

Qualitative Data Analysis

For more information, see ch. 6-7 *Qualitative Researching*, see *Applied Sociology: Terms, Topics, Tools and Tasks*

Constant analysis during data collection. Don't wait for all the data to be collected to analyze data (unlike surveys and experiments)

- informs how to continue study
- informs explanations/understandings: interview/observation/documentation notes include what you think is going on so far. Use this as a starting place for analysis

Steps to Formal Qualitative Analysis

1. Read notes and explanations in notes.
2. Read all your data. Look for patterns, similarities/differences. See if preliminary explanation holds. Revise it.
3. Develop categories/concepts from this revised explanation. These are categories/concepts you need data on in order to support your explanation
4. Code the data (documents, notes, transcribed interviews, etc..) for these categories/concepts
 - Code = Mark excerpts for presence of data on category/concept
 - Look for patterns while doing this. Write notes in the margins.
 - Can use computer programs for this.
5. Refine explanation and categories/concepts as you go through data. Revise previous coding.
6. When finished going through all data, return to your marginal notes. Refine explanation and categories/concepts.
7. Go through coded data. Tally categories/concepts. Make tally.
8. Develop final explanation
9. Write up your explanation. Tell a story.
 - Draw on subsets of excerpts to illustrate points.
 - Bring in lit/theory to help you explain, generalize and convey importance of topic
 - Put in %'s of each event/characteristic.
 - Change names of participants.
 - Write in 1st person, present tense. Use metaphors.

Example of Qualitative Data Analysis: SPOTS