

# 8

## HOW TO ANALYSE AND DISCUSS THE INFORMATION YOU GATHER



# Chapter Table of Contents

Analysing words

Analysing numbers

Discussing your analysis

## This chapter will help you figure out how to . . .

- Analyse words – the constant comparative method (coding, sorting and patterns)
- Analyse numbers – understand what numbers are saying and make your numbers meaningful to others (eyeballing, descriptive and inferential statistics, significance)
- Understand what your analysis tells you – discuss your findings in the context of previous research and develop theory

## For extra help, check out these other resources:

### Analysing words

Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1996) *Making Sense of Qualitative Data*. London: Sage. Good on coding and narratives.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (eds) (2012) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (4th edn.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Comprehensive and thoroughgoing.

Lepper, G. (2000) *Categories in Text and Talk*. London: Sage. Shows how to apply Harvey Sacks's *categorisation analysis* to conversations, text and narrative. Useful as an extension to the possibility of discourse analysis as it is discussed in this chapter.

McCulloch, G. (2004) *Documentary Research in Education, History and the Social Sciences*. London: RoutledgeFalmer. A full and interesting look at documents – defined in the widest sense – and documentary analysis.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, M. (2013) *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (3rd edn). London: Sage. One of the bibles of qualitative methods.

Riessman, C. (2008) *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. London: Sage. This offers a good introduction to narrative analysis.

Ryan, G.W. and Bernard, H.R. (2003) Techniques to identify themes. *Field Methods*, 15 (1), 85–109. A good summary on identifying themes.

Schwandt, T.A. (2015) *The SAGE Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry* (4th edn.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Actually, this is much more than a dictionary.

## Analysing numbers

Connolly, P. (2007) *Quantitative Data Analysis in Education*. London: Routledge. A thorough and user-friendly introduction to the use of statistics in education.

Field, A. (2017) *Discovering Statistics using IBM SPSS Statistics* (5th edn.). London: Sage. If you want to go further in using statistics, for which you will need SPSS, you can't do much better than this book. Highly detailed. Some funny examples, including lap dancers and ejaculating quails.

Hinton, P.R. (2014) *Statistics Explained: A Guide for Social Science Students* (3rd edn.). London: Routledge. A good spread, though more on social science *per se* rather than applied social science.





Miles, J. and Shevlin, M. (2001) *Applying Regression and Correlation: A Guide for Students and Researchers*. London: Sage. Good on correlation.

Saldaña, J. (2016) *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (3rd edn). London: Sage. Lots of really helpful, practical advice on coding.

Salkind, N.J. (2016) *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. This is my favourite book on statistics. It has lots of cartoons and is nicely written. It explains (if you really want to know) the difference between one-tailed and two-tailed tests. If you are going to get one book on statistics, I would recommend you get this one.

## CHAPTER 8 CHECKLIST

You may find it helpful to copy this table and write down the answers to the questions.

	Notes	
1 Are you analysing words or numbers?	Use the analysis flow chart in Figure 8.27 to help you decide on which is most appropriate for your work	
2 If you are analysing <i>words</i> , have you decided upon a method of summarising and presenting the data?		
3 If you are analysing <i>numbers</i> , have you decided upon a method of summarising and presenting the data?		
4 Have you thought about how you will organise your analysis and discussion? Will you split it into two chapters, or integrate the analysis and discussion in one chapter?		
5 Have you considered how you will tie strands together and connect ideas such that you offer <i>synthesis</i> and <i>theory</i> ?		