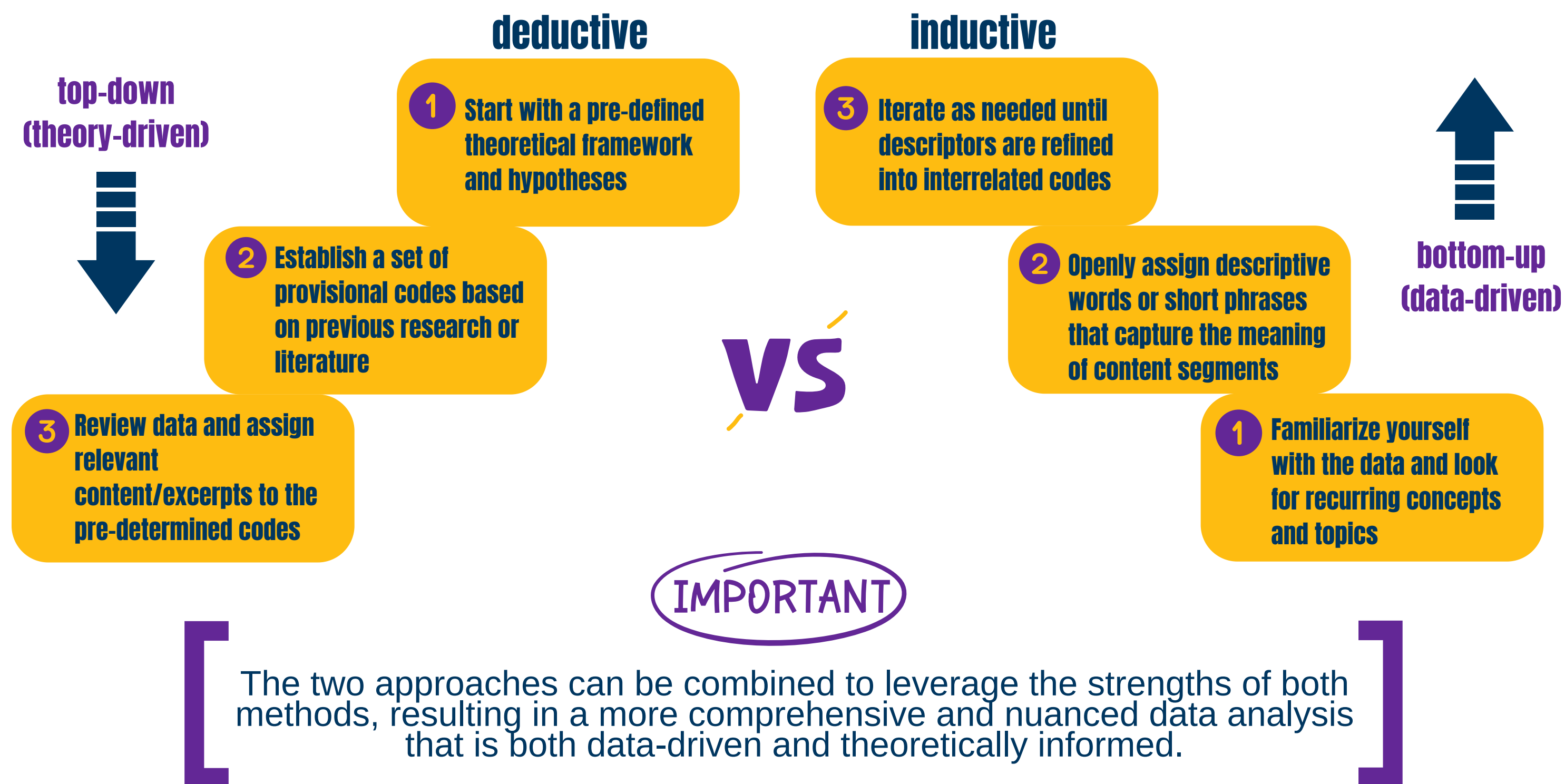# CRACKING THE CODING FOR QUALITATIVE DATA

Qualitative coding is the systematic process of categorizing and segmenting textual or visual content into meaningful analytical units to identify patterns and themes within the data. This handout compares deductive and inductive approaches to qualitative coding and highlights campus-licensed and supported tools to aid in this process.

deductive

top-down (theory-driven)

1. Start with a pre-defined theoretical framework and hypotheses
2. Establish a set of provisional codes based on previous research or literature
3. Review data and assign relevant content/excerpts to the pre-determined codes

VS

inductive

bottom-up (data-driven)

3. Iterate as needed until descriptors are refined into interrelated codes
2. Openly assign descriptive words or short phrases that capture the meaning of content segments
1. Familiarize yourself with the data and look for recurring concepts and topics

IMPORTANT

[The two approaches can be combined to leverage the strengths of both methods, resulting in a more comprehensive and nuanced data analysis that is both data-driven and theoretically informed.]

Qualitative Data Analysis Tools

Campus-licensed

NVIVO

MAXQDA

Free and Supported

TAGUETTE

QualCoder

LEARN MORE

Request access to licensed tools:

dreamlab@library.ucsb.edu

Consult available training:

rds@library.ucsb.edu