

Focus Group Analysis with MAXQDA

How does MAXQDA support focus group analysis?

- Autocode speakers in focus group transcripts
- Shortcuts for speaker names when transcribing focus group recordings
- Compile contributions of individual speakers on coded topics
- Include standardized background information about speakers using variables
- Use this standardized information for selecting speakers
- Show amount and number of contributions from a speaker using the “Overview of Focus Group Participants” function
- Explore and conduct in-depth analysis of data with several functions, such as the Word Cloud, Code Matrix Browser, or Crosstab functions

Importing a focus group transcript

To import a focus group transcript, it must be prepared as such:

1. Each contribution begins with a new paragraph.
2. The contribution starts with the name of the participant, followed by a colon.

DINAN (MOD): Senator Rubio, real quick follow-up on this.

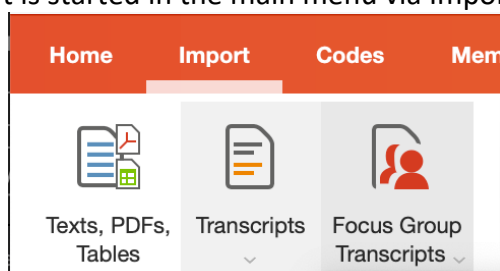
You've — in the — in the context of illegal immigration, you've called for basically putting off any legalization process until we get the border secured.

RUBIO: Correct.

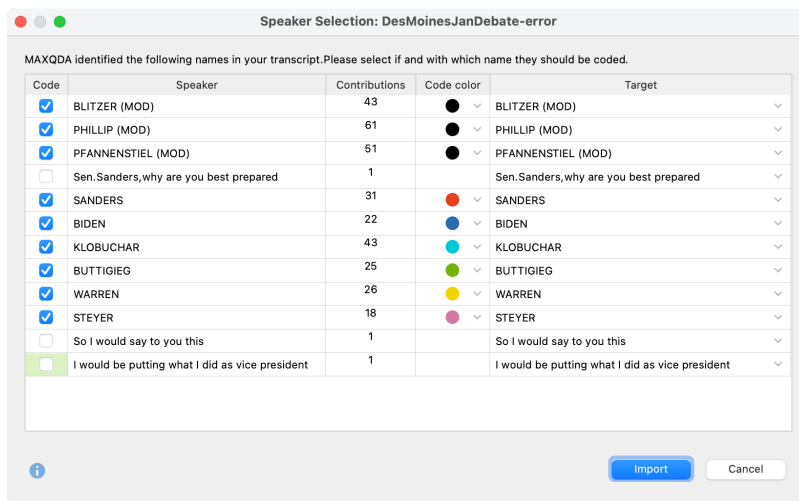
DINAN (MOD): Why not call for a pause on H1Bs until those abuses you've talked about are solved.

Prepared focus group transcript for import

The import is started in the main menu via Import > Focus Group Transcripts.

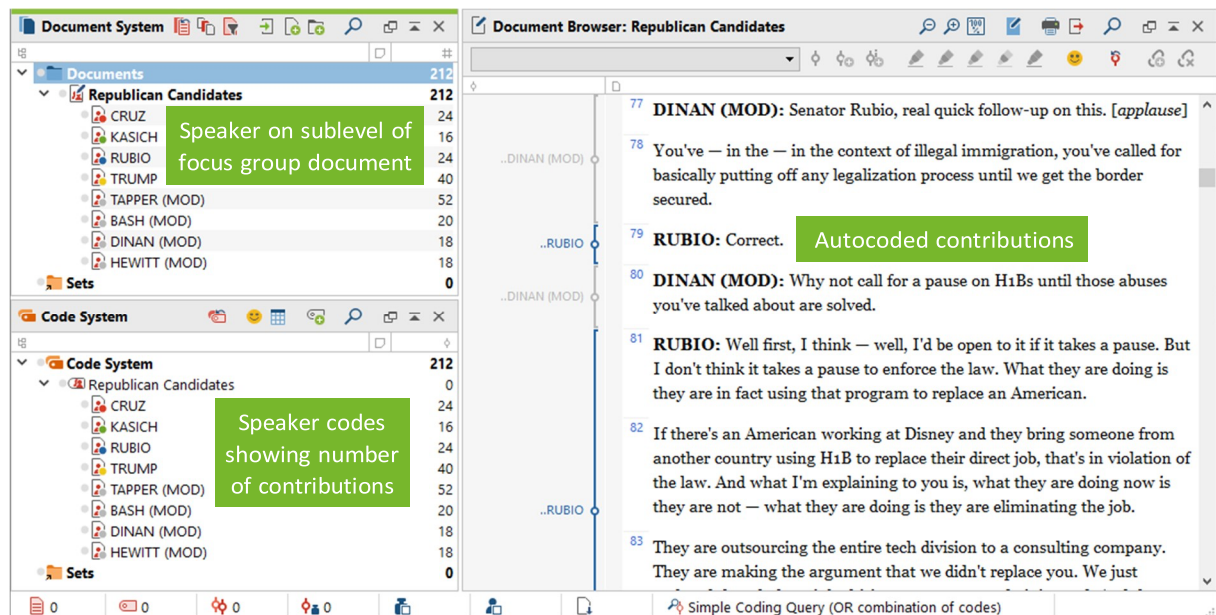


MAXQDA will identify errors from unintended speakers, and give you the option of not importing them.



Just unselect the speakers that are not actual speakers.

After the import, MAXQDA autcodes the speaker contributions with speaker names.



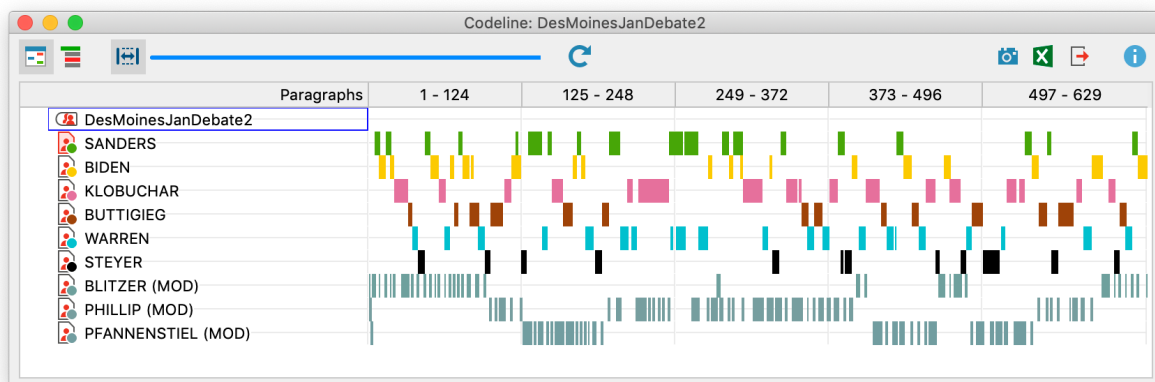
Imported focus group transcript with autocoded contributions with speaker names

To autocode speakers in a transcript that has been already imported into MAXQDA, open the document and use the function Import > Convert Text > Insert displayed Text as a Focus Group Transcript. This also works for a focus group transcript that has been created in MAXQDA.

Exploring focus group data

Codeline: Progression of discussion

It is always a good idea to assign different colors to each speaker. Then, you can use the Codeline visual tool (available in the context menu of a focus group) to visualize the progression of the discussion in a focus group.



Codeline displaying the sequence of contributions in a focus group

If you have already begun coding (topics etc.), you will also see when the topics were addressed in the discussion.

Word Cloud: Identify frequently used words in a focus group

The function Visual Tools > Word Cloud allows you to get an overview of the most frequently used words in one or more transcripts. Define stop words that are to be ignored in the image.

Overview of Focus Group Participants: Gain a (first) impression of speaker

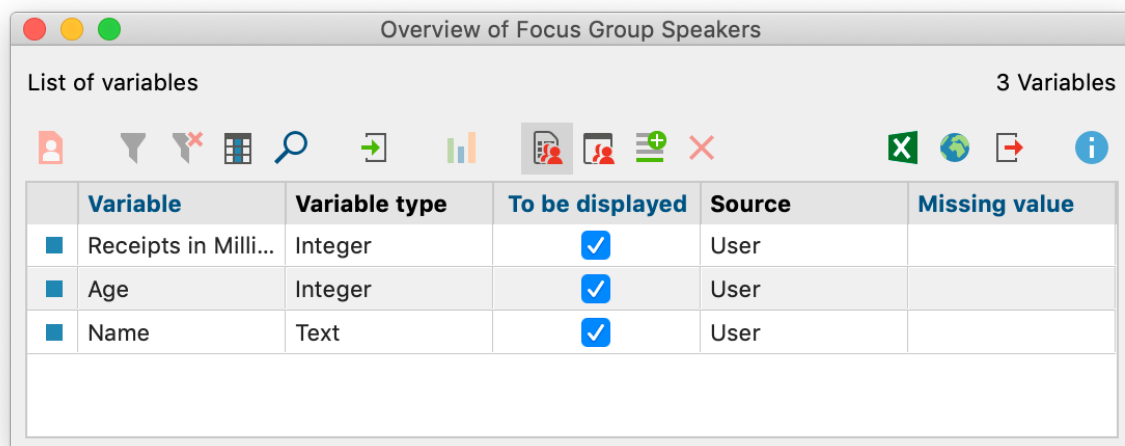
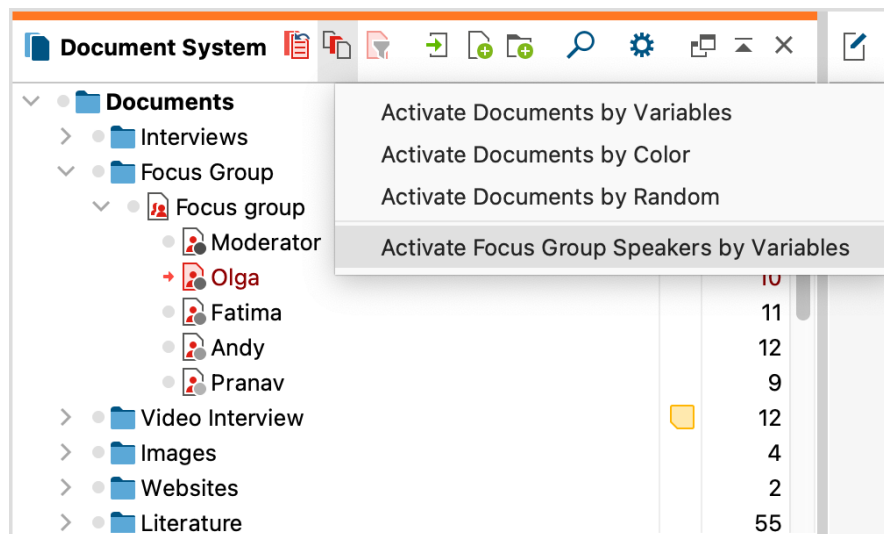
Overview of Focus Group Speakers

Focus group: DesMoinesJanDebate

9 focus group speakers from 1 focus groups

	Speaker	Focus group	Contributions	% Contributions	Words	% Words	Characters	% Characters	Receipts in Mil...	Age
	SANDERS	DesMoinesJan...	31	9.69	2798	13.23	15349	13.32	107	79
	BIDEN	DesMoinesJan...	22	6.88	3157	14.92	16717	14.51	59	78
	KLOBUCHAR	DesMoinesJan...	43	13.44	3278	15.50	17276	14.99	28	59
	BUTTIGIEG	DesMoinesJan...	25	7.81	3083	14.57	16824	14.60	75	38
	WARREN	DesMoinesJan...	26	8.13	3408	16.11	18427	15.99	81	70
	STEYER	DesMoinesJan...	18	5.63	2299	10.87	12511	10.86	205	62
	BLITZER (MOD)	DesMoinesJan...	43	13.44	1057	5.00	6412	5.56	3	0
	PHILLIP (MOD)	DesMoinesJan...	61	19.06	1130	5.34	6337	5.50	0	0
	PFANNENSTIEL...	DesMoinesJan...	51	15.94	945	4.47	5377	4.67	0	0

In the overview, you can add your own variables and enter values for each participant. These values can be used to select participants for analysis: right-click on the root of the “Document System” window and select **Activate Focus Group Participants by Variables**.



Coding focus group transcripts

When coding focus group discussions, you can focus on different aspects reflected in different levels in the “Code System” window, e.g.:

- a topic and content level
- a group interaction level
- a moderator and participants level

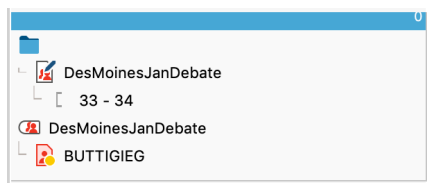
Code System	Count
Code System	777
Interaction (according to David Morgan's system)	0
Interpersonal Connections	0
Agreement	0
Disagreement	0
Support	0
Change in Topic	0
Introduction of new topic	0
Expansion	0
Differentiation	0
Continuation of Topic Connections	0
Explicit continuation	0
Implicit continuation	0
Lexical Search Results	0
Autocode: Job	63
Autocode: Money	38
Autocode: Social Security	36
Autocode: Muslim OR Islam	22
Focus Groups	0
Republican Candidates	212
Democratic Candidates	406

Different code levels in the "Code System" (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019)

Analyzing coded focus group transcripts

What did a specific participant say in one or more focus group discussions?

1. Activate the focus group documents of interest in the "Document System".
2. Activate the participant's speaker code(s) in the "Code System". MAXQDA will compile the contributions in the "Retrieved Segments" window.



3. Participant's name displayed in the source information in the "Retrieved Segments" window

What did one or more participants say about a specific topic?

1. Activate the participant(s) in the "Document System".
2. Activate the topic code in the "Code System".

Code Matrix Browser: Visualize code assignments per participant

You can use Visual Tools > Code Matrix Browser to display the distribution of topics per participant.

Code Matrix Browser

Code System	SANDERS	BIDEN	KLOBUCHAR	BUTTIGIEG	WARREN	STEYER
Issues						
Economic Issues						
corporate power	■				■	■
trade issues	■	■	■		■	■
NAFTA / USMCA	■		■	■	■	
Corporate responsibility	■	■			■	
free college tuition			■	■	■	■
SUM	8	3	4	2	5	3

Topics (rows) by participants (columns) in the Code Matrix Browser

Crosstab: Compare code frequencies for groups of participants

You can use Mixed Methods > Crosstab > Crosstab for Focus Groups to create a display that compares code frequencies for grouped participants. To use this function, you need to assign variable values in the “Overview of Focus Group Participants” first because the groups are built by using these variables.

Crosstab for Focus Groups

	Sanders	Buttigieg	Warren	Biden	Klobuchar	Total
Issues						
Economic Issues						
corporate power	2		1			3
trade issues	1		1	2	1	5
NAFTA / USMCA	4	1	1		1	7
Corporate responsibility	1		1	1		3
free college tuition		1	1		2	4
Foreign Policy						
authorization of force		2	1	2		5
Iraq war vote	1			2		3
leave troops in the middle east		1	1	2	1	5
Commander in Chief		1	1		1	3
nuclear weapons		3			1	4
North Korea				1		1
Iran	2	3		3	2	10
decision to kill Iranian leader				1		1
Health care	4	3	3	3	3	16
prescription drugs			1		1	2
child care	1	1	1	1		4
Climate issues	1	4	1	1	1	8
impeachment			1	1	1	3
SUM	17	20	15	20	15	87
# N = speakers	1 (20.0%)	1 (20.0%)	1 (20.0%)	1 (20.0%)	1 (20.0%)	5 (100.0%)

Crosstab for comparing code frequencies by participants