

8

Organize Data

I collected data during two distinct stages of this study, the research phase and the enactment phase. Multiple methods ensured I collected the data needed to best answer my question. These methods included (a) constructing and deconstructing a personal narrative, (b) analyzing five years of teaching evaluations, (c) collecting and analyzing student essays, (d) collecting and analyzing professor essays, and (e) developing artwork representative of both my problem and the outcome of my study.

—LaKesha Anderson (2009)
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CHAPTER DESCRIPTION

The chapter offers guidelines for organizing and managing your data, which is essential for later data analysis and transparency of your data collection: what you collect, how you collect it, and when you collect it. A template is provided to guide you through your data collection (i.e., the data you will collect before, during, and after your study). You are also asked to consider the alignment and significance of your data to your research question and the types of data your pedagogical strategies will yield.

◆ Reading this chapter will guide you in organizing your data to make your project manageable.

I remember when I was working on my dissertation. I had collected volumes of data. Feeling overwhelmed about how to organize them all and where to begin the data analysis process, I exclaimed to my husband, "I have all these data to analyze!" Ted responded with kind support, "Yes, you have data!" My dissertation advisor, Greta G. Fein, always rejoiced when she had data and exclaimed, "I love having data!" Now, I know just what she meant. I love my data too. Researchers tend to have a slobbering love affair with their data. Choose your attitude about your data and consider how privileged you are to have data to organize and analyze.