012), poems (Clark-McGhee & Castro, 2015), and short stories (Diversi, 1998). However, with such diverse representations, there is little evidence to suggest what constitutes narrative research (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). To conduct a “narratology” (see Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), researchers must construct their own inquiry procedure and process (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). Therefore, the purpose of this article is to illustrate the narratological process of turning transcripts into stories by

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presenting the nuances that go into decision-making on the part of the researcher. Using a multimethod restorying framework, the article draws on a study of young people’s experiences in a life skills program in Maldives to illustrate how these decisions were made in creating a story from interview transcripts.

Situating Stories Within Narrative Research

While narratives provide accounts of events of spoken or written texts, which can be chronologically connected, stories are narratives that have been emplotted and made into a coherent whole (Czarniawska, 2004; Diedrich, Walter, Czarniawska, & Walter, 2011). Literature suggests a multitude of techniques and approaches to analyzing narrative data; there is no single method to narrative analysis as the story can be told in different forms and retold on different occasions. Hence, narrative research draws its methodological analysis from philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and sociolinguistics (Cortazzi, 1994). For instance, researchers interested in the content of the narratives focus on actual events and analyze characteristics of the events and actors in a categorical approach (Muylaert, Sarubbi, Gallo, Neto, & Reis, 2014), while others may become interested in the structure and form of the narratives. Often these involve separating out participants’ spoken words by inductively developing thematic elements across participants’ narratives (Riessman, 2000, 2005). Analyzing data narratively involves a complex process that is significantly different (Muylaert et al., 2014) from other qualitative approaches such as the detailed description of ethnography, the within and cross-case analysis of case study, and the axial and selective coding of grounded theory. In these analytical approaches, the outcome can lead to a loss of the participants’ unique experiences within the larger social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional contexts (Hunter, 2010; McCormack, 2000).

Narrative Versus Story

There is a distinction between a narrative and a story (Czarniawska, 2004). A story is a unique type of narrative production that gives structure to individual experiences by bringing cognitive, affective, and motivational connections to the told story (Mendieta, 2013; Singer & Blagov, 2004). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state that stories define the lives of the individual and narrate his or her lived experiences. To Kurtz (2014), stories consist of three dimensions: form, function, and phenomenon. Hence, telling a story about oneself is about describing the actions, choices, and beliefs that transformed the participant’s experiences (Hunter, 2010). It is through the process of storytelling that individuals engage in identity construction (Riessman, 2005) and position themselves socially and culturally (Bell, 2003; McCormack, 2000; Stapleton & Wilson, 2017).

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) regard stories as narratives that have a three-dimensional space that include interactions (personal and social), continuity (present, past, and future), and situation (place). Usually, stories have significant elements such as conflicts, struggles, a protagonist, and a sequenced plot. Hence, a story is a description of instantiation, consisting of a sequence of actions and experiences of an individual (Feldman, Skoldberg, Brown, & Horner, 2004) that has a beginning, middle, and an end (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) that an individual has experienced in the past, which can have an impact on the individual’s present and future (Frank, 2012; Muylaert et al., 2014). According to Cortazzi (1994), it is the chronology sequence that sets narrative research apart from the other approaches in qualitative research.

A Multimethod Approach to Transforming Transcripts Into Stories

While there exists a number of ways to present narrative data across different disciplines (see Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Cortazzi, 1994; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998; Riessman, 2000), narrative analysis can utilize different typologies or a combination of multiple approaches in representing social reality of individual lived experiences (Czarniawska, 2004; Hyvärinen, 2008). There is no single procedure that can be claimed as “best” for analyzing narratives. Therefore, how stories are told and retold within narrative research methodology may include a set of strategies that can be employed depending on how the researcher chooses to represent the gathered data (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Diversi, 1998; Kurtz, 2014; McCormack, 2000; Ollersenshaw & Creswell, 2002; Riessman, 2005). Regardless of how the story is told and retold, the data are typically analyzed for story elements such as characters, settings, actions, and resolutions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Diversi, 1998; McCormack, 2000; Riessman, 2005). This procedure can be applied in order to create a story from the interviews through restorying. Restorying is a process of reorganizing and analyzing the key elements of a story and rewriting it within a chronological order (Ollersenshaw & Creswell, 2002).

The current study includes elements from multiple typologies and approaches to narrative analysis such as holistic-content reading (Lieblich et al., 1998), elements of the story (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007; Czarniawska, 2004; Imabuchi & Ogata, 2012), narrative inquiry (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006), and structural analysis (Riessman, 1993, 2002, 2005) to develop a restorying framework to transform transcripts into a story. Figure 1 illustrates the multimethod approach that was developed for this study to transform the study transcripts into meaningful representations in the form of a story. A step-by-step progression within the framework includes choosing interview participants, transcribing interviews, familiarizing oneself with the transcript (elements of holistic-content reading), chronologically plotting (elements of the story), use of follow-up interviews as a way to collaborate (an important procedure in narrative inquiry), and developing the story through structural analysis such as language.
Background of the Study Data

The subsequent sections in this article elaborate on the multimethod restorying framework (Figure 1) used within the transcript analysis process. The process will be illustrated with data from the first author’s doctoral research of adolescents’ lived experiences in a life skills education program in Maldives. Life skills education programs for young people have been critical for bringing about constructive adjustments to individual well-being from the early years of childhood and adolescence through their transition to adulthood (Aparna & Raakhee, 2011; Nasheeda, 2008). The first author collected stories of a young adult’s lived experiences in a life skills education program during adolescence. Using a retrospective narrative approach, these stories were gathered through semistructured interviews and informal conversations. Raw data from the interview transcripts are used to illustrate the process involved in developing a story from the transcripts.

Progression Through the Phases

The reason for creating a story from the transcripts was to extract the essence of the participant’s lived experiences. It is difficult to retain the core experiences if one divides the stories into segments and themes (Iyengar, 2014). Maintaining a sense of the whole is an important goal of restorying in narrative analysis.

Phase 1: From Interview to Transcript

Choosing Whom to Interview

The initial step in the progression deals with choosing the right participant to interview. In qualitative research, samples are selected with an intention to understand the central phenomenon. Purposive sampling is selecting participants who have knowledge and experience on the issue of interest of the researcher (Oppong, 2013). Since this study is about adolescents’ life skills experiences, it was crucial to select a participant who had been involved in a life skills program during their adolescence. The primary source of data collected is from semistructured face-to-face interviews and informal conversations through social media platforms such as Facebook instant messaging, Viber, and e-mails. Interviews are important in narrative research since the story emerges from the collaborative conversations between the researcher and the participant (Muylaert et al., 2014). All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed upon completion.

Transcribing Interviews

Transcribing an interview is a tedious and time-consuming process but provides the best catalogue for analysis (Davidson, 2017). In the current study, interviews were transcribed in a naturalistic fashion, which included all verbal cues (e.g., smiles, nods), extraneous words and utterances (e.g., umms). The transcripts were then carefully checked against the audio recordings to ensure that accurate accounts were obtained. This practice also allowed for active reflection on the interview by identifying the participant’s mood and tone and the conversation as a whole. This is an important process for researchers to engage in as it allows for greater familiarity with data (Davidson, 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Familiarizing With the Transcripts

Familiarity allows researchers to identify the main characters, place, and time of events that took place as recorded in the narratives. Familiarity with data includes reading the transcript and listening to the audio recording of the interview several times to immerse oneself in the data. This can be described as a holistic-content reading process. This process made it easy to identify with the narrative process of the story such as how the participant constructed her uniqueness in the social context, that is, her place in the story and her beliefs, attitudes, and
relationships. The researcher then took time to reflect on the elements of the story including the order of events and epiphanies to become fully immersed in the narrative process. To recognize the narrative process is to identify how the participants integrate the events in the context of what has happened (Diedrich et al., 2011) and to develop a plot that provides contextual information about the individual’s social interactions and experiences (Kurtz, 2014). During this process, the researcher recognized that the transcript was a messy chronicle that needed to be organized into a series of chronological events. Sequencing narratives from transcripts is an essential part in storytelling as it reveals significant events, major turning points, and the voice of the storyteller (Feldman et al., 2004; Knight, 2009).

The following are excerpts from the transcript that would later be organized into the resulting narrative:

Interviewer: How long were you enrolled in the life skills education program?
Participant: I was exposed to LS when I was in primary, secondary and as well as in higher secondary and when I was doing my pre-university as well. So in primary it was, when I was in grade six, then I did, then in secondary once I think when I was in grade 10 and then in higher secondary it was before beginning my grade 11.
Interviewer: Could you describe the life skills program?
Participant: umm. err. the life skills program the set up was different for primary, secondary and higher secondary, so when I was in primary they would teach me like how to be compassionate towards others, how to deal with certain things, so umm. I remember, when I was in grade 5, I used be like so full of myself when I went to secondary, even if anybody said anything to me I would just brush it off, because, I know I’m better than that. That’s their perspective. When I went to higher secondary they started like…telling us this is the age where you will get intimate with someone, where you would create bonds of intimacy…

Phase 2: Storying the Transcript
Stories are narratives that have been emplotted and made into a coherent whole (Czarniawska, 2004; Diedrich et al., 2011). To emplot narrative text is to establish a sensemaking mechanism on how events are connected and related. In other words, to develop a structure that makes sense of the events (Czarniawska, 2004). Therefore, emplotment is crucial for development of a story. Thus, to develop a story, it is essential to pay attention to the spoken language, the way events are described, the characters, and the roles.

Vladimir Propp’s structural analysis suggests that all stories share some basic characteristics necessary to make up a narrative (as cited in Czarniawska, 2004; Imabuchi & Ogata, 2012). According to Propp’s method, an individual can behave differently depending on the situation. Therefore, the most important element in a story is the function of an action the character plays (Czarniawska, 2004). As such, an individual can take on the role of different characters based on the situation and circumstances. For example, the individual can take on two or more roles such as a villain who creates disruptions in the narrative equilibrium by having negative thoughts and blaming oneself for all the events that happened in one’s life. On the other hand, the same individual can make amendments to their thoughts by seeking help or modifying their behavior.

To ultimately weave a collective narrative from the transcripts, each transcript was analyzed using a combination of structural analysis, and elements of story such as form, function, and phenomenon. In light of this analysis, it was crucial to identify the roles that the individual played in the story leading to a chronological plotting of the transcript.

Story function serves as the cognitive, affective, and motivational connections that bring coherence and meaning to the told story (Singer & Blagov, 2004). In the following excerpt, the participant’s values, thoughts, and emotions are brought into consciousness, which facilitates understanding of the role of life skills education.

It’s a taboo to talk about sex in our community. So when I was in higher secondary, that was the right time for me to actually know that so, now I know, like…even I feel like all my friends are having boyfriends some are getting married having kids, because, everybody is into the western culture, because it’s very pleasing. And then they neglect the actual teachings why something happens to you because of some reason, but people don’t take the time to ponder about it.

Story phenomenon is about stories within stories, as the story moves through time and society (Czarniawska, 2004; Kurtz, 2014; Singer & Blagov, 2004). In narratives, it is common to have stories within stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Individuals tell stories within their narratives to give more emphasis to their experiences. Stories facilitate the expression of emotions within experiences and thus act as manifestations of individual experiences that are situated within social contexts (Feldman et al., 2004). The following is an example of a story phenomenon. It is clear that this particular incident had an impact on the individual.

So one day, my mum came to pick me up and there is this specific girl I really didn’t like in my class, for some reason I didn’t like, so she was like asking, about something. I got really frustrated and annoyed with the fact and I was like, “It’s not your business – why are you asking me this?”

The Chronological Plot
To chronologically plot the events, the transcripts were read and reread several times in order to become familiar with the timing of events that occurred. The data were then organized and reorganized into events, that is, “chronologically plotted.” To aid the chronological plot development, the following questions were asked:

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1. Who are the main characters in this story?
2. What are the main events?
3. When and where did these events take place?
4. How has the participant positioned herself in the story?

Subtitles were used to form building blocks of the resulting story. This was useful in order to craft the story as it allowed the researcher to identify the participant’s storytelling perspective on how things were, who was involved, and what were the high and low points for the participant. Individual stories are always located along the narrative of time, place, personal, and social stories (Clandinin, 1998; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The main purpose of the subtitles was to interact with data and to get a sense of the descriptive and analytical foci of the personal and social stories. Through the chronological plot, a rough draft of a story was constructed. The following are excerpts from the constructed draft:

Early years—primary (10-13 years old):

During primary I never realized I had social anxiety but I felt like I can talk to people in primary. It didn’t matter to me much because I was just a kid back then. I would just talk to people. I would maintain eye contact. I would just go up and ask things.

Adolescence (secondary years, 14-16 years old):

I have a bit of social anxiety. I can’t smile even if I want to. I can’t just go and interact with people freely. I would have my setbacks and I would just wait till somebody comes and open up to me.

Higher Secondary years (17-19 years old):

When I went to higher secondary there is one thing that is still fresh in my head. They started telling us this is the age where you will get intimate with someone, where you would create bond of intimacy with someone.

Towards transition

... my A level results didn’t turn out as I would like it to be. I was pretty frustrated. I was like ok, now I have to do something with my life.

Pre-university—on my own:

When I went to Pre University, I met the kind of people who are just like me.... I met people who actually understands me, see things from the same perspective as me....

Situating oneself within the family context—I’m unique.

All my family members would say that I do things in a specific way. I have this way of doing things in a specific way. I’m very stubborn I know that, if I don’t feel like doing anything I wouldn’t do it.

Life changing experiences: I have changed

... I think the life skills program actually taught me like not to take everything really personally, like to let go of the things that doesn’t actually have a value.

The story was then reread to determine whether it made sense based on what was represented in the data. At this point, although the time and place of the participant’s stories were identified, the overall meaning still made little sense. Missing links remained. Therefore, follow-up interviews were required.

Phase 3: Cocreating

The relationship between the participant and the researcher is crucial to cocreate the story. It is essential to develop active collaboration between the researcher and the participant as the individual story is co-constructed by the participant and the researcher (Haydon et al., 2018). Collaboration goes beyond good rapport between the participant and the researcher (Haydon et al., 2018). There needs to be mutual trust and respect between the researcher and the participant about the information that is shared (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). To gain the participant’s trust, confidentiality issues such as maintaining anonymity, filtering any personal information that the participant is not comfortable sharing and ensuring participant ownership of the story were prioritized. Working collaboratively thus enabled the researcher and the participant to look at the transcripts from multiple lenses. Several follow-up interviews were conducted for the purpose of collaboratively cocreating the story.

Follow-Up Interviews and Collaboration

Once the transcript was chronologically plotted, it was sent to the participant to check on the story plot to determine whether the story sequence accurately reflected the participant’s voice. Several questions were asked, including (a) Is this you? and (b) Do you see yourself in the transcript? The process of collaboratively transforming the narrative transcript began with these questions. In cases where the participant disagreed with the story, negotiating questions were asked such as what other details can be included to give the audience a true picture. In the current study, the participant’s trust was gained through addressing issues on how the data would be collected, analyzed, and by identifying the roles of the participant and the researcher.

The author worked closely with the participant in cocreating the story through active listening and being genuinely interested in what the participant was sharing. Clarification on gaps in the story such as silences and apparent contradictions, as well as probing for clarity regarding the meanings of certain words and phrases, was carried out during these collaborative sessions. For example, questions like “What is the meaning of yes/yeah,” “Does the word ‘like’ mean anything different to you (the word ‘like’ was used often in the conversation),” “Why were there direct speeches and indirect speeches within the conversation?” were clarified during the process. Several back-and-forth interactions took place during the co-construction process. Instant messaging through social media (Viber, Facebook, and e-mails) was useful for clarification of any questions and doubts as a way of being connected as the story was unfolding. This connectivity with the participant allowed the participant to become an active collaborator in cocreating the story. Some of the words used by the participant were examined for embedded meaning in the narratives. Meaning making from subjective realities can be expressed through such collaborations (Czarniawska, 2004). Collaborating and
cocreating the story with the participant facilitated the process of attributing meaning to the chronological plot set within the participant’s personal and social context.

**Phase 4: Meaning Making**

To progress from transcript to story, it is crucial to know how the identified segments of narratives fit into a broader context. Understanding the narrative process allows the researcher to understand the meaning of the narratives that the participant wishes to convey (Earthv & Cronin, 2008; McCormack, 2000). This was done by examining the transcripts from various perspectives to convey meanings attached to the narratives. Structural analysis is an approach that emphasizes the way a story is told and tries to draw out the essential meanings relevant to the spoken language (Riessman, 2005). Language is a means of communication among human beings. Language is fundamental in expressing one’s beliefs and values. “Experience starts to make sense as the person performs his or her psychological function of translating it into how he or she thinks and feels” (Krauss, 2005, p. 762). Hence, language is an essential unit of analysis to understand the worldview of the participant. The spoken language is a tool for constructing reality and can be an important device in the meaning-making process (Sirbu, 2015). Individuals have their own personal styles of communication and their own version of the shared culture. It is important to understand how participants speak about themselves so that meaning can be constructed from their narratives.

Through language, individuals develop a mental representation of a particular state of affairs described in utterance (Eerland, Engelen, & Zwaan, 2013). The most influential aspects of language are direct and indirect speech quotations, such that direct speech offers listeners more reality when compared to indirect speech, which offers a descriptive gist (Bonabi & Jafarigohar, 2012).

**Developing the Story**

In this phase, the narrative process was developed within the structural analysis. In structural analysis, language is taken seriously and necessitates attention to detail of speech in order to understand how the narrative is composed (Riessman, 2005). Language is useful in understanding the words the participants use when describing their experiences. In the interview transcript, different meanings were attached to words such as “yeah,” “yes,” “boring,” and “pretty boring.” Elements of analysis such as dichotomies and silences were useful in meaning making and filling the gaps (Czarniawska, 2004). The researcher clarified the meanings attached to these words through follow-up questions. These words were contextually used according to the participant’s moods and feelings.

In the process of interviews, individuals describe events and experiences using direct speech, utterances, indicating vivid memory of those events (Goodell & Sachs, 1992). Therefore, analysis of the transcripts for spoken language was conducted as it is an important element in the development of a story plot (Czarniawska, 2004). The meanings attached to the excerpt below were clarified through follow-up questions.

I would meet a lot of people, like till now I have met different people because my mum would be like “if you don’t talk to someone you wouldn’t meet new people so it’s your age to like learn how things are.”

The use of direct speech indicates that the participant is shy and does not socialize much with her friends. Her mother’s encouraging words are reported using direct speech to indicate that it was a significant turning point for her. It also tells much about the participant’s character as well as the relationship she has with her mother, which is an important element in understanding the family dynamics.

During storytelling, individuals’ use of pronouns such as talking in first, second, or third person is common. It emphasizes the turns and the important events within the story (Kurtz, 2014). Use of person shifts while telling stories is a good indicator of important narrative events, narrative peaks, and narrative evaluations that offer insight into the story plot (Czarniawska, 2004; Kurtz, 2014; Margetts, 2015). Narrative events are bits of information about an event that the storyteller wants to impart (Köppe, 2014). Narrative peaks are conversations that evoke interest in the story such as critical incidents (Margetts, 2015). Narrative evaluations can facilitate a “personal touch” to stories that are unique to the individual experiences. Acquiring a glimpse into the life of a participant through his or her own biases and judgments provides a reflection of individual experiences. To understand the structure of the narrative compositions, the transcripts were analyzed for person shifts used in the transcript. Below are some examples from the transcript:

**SHIFTING PRONOUN:**

So you have to communicate with everyone or you have to like open bit to the person next to you.

**TALKING ABOUT THE SELF, IN THIRDPERSON:**

She is like in the post and she would be a bit too full of herself.

**EVALUATION:**

I always believe that my ideas cannot be forced from somebody else. I didn’t believe in stereotypes, so a girl should be this, a boy should do that. That was my ideology of certain things. When I was put into the life skills program, I knew I was able to relate to certain things. Because I was taught in life skills program, you need to say No to certain someone you need to be cautious about certain things you don’t have to do something because somebody told you to do.

In the above excerpts, the participant was reflective of her thoughts and feelings on gender inequality. She portrays herself as a strong woman who has her own ideas and values. Her beliefs were validated through the life skills program. Analyzing the transcript using structural analysis facilitated the development of the story. These descriptions made way for a more concrete story plot. Below are some extracts from the story that was developed from the multimethod restorying framework.
The Transit:
I was 10 years old when my parents moved to our own apartment. I was old enough to understand the process of how my grandparents’ house was divided and then everybody was given a certain part to live in. That’s when the family was divided. Having lived in an extended family for ten years, I knew my life just began.

Now that the house was divided, we lived in the same land but different sections as the house was divided among my mum’s siblings. We had different places to live and that it’s not that we interact every day or they get to see what we do. So the whole concept of family setup changed. We did not get to see our cousins and aunts as often as we did earlier.

Primary school—my whole life:
My life was pretty much limited to school. It was jammed packed from school, extra co-curricular activities to tuition classes. I was always doing something. I participated in netball and basketball. I participated in oratory competitions. I was always among the top three students in my class. I was given lot of opportunities to shine out. To me, it was my whole life. And all this felt very normal. I liked school. I was very popular in school, almost everyone knew my name. So even though I was being bullied for being big in size, it didn’t matter, at least I thought it didn’t matter.

Teenager—A lonely star:
I guess I felt too grown up. I was becoming a teenager and my interest was shifting. I think part of it was I was very determined to do well. Maybe to compensate for not having friends and becoming a victim to bullying again. Perhaps all of it.

High school—Life skills Education taught me “Sexting”:
One week before the academic year of my higher secondary school, Centre for Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), all the freshmen were called to attend life skills sessions. It was a mandatory. The sessions were very different from the ones I attended during primary and secondary school, which I could barely remember. In CHSE, the set up for life skills sessions were very different. It was very interactive. I became interested in these sessions. There was a glimpse of hope for me. I knew I had to make use of it. Because, my mum was too busy attending to my brother and I was dealing with teenage issues, which was new to me. My mum never spoke about boys and sex. Mainly because it’s not something we talk with our parents or it’s not something our parents talk with us. So when I went to the life skills program. The life skills teacher was very open. For the first time we felt we were treated as teenagers. So for us it was pretty much about the “yo lo,” “you only live once,” “LOL” life. That was the peak of all these abbreviations. One day our life skills teacher came to our class and asked us, “Do you guys know what’s sexting?” There was pin drop silence. She rephrased her question, “are you aware of sexting?” I was thinking to myself, I have heard about texting but never heard of sexting. Everyone was quite taken back. And all ears were on her as she explained.

Becoming an Adult—Making friends:
At first I was anxious about moving to a new place, and to be on my own. I was not sure if I could handle it. Being alone in a foreign country felt different and strange, but I guess a good strange. It felt so right. I met people who are like me. They were choosy about the relationships they form. They were selective in sharing things. I felt understood. I felt a sense of belonging. For the first time, I made ACTUAL FRIENDS whom I could call my “real life time friends.” Because, they showed genuine concern and defined friendship in ways I have never understood nor experienced. There was this one time, I came back to Maldives for holidays, and they called me. They said they missed me. They would text me. I felt happy.

Transition from Adolescence to Adulthood…I think I’m ready:
Looking back at my life and my experiences, I would say that, it taught me like not to take everything really personally. I was able to let go of the things that doesn’t actually have a value. Things like taking criticisms or negativity. Instead I learnt how to channel all negativity out and not be too hard on myself. I think part of my struggles I would attribute to procrastination, getting late and not being able to manage my time. I think, these was some areas I believe I needed to work on. And I could see the difference when I was able to correct them, while I was living on my own had made a huge difference in my life. I think that was when I realize the importance of time management, valuing friendship, and learning to listen to others before judging them. Had I not had my fair share of mistakes while growing up I don’t think I would have been able to see things differently. I think it made me strong. I had to face different kinds of people and this experience taught me a lot about life. I think most of the things I learnt are from my parents and life skills program. Some of the significant lessons taught in life skills were also emphasized by my mum. She was the first one to point out my mistakes. For instance, if I spoke to anyone rudely, she would tell me that there is a certain way to speak without offending the other person. Having these types of conversations validated what I learnt in life skills such as communication skills and listening skills.

Conclusion
The article highlights the role of the transcript in narrative inquiry as an essential tool for attributing meaning to the personal stories of research participants. The phases presented provide a logical sequence to weave a collective narrative from the transcripts. Although other approaches to restorying a transcript in narrative research are available (see Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002; Riessman, 1993), the current article introduces multiple methods for carrying out narrative analysis. The focus of the presentation was to illustrate how a researcher can create a story from interview transcripts. Individual transcripts were reorganized into a chronological sequence to identify the time and place of the events leading to the development of a coherent story. This process assisted in developing a restorying framework to craft the story.

It is hoped that this article will encourage other researchers embarking on narrative analysis to consider the different techniques and strategies available in presenting participants’ lived experiences in meaningful ways including extensive collaboration with study participants. Narrative analysis is a fluid method, and there is no single procedure to be followed in attempting to create stories from interview transcripts.
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