

Qualitative Analysis

for Quantitative or Beginning Researchers

Debby Kermer

Digital Scholarship Center

George Mason University



Comparison

Qualitative

Understanding Experiences
Meaning & Context

Every individual
Small & Similar

Interesting, look closer

Rich data, including
the researchers' thoughts
Acknowledge bias and rely
on your own judgement

Quantitative

Accurately Predicting
Certainty & Generalization

The typical person
Large & Diverse

Unusual, consider excluding

Purpose
Priority

Interest
Sample

Outliers

Data

Bias

Concrete data, so the
results are replicable

Avoid bias by having
others make judgments

Comparison, cont.

Qualitative

Quantitative

What do...? How do..?

Questions

What effect...? How much...?

Similarities, then Differences

Focus

Differences, then Similarities

“Many teachers use active teaching methods. Do those teachers have other similarities in experience?”

Starting Point

"Some teachers use active teaching methods, others don't. Does that cause differences in other aspects?"

“In what ways does teaching methodology play a role in the time spent on lesson planning?”

Example

"Do those who use active teaching spend more time lesson planning than those who don't?"

What is Coding

- Code
 - *aka* Node (NVivo)
 - Index, like in a book
 - Category
- Segment
 - *aka* Reference (NVivo)
 - *aka* Quotation (Atlas.ti)
 - “Meaning Units”
 - Complete Thoughts

Quantitative Coding differences:

Categorizes with #'s

Restricted to one choice per coding variable (but multiple variables allowed).

From Text to Themes

What you do

Gather and read through data Divide text into segments Label segments with codes Reduce overlap and redundancy Collapse codes into themes



Lots of
Text

Many
Segments

30-40
Codes

~20
Codes

5-7
Themes

What you have

Based on Figure 18.3 from Creswell (2013)
Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches.

Coding by “Type”

- Description
 - Starting out, you may just code for descriptors that you know will reoccur based on your design.
 - But, there are usually better ways to categorize.
- Categorization
 - As you read more, similarities in the topics that are addressed should emerge.
 - They need not be hierarchical at first.
- Analytic
 - As you think about the thematic codes and re-read those segments, you should begin to develop answers to your research questions.

Example: Alzheimer's Study

INTERVIEWER

Have you had to give anything up that you enjoyed doing that was important to you?

BARRY

Well, the only thing that we've really given up is – well we used to go dancing. Well she can't do it now so I have to go on my own, that's the only thing really. And then we used to go indoor bowling at the sports center. But of course, that's gone by the board now. So we don't go there. But I manage to get her down to works club, just down the road on the occasional Saturdays, to the dances. She'll sit and listen to the music, like, stay a couple of hours and then she's had enough. And then, if it's a nice weekend I take her out in the 10 car.

Descriptive Codes

INTERVIEWER

Have you had to give anything up that you enjoyed doing that was important to you?

BARRY

Dancing

Well, the only thing that we've really given up is – well *we used to go dancing.* Well she can't do it. *Indoor Bowling* my own, that's the only thing really. And then we used to go *indoor bowling at the sports center.* But of course, that's gone by the board now. So we don't go there. But *I manage to get her down to works club, just down the road on the occasional Saturdays, to the dances.* She'll sit and listen to the music, like, stay a couple of hours and th *Dancing* nough. And then, if it's a nice weekend *I take her out in the 10 car.*

Drive together

Categories

INTERVIEWER

Have you had to give anything up that you enjoyed doing that was important to you?

BARRY

Well, the only thing that we've really given up is – well **we used to go dancing.** Well she can't do it now so I have to go on ***Joint Activities that stopped*** then **we used to go indoor bowling at the sports center.** But of course, that's gone by the board now. So we don't go there. But **I manage to get her down to works club, just down the road on the occasional Saturdays, to the dances. She'll sit and listen to the music, like, stay a couple of hours and then she's had enough.** And then, **if it's a nice weekend I take her out in the 10 car.**

Joint Activities that continued

from [Analyzing Qualitative Data, 2nd Ed](#) by Graham R. Gibbs

©2007 SAGE Publications, Ltd.. All Rights Reserved.

Analytic Codes

INTERVIEWER

Have you had to give anything up that you enjoyed doing that was important to you?

BARRY

Loss of physical co-ordination

Well, the only thing that we've really given up is – well we used to go dancing. Well she can't do it now so I have to go on my own, that's the only thing really. And then we used to go indoor bowling at the sports center. But of course, that's gone by the board now. So we don't go there. But I manage to get her down to works club, just down the road on the occasional Saturdays, to the dances. She'll sit and listen to the music, like, stay a couple of hours and then she's had enough. And then, if it's a nice weekend I take her out in the 10 car.

Togetherness

Doing for

from [Analyzing Qualitative Data, 2nd Ed](#) by Graham R. Gibbs

©2007 SAGE Publications, Ltd.. All Rights Reserved.

Analytic Codes

INTERVIEWER

Have you had to give anything up that you enjoyed doing that was important to you?

BARRY

Resignation

Well, the only thing that we've really given up is — well we used to go dancing. Well she can't do it now so I have to go on my own, that's the only thing really. And then we used to go indoor bowling at the sports center. But of course, that's gone by the board now. So we don't go there. But I manage to get her down to works club, just down the road on the occasional Saturdays, to the dances. She'll sit and listen to the music, like, stay a couple of hours and then she's had enough. And then, if it's a nice weekend I take her out in the 10 car.

Core activity

Examples of Codes – Flat

Becoming sexual relationships

Close, generalized friendships

Losing touch with friends

Making new friends - different sex

Making new friends - same sex

Sporting friendships

Sports club members

Work friends

Can you see the relationships and put these in a hierarchy?

Examples of Codes - Hierarchical

- Friendship types
 - Close, generalized
 - Sporting
 - Club
 - Non-club
 - Work
- Changes in Friendship
 - Making new friends
 - New same sex friends
 - New different sex friends
 - Losing touch
 - Becoming sexual relationship

Tasks in Cleaning Up Codes

Bottom Up Coding

- Code sentences or thoughts
- Rearrange codes into groups or hierarchy
- Merge codes

Top Down Coding

- Code larger themes
- Retrieve text coded for a theme and code for sub-themes
- Move codes to create new themes

Writing a Paper

- Look at your final set of codes
 - Identify your headings and sections
- Retrieve the data from each code in turn
 - Read through the data
 - Integrate ideas and make deductions
 - Summarize the conclusion and illustrate with quotes