

Transcribing for meaningful analysis in MAXQDA

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Transcription is the process of turning a naturally-occurring event or research encounter from an audio or video recording into a textual form for analysis.

Distinguishing between strategies and tactics (Silver & Woolf, 2019) when discussing transcription is useful because it encourages us to think about both the analytic decisions we make that result in choosing between forms of transcript (strategies) and how the transcript is created in the context of what the CAQDAS-package can enable us to do with them (tactics). Although the idea of transcribing verbal data is often taken for granted, there is a body of literature about strategy-level decisions for transcribing that is usually framed around the idea that transcription is an analytic act.

To transcribe or not?

Even though transcription is the norm (and often taken-for-granted) MAXQDA does not require a transcript – both audio and video files can be analyzed *directly*. There are many situations when it may be more appropriate to analyse talk or interaction directly, but if the decision is made to create a transcript, at the strategies level it is useful to think about this in terms of **what** is transcribed, **when** transcripts are created, and the **form** they take. At the tactics level we consider **how** the transcription is accomplished.

Forms of transcript

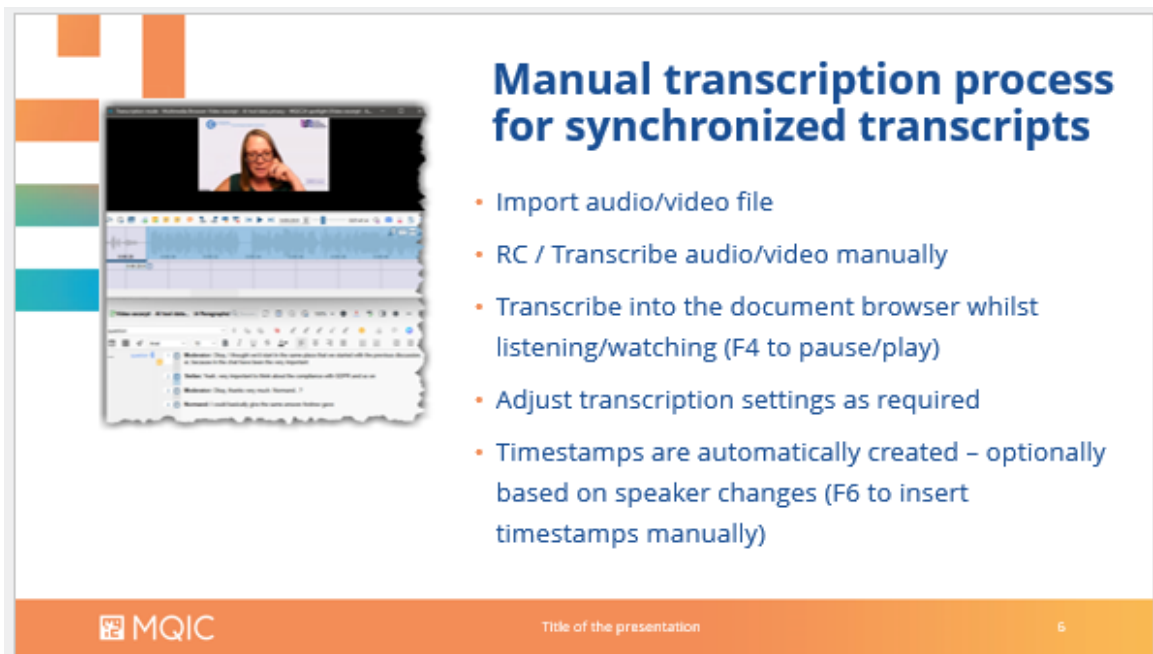
There are some formalized transcription protocols, perhaps most famously is Jeffersonian transcription notation that was developed in the 1960s by Gail Jefferson for conversation analysis. This is a form of what is sometimes called 'naturalized transcription' or 'thick description' in which recordings are transcribed in as much detail as possible – including hesitations, pauses, intonation, gestures, and emotional tone.

file. Synchronicity can happen during the manual transcription process within MAXQDA, or if a transcript created outside of MAXQDA has timestamps in the correct format, can be synchronized later on.

- You can have MAXQDA create transcripts for you automatically, using the new artificial intelligence features provided by AI Assist

Manual transcription processes for generating synchronized transcripts

The steps you go through to create transcripts depends on the above choices. Many researchers like to work with synchronized transcripts so they have access to both the textual representation and the original audio/video file.



Manual transcription process for synchronized transcripts

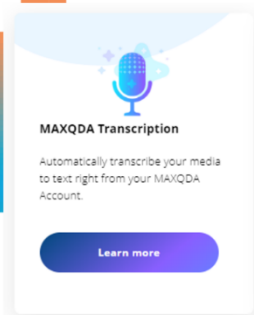
- Import audio/video file
- RC / Transcribe audio/video manually
- Transcribe into the document browser whilst listening/watching (F4 to pause/play)
- Adjust transcription settings as required
- Timestamps are automatically created - optionally based on speaker changes (F6 to insert timestamps manually)

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AI-generated transcripts

If you do not have the time to generate transcripts manually, and if it is the content of what is said in an audio or video file that is the main interest, using AI Assist to create verbatim transcripts automatically is a good option.

These are not only produced very quickly and to a high degree of accuracy, they can be edited to correct any errors, and are formatted in a way that makes them easy to import into a MAXQDA project and synchronize with the original audio/video if desired.




MAXQDA Transcription
Automatically transcribe your media to text right from your MAXQDA Account.
[Learn more](#)

Experiment to determine accuracy

AI-generated transcripts

<https://www.maxqda.com/automatic-transcription>

- **Fast** (very quick auto-transcription)
- **Flexible** (common file formats & editable)
- **Tailored** (ready for MAXQDA import - speakers, timestamps)
- **Secure** (GDPR compliant, not shared, deleted)
- **Bespoke** (custom glossaries, 45+ languages)
- **60 minutes FREE trial**

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Hybrid and dynamic approaches

It is of course possible to combine approaches, as suits your needs. Because transcripts – however they are created – are editable, it is possible to think of them as ‘dynamic’ – meaning that you can add to them at any point, even as the analysis proceed and for example, you see or hear something that you didn’t earlier on. This is an added reason why synchronicity is often analytically beneficial.

One option particularly useful when working with video material is being able to add stills of points in a video to the transcript, to illustrate something that’s happening at that moment. Such visual transcripts can be created inside or outside of MAXQDA as necessary, and added to at any point.

For more information on transcribing using MAXQDA see the Help Menu which provides the detailed step-by-step instructions.

<https://www.maxqda.com/help-mx24/transcription-audio-video>