This is an excerpt from one of the interviews undertaken by Hannah Scaife (2016) for her Master’s degree in Psychology. This excerpt, and that of five other interviews, are used to highlight her use of Thematic Analysis as a tool for the analysis of qualitative data. Further details on her use of Thematic Analysis, and an exercise to allow you to explore its application, is given in Chapter 11 of the book by Opie and Brown (2019).

Note: where (.) is used this indicates a very short pause and (.*n*) indicates a pause of approximately *n* seconds.

**Excerpt of interview transcript: 78NE5**

I: So, can you describe the process by which you think you came to a conclusion about your gender and sexual identity?

78NE5: Yeah [laugh]. Ok well, when I was (.) 3, about 3 or 4, no 3, my brothers told me that God didn’t love me and didn’t give me a willy, but I was a boy [laugh].

I: Strong start [laugh].

78NE5: Yeah. Erm, so yeah, they told me I was a boy but God didn’t love me, erm, so I wasn’t as good as them [laugh].

I: [laugh]

LK: And I don’t know if I believed them, but obviously I knew that I looked different.

I: Yeah.

78NE5: But I think I was quite aware that there was other girls, so I was like, one of them. Erm, but (.) I did like wearing their clothes, and my mum was like really good. Well, the clothes we had were passed down so generally I wore them anyway. But if I wanted like erm, we all went to the market and they were getting boxer shorts, and I was like ‘I want a pair of boxer shorts’ so I was allowed to wear boxer shorts. Erm

I: Nice.

78NE5: Mm (.) and at nursery I was erm, I learnt to wee standing up after they [laugh] erm, said that I was a boy, and my best friend at nursery was Patrick, me and Patrick used to go to the toilet and I’d be like ‘I can do that as well’. Erm but then the nursery staff told my mum that she needed to talk to me because I can’t use the boys’ toilets. But then, at nursery I used to grab girls and try and kiss them, and they didn’t like that very much [laugh].

I: You did start early [laugh]

78NE5: Yeah. Erm, but at secondary school (.) I was like in the football and cricket teams and stuff, like the only girl in in them, but in the year above there was also a girl in them so I thought that was like alright. Because I, I thought it was just normal until other people said, like one school wouldn’t let me play because they were like ‘it’s against FIFA rules to let girls play’, so I had to sit out. Erm, so I think it’s generally other people (.) sort of saying ‘you’re a girl, you should be doing this’, erm and I remember at primary school as well a girl a year above, came up to me with all her mates and was like ‘you think you’re a boy don’t you?’, I was like ‘no I don’t think I’m a boy’, like ‘yeah you do, you play football, all your friends are boys, you think you’re a boy but you’re not’, and I was like ‘I don’t think I’m a boy’. I thought (.) I think I do think like a boy, like I play Kiss Cat on the boys’ team [laugh] so erm (.3) maybe I think like a boy, but I don’t think (.) I know I’m not a boy. What was the question?

I: How, well how did you feel about that? Feeling like, different? Did it bother you?

78NE5: It wasn’t too bad until I left (.) erm, because none of my boy friends, not boyfriends but my friends who were boys (.) said anything like that. Erm, it just seemed to be the girls who thought that it was really weird. And then, so my best friend throughout primary school was Harry, and when we got to secondary school he went to a mixed school, mum wanted me to go to an all girls’ school, which I was petrified about because I don’t like girls, I don’t, there’s, I don’t have girls who are my friends, like (.) so when I went there I had to make friends who were girls (.) and (.) I suppose being around more girls, it was, and like all different types of, like girly girls and not girly girls, so I felt a bit more normal there. I guess (.) but like (.) they all fancied like boybands, and I didn’t really, I think I fancied them [laugh]. But I don’t think I really knew that.

I: So at what point do you think that you started thinking about your sexuality and being attracted to girls?

78NE5: Well I had a naughty dream about girls when I was 11 (.) but I guess I sort of supressed it a bit maybe, and just sort of went along with sort of like if my friends said that they fancied this person I’d be like ‘oh yeah yeah, I fancy them’, erm (.). I think when I really, because I think I ignored it quite a lot. But when the first time I really really sort of realised, I was talking to, erm, my P.E. teacher. And she was talking to me and I was thinking ‘I really want to kiss you’. And and then I thought a while like after that like ‘ooh should I be thinking that? That’s a bit weird’.

I: How old were you then?

78NE5: 15. It was towards the end of secondary. Mm then we got to college and I was just desperate to lose my virginity because everyone was shagging. And (.) at, erm, 6th form there was a girl in my photography who erm I went to nursery with. One of the girls I tried to kiss all the time

I: [laugh]

78NE5: Erm, and she was friends with her, so this girl in my class was like ‘oh, so and so’s mum says that you’re a lesbian’, [laugh], like ‘no I’m not’, erm, I guess because there wasn’t really many about, or I didn’t know any, erm, and if someone tells me I’m something I like to go ‘no I’m not’. Erm (.) so I think I went the other way to sort of prove them wrong. Erm, and started like snogging loads of boys. But then there was a few girls who liked to go out and kiss girls, erm, and then I was like ‘oh maybe it’s like, not so weird’.

I: Yeah

78NE5: Erm (.) so I properly kissed a girl when I was 17, I think. But then I think I was like they were, like ‘it’s not a thing’, you know, it’s like, erm, but actually, going back to school, there was a girl called Laura and she had a girlfriend. Erm who was older, and not very nice. And I definitely didn’t fancy Laura, but I thought I fancied her girlfriend. Erm and I guess from then til I had my first girlfriend I’d thought about her, like, a lot.

I: When did you have your first girlfriend?

78NE5: When I was 19. And that was Laura’s ex girlfriend, the girl that I’d thought about a lot [laugh].

I: Good work!

78NE5: Yep, and she doesn’t remember me, I only met her once. But erm, I saw her in Silhouettes, and I was like ‘oh hi, you know Laura who I went to school with’. She was like ‘yeah’, I was like ‘I’ve met you once’ [laugh]. Yeah.

I: So did you tell anybody about it, at any point?

78NE5: Erm (.) when I was 18 I (.) was I 18? Yeah, and I’d come back from travelling, I’d met er, a gay guy while I was travelling, and I knew that I was going to meet him because he was a friend of Harry’s, who I was going out to see. And I was quite sort of eager to meet him, like I don’t, well, I suppose I did know why, but, and on the first night, erm we started drinking and I was like ‘so how did you know?’ like, just sort of wanting some confirmation I suppose. And that was the first time I’d sort of talked to anyone, and when I came back I told erm E\*\*\* [friend] that erm, I got really drunk and I said I think I might be bisexual. Think, I might be. I stressed that [laugh]. Erm and she was like ‘yeah yeah yeah it’s fine’, and I’m like ‘nooo it’s nottt’. Erm, and then I told my mum (.) when I was 19, when I first started going out with C\*\*.

I: Was it all right telling your family?

78NE5: No. Well it, telling my mum, I came in from a night out and she was sat watching telly and I was like ‘I’ve got something to tell you’. She was like ‘what?’, but she didn’t look at me, she carried on watching telly. And erm (.) I was like ‘it doesn’t matter, it doesn’t matter’. And this went on for, for about 10 times ‘I’ve got something to tell you’, ‘what?’, ‘I can’t tell you I can’t tell you’. I was like ‘I’ll write it down’. So I wrote ‘I’m gay’ on this bit of paper, and I passed her it, and she reached for it and I took it back, and this went on for ages, then, I gave her it. And she looked at it and then looked at me and went ‘do you think so, because I thought I was once?’. And I was like ‘yeah’, and then she went ‘aw that’s a shame because I always thought out of the three of you, you’d be the best one to have kids’ [laugh] and I went ‘I’m so sorryyyy’ and started crying, and I was like ‘don’t tell anyone’. She was like ‘I won’t’, I was like ‘don’t tell dad’. So over the next few days she was like ‘your dad wants to talk to you’, and I was like ‘why?’ and she was like ‘well I had to tell him’ and I was like ‘I told you not to say anything’. So eventually he caught up with me, I avoided him quite well for a while, and he, he came to my room (.) and sat on the sofa and just started crying and he said ‘is it something that I’ve done?’, and like ‘no don’t be silly’. Like, I’d seen him cry once before, and that was when his mum had just died, and it was in another room and I was sort of spying through the door, like I’d never actually seen him cry. So I just felt really really awful. Erm, and it didn’t help as well that C\*\* [ex partner] wasn’t very nice and didn’t get along with them. And I sort of took myself (.) away from them a bit. But my brothers were fine about it.

I: And then how did it, how has it evolved with your parents then?

78NE5: Think, they’ve got better, but I’ve always sort of felt that erm (.) well, when \*\*\* [brother] came back from London one time he was like, he went to get some cream cakes with my dad, and he said as they were walking along, he said ‘oh dad I’ve got some good news’ and he was like ‘oh what?’ and he went ‘\*\*\*\*’s [interviewee] erm, split up with C\*\* [ex partner]’, and apparently his face like lit up and he went ‘oh good’, ‘and she’s got someone else’, and he went ‘ really, really? Is it a boy?’. And it was like ‘no, it’s a girl’. And then his face dropped and was like ‘nooo’. Erm, but he he’s got better, but not until I suppose (.) over the past 4 years that I think he’s really sort of accepted it and I’ve heard him (.) sort of, when gay marriage was legalised and stuff, erm, I was with him like watching the news and he’s like ‘what, has this only just happened? This is ridiculous’ and seemed quite sort of pro, erm, which is nice. And er, he really got along with L\*\*\* [ex partner #2], and (.) like asked if I wanted to get married and stuff, whereas before I think I was partly against that because I’d think my parents wouldn’t think of it as if my brothers got married to women, that it wouldn’t be sort of seen the same. Erm.

I: So you said that when you came out to E\*\*\*

78NE5: Yeah

I: You told her you were bisexual.

78NE5: Yeah

I: Did you think that you were bisexual then, or were you just trying to opt for a safer option?

78NE5: I think it was a safer option.

I: What made you feel like you could talk to her about it? I’m just thinking because 18, that’s quite late on, if you’d have been from nursery even

78NE5: Yeah

I: feeling that way, but then you didn’t have that conversation with anybody until you were 18.

78NE5: It’s a long time [laugh]

I: Yeah, like, what do you think got you to the point where you were like ‘I need to have this conversation now’, or ‘I can have this conversation now’?

78NE5: Erm, alcohol, probably, was a big factor [laugh]. Erm, I guess (.) people were a bit more, like the people around me were a bit more worldly. People knew more gay people, and I (.) I sort of realised that they were comfortable with that so I could be more comfortable.

I: Do you think it made a difference meeting somebody who was out?

78NE5: Yes, definitely, because (.) yeah. I don’t think my parents have got any friends who are. Just all the sort of talk around it, like especially at an all-girls school is like, you couldn’t do anything. You couldn’t look at somebody because then you were a lesbian, like, it was all quite, used in like a negative way.

I: Yeah

78NE5: So that was something that you didn’t want to be.

Opie, C. and Brown, D. (eds) (2019) *Getting Started in Your Educational Research: A Student’s Guide to Design, Data Production and Analysis.* London: Sage.

Scaife, H.Z. (2016). ‘A qualitative exploration of sexual and gender identity in non-heterosexual women, specifically focused on identity formation, fluidity and intersectionality’. MSc thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University.