

P-Shift	Example
Turn claiming:	
AO-XA.....	John talks to the group, then Frank talks to John.
AO-XO.....	John talks to the group, then Frank talks to the group.
AO-XY.....	John talks to the group, then Frank talks to Mary.
Turn receiving:	
AB-BA.....	John talks to Mary, then Mary replies.
AB-BO.....	John talks to Mary, then Mary talks to the group.
AB-BY.....	John talks to Mary, then Mary talks to Irene.
Turn usurping:	
AE-XA.....	John talks to Mary, then Frank talks to John.
AB-XB.....	John talks to Mary, then Frank talks to Mary.
AB-XO.....	John talks to Mary, then Frank talks to the group.
AB-XY.....	John talks to Mary, then Frank talks to Irene.

Note: The initial speaker is denoted A and the initial target B, unless the group is addressed (or the target was ambiguous), in which case the target is O. Then, the P-shift is summarized in the form (speaker1) (target1)-(speaker2) (target2), with A or B appearing after the hyphen only if the initial speaker or target serves in one of these two positions in the second turn. When the speaker in the second turn is someone other than A or B, X is used, and when the target in the second turn is someone other than A, B, or the group O, Y is used.

Source: Gibson, David R. 2005. Taking turns and talking ties: Networks and conversational interaction. *American Journal of Sociology* 110(6): 1561–1597. Copyright © 2005 The University of Chicago. Reprinted with permission from the University of Chicago Press.

Careers and Research



Laurel Person Mecca

Laurel Person Mecca, MA, Assistant Director and Senior Research

Specialist, Qualitative Data Analysis Program

Laurel Person Mecca was uncertain of the exact career she wanted to pursue during her graduate studies at the Louisiana State University. Then she happened upon the University Center for Social & Urban Research (UCSUR) at the University of Pittsburgh. It's hard to imagine a better place to launch a research career involving qualitative data analysis. Since 2005, the center has provided services and consultation to investigators in qualitative data analysis. Mecca used UCSUR to recruit participants for her own research and then made it clear to staff that she would love to work there after finishing her degree. Fourteen years later, she enjoys her work there more than ever.

One of the greatest rewards Mecca has found in her work is the excitement of discovering the unexpected, that is, when her preconceived notions about what research participants will tell her turn out to be incorrect. She also finds that her interactions with research participants provide a unique view into people's lives, thus providing insights into her own life and a richer understanding of the human condition. In addition to these personal benefits, Mecca has the satisfaction of seeing societal benefits from the projects she consults on: improving technologies designed to enhance independent living for elderly and disabled persons; exploring the barriers to participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); and evaluating a program to improve parent-adolescent communication about sexual behaviors to reduce sexually transmitted diseases and unintended teen pregnancies.

Mecca has some very sound advice for students interested in careers involving doing research or using research results:

Gain on-the-job experience while in college, even if it is an unpaid internship. Find researchers who are conducting studies that interest you, and inquire about working for them. Even if they are not posting an available position, they may bring you on board. Persistence pays off! You are much more likely to be selected for a position if you demonstrate a genuine interest in the work and if you continue to show your enthusiasm by following up.

Definitely check out the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program. Though most of these internships are in the "hard" sciences, there are plenty of openings in social sciences disciplines. These internships include a stipend, and oftentimes, assistance with travel and housing. They are wonderful opportunities to work directly on a research project, and may provide the additional benefit of a conference presentation and/or publication.

Visual Sociology

The analysis of the "text" of social life, then, can be conducted in a variety of ways. But words are not the only form of qualitative data. For more than 150 years, people have been recording the social world with photography, and photos can be interpreted as data. **Visual sociology** is a method both to learn how others "see" the social world and to create images of that world for further study. As with written documents, however, the visual sociologist must be sensitive to the way in which a photograph or film "constructs" the reality that it depicts.

Visual sociology:

Sociological research in which the social world is "observed" and interpreted through photographs, films, and other images.

An analysis by Eric Margolis (2004) of photographic representations of American Indian boarding schools gives you an idea of the value of analysis of archival photographs, taken before the research project began. On the left in [Exhibit 10.8](#) is a picture taken in 1886 of Chiricahua Apaches who had just arrived at the Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The school was run by Captain Richard Pratt, who, like many Americans in that period, felt that tribal societies were communistic, indolent, dirty, and ignorant, whereas Western civilization was industrious and individualistic. So Pratt set out to acculturate American Indians to the dominant culture. The second picture shows the result: the same group of Apaches looking like European, not Native, Americans, dressed in "standard" (per the dominant culture) uniforms with standard haircuts and with more standard posture.

Exhibit 10.8 Pictures of Chiricahua Apache Children Before and After Starting Carlisle Indian School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1886



Source: Margolis, Eric. 2004. "Looking at Discipline, Looking at Labour: Photographic Representations of Indian Boarding Schools." *Visual Studies* 19:72–96.

Many other pictures display similar transformations. Are these pictures each "worth a thousand words"? They capture the ideology of the school management, but we can be less certain that they document accurately the "before and after" status of the students. Pratt "consciously used photography to represent the boarding school mission as successful" (Margolis 2004: 79). Although he clearly tried to ensure a high degree of conformity, there were accusations that the contrasting images were exaggerated to overemphasize the change (Margolis 2004: 78). In these photographs, reality was being constructed, not just depicted.

Sometimes researchers themselves take photographs. UK researchers Nick Emmel and Andrew Clark (2011) discuss how photographs collected in "walkarounds" enriched their understanding of the social setting they studied:

The research is situated in one geographical location or fieldsite. Periodically we walked through this field along a set pathway taking photographs. . . . The research is conducted in a geographical place covering around 1.5 mile² (circa 2.5 km²) with a mixed population. Relatively affluent students live in close proximity to one of the most deprived populations in England. . . . Within this socially heterogeneous geographical context our research explores, among other aims, the ways different social groups create, maintain, dissemble and experience, social networks over time and across space.

We each use the photographs we take on the walk as an adjunct to the other methods we are using in the research. . . . They contribute to and facilitate an interpretation of place, which in turn provides a more complete account of the place and space in which we are doing research.

. . . How this analytical process happens. The panorama [see [Exhibit 10.9](#)] could be analysed at face value as an empty play area; perhaps supporting ideas about the out-migration of families (a common theme discussed by some resident groups). . . . Subsequent questioning about play spaces in the area however, reveals a range of alternative explanations for under-use. For example, conversational interviews with young people reveal a more nuanced geography of play and socialisation in the area; informal discussion with a local official suggest [*sic*] infrastructural

problems with this particular space, while analysis of the recent history of this play space hints at a more political explanation for its existence and apparent under-use. This means that I do not analyse the images alone (that is, as a discrete data set); but rather alongside other methods. . . . Finally, . . . I use the walkaround method as a way of formulating new questions to ask of participants in the other methods. In some respects, it is the making of the photograph (deciding whether, and what, to photograph and why), rather than the image itself, that is more analytically revealing. (n.p.)

Lisa Frohmann (2005) used what is called “photo voice” methodology. She recruited 42 Latina and South Asian women from battered women’s support groups in Chicago to participate in research about the meaning of violence in their lives. After they received some preliminary instruction, she gave each participant a camera and invited participants to take about five to seven pictures weekly for 4 to 5 weeks. The photographs were to capture persons, places, and objects that represent the continuums of comfort–discomfort, happiness–sadness, safety–danger, security–vulnerability, serenity–anxiety, protection–exposure, strength–weakness, and love–hate. Twenty-nine women then returned to discuss the results.

Exhibit 10.9 A Playground in the Fieldsite of Emmel and Clark



Source: Emmel, Nick, and Andrew Clark. 2011. Learning to use visual methodologies in our research: A dialogue between two researchers. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 12(1). From <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1101360> (accessed September 10, 2018).

With this very simple picture ([Exhibit 10.10](#)), one participant, Jenny, described how family violence affected her feelings:

This is the dining room table and I took this picture because the table is empty and I feel that although I am with my children, I feel that it is empty because there is no family harmony, which I think is the most important thing. (Frohmann 2005: 1407)

The image and narrative indirectly represent Jenny's concept of family: a husband and wife who love each other and their children. Food and eating together are important family activities. Part of caring for her family, is preparing food. The photo shows that her concept of family is fractured (Frohmann 2005: 1407).

Another type of visual sociology, **video ethnography** is becoming increasingly popular. Although professional projects require a dedicated video camera, such as a handycam with "shotgun" microphone (Shrum and Scott 2017: 52–53), you can develop some skill in the method with just a smartphone.

Exhibit 10.10 Picture in Photo Voice Project



Source: Frohmann, Lisa. 2005. The Framing Safety Project: Photographs and narratives by battered women. *Violence Against Women* 11: 1407.

Video ethnography:

The use of audiovisual methods and editing techniques to record, analyze, and present one or more viewable social processes, actions, or events in interpretable segments.

With video gear in hand, an ethnographer needs to consider the boundaries of a social process and how to visually capture it. The video is really just part of an ethnographic study, rather than as a method in itself, for the ethnographer has to "be there" when key interactions happen (Shrum and Scott 2017: 28). You'll inevitably miss a lot if you haven't developed relations with actors in the setting who can help you understand the importance of events and be ready for critical moments. Of course, recording with a camera injects a new element into the setting, but the widespread use of smartphone cameras means that the mere presence of an ethnographer may be more disruptive than the added fact of using a camera. A useful final product—a video that "tells a story"—will only emerge after extensive editing. Video editing is comparable to coding and selecting pictures and notes in an ethnography project, but it will require specialized practice (Shrum and Scott 2017: 93). (You can even submit your video to <https://www.withoutabox.com/> for consideration by film festival organizers!)

With the widespread use of phone cameras and video recorders, visual sociology will certainly become an increasingly important method of qualitative research on social settings and the people in them. The result will be richer descriptions of the social world, but remember Darren Newbury's (2005) reminder to readers of his journal, *Visual Studies*: "Images cannot be simply taken of the world, but have to be made within it" (p. 1).

Why Are Mixed Methods Helpful?

Different methods have different strengths and weaknesses. Using *mixed methods* can reinforce each other, create a greater depth of understanding, reveal or correct errors in other methods, and fill in the steps in complex social processes.

Sometimes new methods are introduced to replicate and strengthen existing research findings. Susan McCarter (2009) extended prior research on juvenile justice processing with an integrated mixed-method investigation of case processing and participant orientations in Virginia.

The large quantitative data set McCarter (2009) used in her research was secondary data collected on 2,233 African American and Caucasian males in Virginia's juvenile justice system, covering

juveniles' previous felonies; previous misdemeanors; previous violations of probation/parole; previous status offenses; recent criminal charges, intake action on those charges, pre-disposition(s) of those charges, court disposition(s) of those charges; and demographics such as sex, race, data of birth, CSU [Court Service Unit], and geotype (urban, suburban, rural). For a subset of these cases, data also included information from the youth's social history, which required judicial request. (p. 535)

Qualitative data, on the other hand, were obtained from 24 in-depth interviews with juvenile judges, the commonwealth's attorneys, defense attorneys, police officers, juveniles, and their families (McCarter 2009):

In the News
Research in the News



How to Understand Solitary Confinement

During a decade of solitary confinement on death row in a Texas prison, Alfred D. Brown spent 22 to 24 hours in his 8' x 12' cell and sometimes an hour in a common room or outdoor courtyard, alone. He was one of dozens of inmates interviewed for a study by the Human Rights Clinic at the University of Texas School of Law. The authors concluded that solitary confinement was a form of torture.

Brown's murder conviction was eventually thrown out due to evidence problems.

For Further Thought

1. The researchers were only allowed access to prisoners who had left death row. What do you think could be lost in interviews with those who were no longer confined in this way?
2. How would you approach analyzing interview data from prisoners with such experiences?

News Source: Fortin, Jack. 2017. Report compares Texas' solitary confinement policies to torture. *New York Times*, April 26.

The juvenile justice personnel were from six Court Service Units across the state, including two urban, two suburban, two rural, two from Region I, two from Region II, and two from Region III. . . . Participants from each CSU were chosen to provide maximum diversity in perspectives and experiences, and thus varied by race, sex, and age; and the justice personnel also varied in length of employment, educational discipline and educational attainment. . . . The youth and their families were all selected from one Court Service Unit (CSU) located in an urban geotype with a population of approximately 250,000. (p. 536)

The sample of youth and their family members was comprised of all male juveniles, five mothers

and one father. Four of the six families were African American and two were Caucasian. (p. 540)

The in-depth interviews included both open- and closed-ended questions. The open-ended responses were coded into categories that distinguished how participants perceived the role of race in the juvenile justice system (McCarter 2009: 536).

In the interviews themselves,

respondents were read the quantitative findings from this study and then asked whether or not their experiences and/or perceptions of the juvenile justice system were congruent with the findings. They were also asked how commonly they believed instances of racial or ethnic bias occurred in Virginia. (McCarter 2009: 540)

The responses to this qualitative question supported the quantitative finding that race mattered:

Juvenile justice professionals as well as youth and their families cited racial bias by individual decision-makers and by the overall system, and noted that this bias was most likely to occur by the police during the Alleged Act or Informal Handling stages. However, although race was considered a factor, when compared to other factors, professionals did not think race played a dominant role in affecting a youth's treatment within the juvenile justice system. . . . Eighteen of the juvenile justice professionals stated that they felt a disparity [between processing of African American and white juveniles] existed, four did not feel that a disparity existed, and two indicated that they did not know. (McCarter 2009: 540)

In this way, the qualitative and quantitative findings were integrated, and the study's key conclusion about race-based treatment was strengthened (McCarter 2009: 542).

Mixed methods can also deepen understanding of a phenomenon. After a devastating earthquake in İzmit, Turkey, on August 17, 1999, killed 19,000 people, Elif Kale-Lostuvali (2007) conducted research using a combination of qualitative methodologies—including participant observation and intensive interviewing—to study citizen–state encounters in the region.

One important concept that emerged from Kale-Lostuvali's observations and interviews was a distinction locals made between a *mağdur* (sufferer) and a *depremzade* (son of the earthquake). This was a critical distinction because a *mağdur* was seen as deserving of government assistance, whereas a *depremzade* was considered to be taking advantage of the situation for personal gain. Kale-Lostuvali (2007) drew on both interviews and participant observation to develop an understanding of this complex concept:

A prominent narrative frequently repeated in the disaster area elaborated the contrast between *mağdur* (sufferers, that is, the truly needy) and *depremzade* (sons of the earthquake). The *mağdur* (sufferers) were the deserving recipients of the aid that was being distributed. However, they (1) were in great pain and could not pursue what they needed; or (2) were proud and could not speak of

their need; or (3) were humble, always grateful for the little they got, and were certainly not after material gains; or (4) were characterized by a combination of the preceding. And because of these characteristics, they had not been receiving their rightful share of the aid and resources. In contrast, *depremzade* (sons of the earthquake) were people who took advantage of the situation. (p. 755)

Similarly, the qualitative research by Spencer Moore and his colleagues (2004) on the social response to Hurricane Floyd combined data from focus groups and from participant observation with the workers. Reports of heroic acts by rescuers, innumerable accounts of "neighbors helping neighbors," and the comments of Health Works After the Flood (task force) participants suggest that residents, stranded motorists, relief workers, and rescuers worked and came together in remarkable ways during the relief and response phases of the disaster:

Like people get along better . . . they can talk to each other. People who hadn't talked before, they talk now, a lot closer. That goes, not only for the neighborhood, job-wise, organization-wise, and all that- . . . [Our] union sent some stuff for some of the families that were flooded out. (Focus Group #4) (Moore et al. 2004: 210–211)

Mixing methods can help offset the intrinsic weaknesses of each technique. For example, Renee Anspach (1991) wondered about the use of standard surveys to study the effectiveness of mental health systems. So instead of drawing a large sample and asking a set of closed-ended questions, Anspach used snowball sampling techniques to select some administrators, case managers, clients, and family members in four community mental health systems, and then asked these respondents a series of open-ended questions. When asked whether their programs were effective, the interviewees were likely to respond "Yes," but their comments in response to other questions pointed to many program failings. Anspach concluded that the respondents simply wanted the interviewer (and others) to believe in the program's effectiveness, for several reasons: Administrators wanted to maintain funding and employee morale; case managers wanted to ensure cooperation by talking up the program with clients and their families; and case managers also preferred to deflect blame for problems to clients, families, or system constraints.

Mixed methods can help us understand complex issues such as violence against women, "a multifaceted phenomenon, occurring within a social context that is influenced by gender norms, interpersonal relationships, and sexual scripts," in which, as Maria Testa, Jennifer Livingston, and Carol VanZile-Tamsen (2011) report, "understanding of these experiences of violence is dependent on the subjective meaning for the woman and cannot easily be reduced to a checklist" (p. 237).

So Testa and her colleagues (2011) supplemented their quantitative study of violence against women with a qualitative component. Victims' responses to structured survey questions showed a quantitative association between alcohol use and rape victimization. Such an association has often been interpreted as suggesting "impaired judgment" about consent by intoxicated victims. But Testa et al. (2011) found that rape usually occurred after excessive drinking when the women were truly incapacitated, and therefore could neither resist nor even be fully aware of what was happening. Testa and her colleagues concluded that the prevalence of this

type of “incapacitated rape” required a new approach to the problem of violence against women (2011: 242). According to Testa et al. (2011):

Qualitative analysis of our data has resulted in numerous “a-ha” types of insights that would not have been possible had we relied solely on quantitative data analysis (e.g., identification of incapacitated rape and sexual precedence, heterogeneity in the way that sexual assaults arise) and also helped us to understand puzzling quantitative observations. . . . These insights, in turn, led to testable, quantitative hypotheses that supported our qualitative findings, lending rigor and convergence to the process. (p. 245)

Even official documents (maybe especially such documents) can themselves be scrutinized with other methods, revealing what's really happening. Consider the court records of juveniles accused of illegal acts, which document the critical decisions to arrest, to convict, or to release (Dannefer and Schutt 1982). Research based on such records is only as good as the records themselves. As indicated in [Exhibit 10.11](#), Carolyn Needleman's (1981) participant observation study of probation officers in two New York juvenile court intake units found that what researchers believe they are measuring with official records differs markedly from what probation officers mean by those records.

Researchers assume that sending a juvenile case to court indicates a more severe outcome than retaining a case in the intake unit, but probation officers often diverted cases from court because they thought the courts would be too lenient. Researchers assume that probation officers evaluate juveniles as individuals, but probation officers often based their decisions on juveniles' current social situation (e.g., whether they were living in a stable home), without learning anything about the individual juvenile. Perhaps most troubling, Needleman (1981) found that probation officers often decided how to handle cases first and then created an official record that appeared to justify their decisions.

Different methods of research can also fill in different steps on a social process, better explaining overall outcomes. In Russ Schutt's study of homelessness and mental illness, he found a quantitative association between lifetime substance abuse—a diagnosis recorded on a numerical scale that was made on the basis of an interview with a clinician—and housing loss ([Exhibit 10.12](#)) (Schutt 2011: 135).

Ethnographic notes recorded in the same group homes help explain the substance abuse–housing loss association (Schutt 2011):

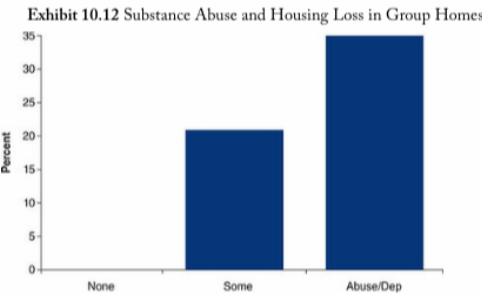
The time has come where he has to decide once and for all to drink or not. . . . Tom has been feeling “pinned to the bed” in the morning. He has enjoyed getting high with Sammy and Ben, although the next day is always bad. . . . Since he came back from the hospital Lisandro has been acting like he is taunting them to throw him out by not complying with rules and continuing to drink. (pp. 131, 133)

The analysis of the quantitative data reveals *what* happened, and Schutt's analysis of the ethnographic data helps to understand *why*.

Exhibit 10.11 Researchers' and Juvenile Court Workers' Discrepant Assumptions

Researcher Assumptions	Probation Officer Assumptions
• Being sent to court is a harsher sanction than diversion from court. • Screening involves judgments about individual juveniles. • Official records accurately capture case facts.	• Being sent to court often results in more lenient and less effective treatment. • Screening should center on the juvenile's social situation. • Records can be manipulated to achieve the desired outcome.

Source: Needleman, Carolyn. "Discrepant Assumptions in Empirical Research: The Case of Juvenile Court Screening." *Social Problems* 28 (February): 247–262. Copyright © 1981 The Society for the Study of Social Problems. Reprinted with permission from Oxford University Press.



Source: Reprinted by permission of the publisher from *Homelessness, Housing, and Mental Illness* by Russell K. Schutt, with Stephen M. Goldfinger, p. 135, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Copyright © 2011 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

Finally, Dan Chambliss and Chris Takacs (2014), in a 5-year longitudinal study of students' development of writing skills in college, used a combination of content analysis, surveys, and in-depth panel interviews to measure and understand how—and if—students actually improved their writing during their college careers. More than 1,000 papers, running from the final year of high school all the way through college, were assembled; they were “blind” graded by outside evaluators. Overall, students showed noticeable improvement during the first 3 years.

Analysis of quantified results on senior surveys then showed that the students who improved the most were aware of that improvement, and in the interviews, those students credited their improvement partly to one-on-one meetings—even a single meeting with a professor who cared about them and their work. A mixed-method study, then, was able to uncover the extent of students' learning, students' own ability to assess their learning, and the means by which the learning occurred—providing a well-rounded understanding of an important phenomenon.

How Can Computers Assist Qualitative Data Analysis?

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis can dramatically accelerate the techniques used traditionally to analyze such text as notes, documents, or interview transcripts; these techniques include preparation, coding, analysis, and reporting (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Richards and Richards 1994). Two of the most popular programs, HyperRESEARCH and QSR NVivo, can illustrate these steps. (You can link to a trial copy of HyperRESEARCH and tutorials about it on the book's Study Site at edge.sagepub.com/chambliissmssw6c.)

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis:

Analysis of textual, aural, or pictorial data using a special computer program that facilitates searching and coding text.

Text preparation begins with typing or scanning text in a word processor or, with NVivo, directly into the program's rich text editor. NVivo will create or import a rich text file (*.rtf). HyperRESEARCH requires that your text be saved as a text file (as "ASCII" in most word processors, or *.txt) before you transfer it into the analysis program. HyperRESEARCH expects your text data to be stored in separate files corresponding to each case, such as an interview with one subject.

Coding the text involves categorizing particular text segments. This is the foundation of much qualitative analysis. Either program allows you to assign a code to any segment of text (in NVivo, you drag through the characters to select them; in HyperRESEARCH, you click on the first and last words to select text). You can either make up codes as you go through a document or assign codes that you have already developed to text segments. Exhibits 10.13a and 10.13b show the screens that appear in the two programs at the coding stage, when a particular text segment is being labeled. You can also have the programs "autocomplete" text by identifying a word or phrase that should always receive the same code, or, in NVivo, by coding each section identified by the style of the rich text document—for example, each question or speaker. (Of course, you should check carefully the results of autocoding.) Both programs also let you examine the coded text "in context"—embedded in its place in the original document.

In qualitative data analysis, coding is not a one-time-only or one-code-only procedure. Both HyperRESEARCH and NVivo allow you to be inductive and holistic in your coding: You can revise codes as you go along, assign multiple codes to text segments, and link your own comments ("memos") to text segments. In NVivo, you can work "live" with the coded text to alter coding or create new, more subtle categories. You can also place hyperlinks to other documents in the project or any multimedia files outside it.

Exhibit 10.13a HyperRESEARCH Coding Stage

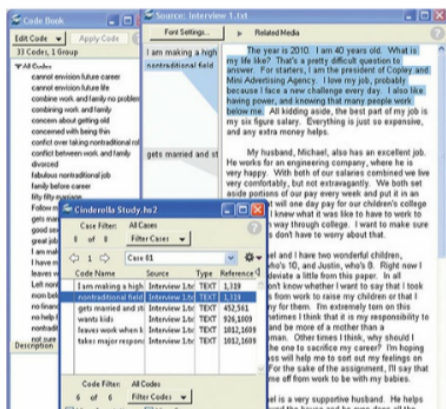
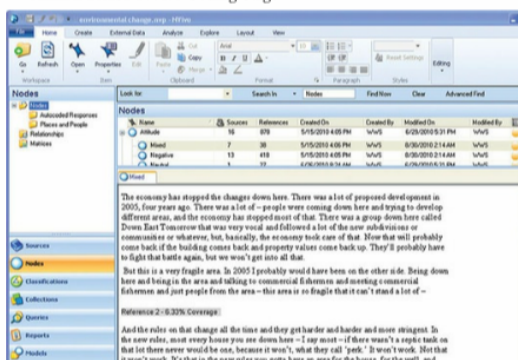


Exhibit 10.13b NVivo Coding Stage



Analysis focuses on reviewing cases or text segments with similar codes and examining relationships among different codes. You may decide to combine codes into larger concepts. You may specify additional codes to capture more fully the variation among cases. You can test hypotheses about relationships among codes. NVivo allows development of an indexing system to facilitate thinking about the relationships among concepts and the overarching structure of these relationships. It also allows you to draw more free-form models (Exhibit 10.14). In HyperRESEARCH, you can specify combinations of codes that identify cases that you want to examine.

Reports from both programs can include text to illustrate the cases, codes, and relationships that you specify. You can also generate counts of code frequencies and then import these counts into a statistical program for quantitative analysis. However, the many types of analyses and reports that can be developed with qualitative analysis software do not lessen the need for a careful evaluation of the quality of the data on which

conclusions are based.

In practice, using these programs is not always as time-saving as it may first appear (Bachman and Schutt 2007: 319). Scott Decker and Barrik Van Winkle (1996) described the difficulty they faced in using a computer program to identify instances of “drug sales”:

The software we used is essentially a text retrieval package. . . . One of the dilemmas faced in the use of such software is whether to employ a coding scheme within the interviews or simply to leave them as unmarked text. We chose the first alternative, embedding conceptual tags at the appropriate points in the text. An example illustrates this process. One of the activities we were concerned with was drug sales. Our first chore (after a thorough reading of all the transcripts) was to use the software to “isolate” all of the transcript sections dealing with drug sales. One way to do this would be to search the transcripts for every instance in which the word “drugs” was used. However, such a strategy would have the disadvantages of providing information of too general a character while often missing important statements about drugs. Searching on the word “drugs” would have produced a file including every time the word was used, whether it was in reference to drug sales, drug use, or drug availability, clearly more information than we were interested [in]. However, such a search would have failed to find all of the slang used to refer to drugs (“boy” for heroin, “Casper” for crack cocaine) as well as the more common descriptions of drugs, especially rock or crack cocaine. (pp. 53–54)

Decker and Van Winkle (1996) solved this problem by parenthetically inserting conceptual tags in the text whenever talk of drug sales was found. This process allowed them to examine all of the statements made by gang members about a single concept (drug sales). As you can imagine, however, this still left the researchers with many pages of transcript material to analyze.

What Ethical Issues Arise in Doing Qualitative Data Analysis?

The qualitative data analyst is never far from ethical issues and dilemmas. Throughout the analytic process, the analyst must consider how the findings will be used and how participants in the setting will react. Miles and Huberman (1994: 204–205) suggest several specific questions that should be kept in mind:

Exhibit 10.14 A Free-Form Model in NVivo

of prior research and acknowledging the researcher's own orientation upon first starting the investigation. (pp. 362–363)

If the answers are yes, a study has achieved much of the promise of qualitative research.

Key Terms

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis 277

Emic focus 250

Etic focus 250

Grounded theory 262

Matrix 256

Narrative analysis 264

Progressive focusing 250

Qualitative data analysis 249

Tacit knowledge 259

Video ethnography 271

Visual sociology 269

Highlights

- Qualitative data analysis is guided by an emic focus of representing persons in the setting on their own terms, rather than by an etic focus on the researcher's terms.
- Narrative analysis attempts to understand a life or a series of events as they unfolded in a meaningful progression.
- Conversation analysis studies the sequence and details of conversational interactions, primarily to understand how people construct social realities through their talk.
- Grounded theory connotes a general explanation that develops in interaction with the data and is continually tested and refined as data collection continues.
- Visual sociology uses the analysis of still photography and motion pictures (video, etc.) to learn both about society and about how people visualize their worlds.
- Special computer software can be used for the analysis of qualitative, textual, and pictorial data. Users can record their notes, categorize observations, specify links between categories, and count occurrences.
- Ethical issues in qualitative analysis often arise around how the results are used and how the subjects of the research may react to what has been done.

Student Study Site

SAGE edge™

The Student Study Site, available at edge.sagepub.com/chamblicsmasw6e, includes useful study materials including practice quizzes, eFlashcards, videos, audio resources, journal articles, and more.

Exercises

Discussing Research

1. List the primary components of qualitative data analysis strategies. Compare and contrast each of these components with those relevant to quantitative data analysis. What are the similarities and differences? What differences do these make?
2. Does qualitative data analysis result in trustworthy results—in findings that achieve the goal of “authenticity”? Why would anyone question its use? What would you reply to the doubters?

3. Narrative analysis provides the “large picture” of how a life or event has unfolded, whereas conversation analysis focuses on the details of verbal interchange. When is each method most appropriate? How could one method add to the other?
4. Both ethnography and grounded theory refer to aspects of data analysis that are an inherent part of the qualitative approach. What do these approaches have in common? How do they differ? Can you identify elements of these two approaches in this chapter's examples of ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, and narrative analysis?

Finding Research

1. *The Qualitative Report* is an online journal about qualitative research. Inspect the table of contents in a recent issue (www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/index.html). Read one of the articles, and write a brief article review.
2. Be a qualitative explorer! Go to this list of qualitative research websites, and see what you can find that enriches your understanding of qualitative research (www.qualitative-research.net/QualPage/). Be careful to avoid textual data overload.

Critiquing Research

1. Read the complete text of one of the qualitative studies presented in this chapter, and evaluate its analysis and conclusions for authenticity, using the criteria in this chapter.

Doing Research

1. Attend a sports game as an ethnographer. Write up your analysis, and circulate it for criticism.
2. Write a narrative in class about your first date, car, college course, or something else you and your classmates agree on. Then collect all the narratives, and analyze them in a “committee of the whole.” Follow the general procedures discussed in the example of narrative analysis in this chapter.
3. Try out the HyperRESEARCH tutorials that you can link to on the book's Student Study Site (cdge.sagepub.com/chambliemusw6e). How might qualitative analysis software facilitate the analysis process? Might it hinder the analysis process in some ways? Explain your answers.

Ethics Questions

1. Pictures are worth a thousand words, so to speak, but is that a thousand words too many? Should qualitative researchers (like yourself) feel free to take pictures of social interaction or other behaviors anytime, anywhere? What limits should an institutional review board place on researchers' ability to take pictures of others? What if the “after” picture of the Apache children in this chapter ([Exhibit 10.8](#)) also included Captain Pratt in a military uniform?
2. Participants in social settings often “forget” that an ethnographer is in their midst, planning to record what they say and do, even when the ethnographer has announced his role. New participants may not have heard the announcement, and everyone may simply get used to the ethnographer as if he were just “one of us.” What efforts should an ethnographer take to keep people informed about his or her work in the setting under study? Consider settings such as a sports team, a political group, and a book group.

Video Interview Questions

Listen to the researcher interview for [Chapter 10](#) at cdge.sagepub.com/chambliemusw6e, found in the Video and Multimedia Section.

1. Paul Atkinson believes that researchers should consider not only what people are talking about but also “how” they are talking about a topic or concept. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
2. What are his three suggestions for dealing with narratives?