Classroom-based Research for Professional Development TESOL Electronic Village Online 2017

[Week 4: Analyzing Evidence] Activity 2 (responses)

CLICK HERE to access the online book *Teacher Researchers in Action*. Find a study which interests you and read the data analysis part. How would you answer the questions below?

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1. Which study did you choose?
2. How is the data analysed and presented (e.g. charts, figures, tables,...etc)? What calculations have been used (means, percentages, ranking, etc.)?
3. How could the data analysis and data presentation of the study you focused on guide your own classroom-based research

Now compare your answers with those provided by some participants in last year's EVO (2016):

(1)

Glenna Young

I read "Tackling Speaking Challenges..." by Gunbay and Aydemir. Open-ended student responses were categorized, tallied, and displayed as a distribution bar graph. (I thought this would be a good way for my to display student errors, as I collect them. The difficulty I foresee will be categorizing them.) The responses were further grouped into "linguistic" and "non-linguistic" factors, and again displayed as a bar graph. Student responses to a second questionnaire (students' own suggested strategies) were simply tabulated and displayed as such.

Secondly, I read "Peer Assessment as a Way of Developing Presenting Skills" by Fenek. Again, data were displayed as distribution bar graphs comparing results on four variables across 4 weeks; and comparing results of peer assessment to teacher assessment. Student self-reflections were presented as a table showing categories and percentages. Interestingly, some additional student self-reflections were simply categorized without counting frequencies: Here, the importance was seen as being in the content of the categories (e.g., the types of "likes" and "dislikes") rather than in the quantity. Reflections were displayed as a relationship map.

Finally, I read "Cross-checked Problems in Undergraduate Academic Writing" by Salim Razi. He collected student-reported difficulties with writing and compared them to lecturer-reported difficulties. He reported the results as means and averages, and displayed them as distribution bar graphs. Interesting to me in this article was that though he gathered data over 2 years and many classes (over a hundred students), he was careful to say that his classes did not represent a statistically meaningful sample. However, the data he gathered was nonetheless very useful for him in the evolution of his professional skills.

I think I am beginning to understand that since I am not trained in statistical analysis, my research will always be descriptive and not generalizable beyond my classrooms (as Ann Burns informed us in our first assigned lecture!) I'll present my data as bar graphs showing frequencies of errors before and after presenting the material on tense/aspect in a different way. I will have to see the results of the teacher reflections before I can know how to analyze/display that data. It may be, as Fenek's, valuable only for its content and not its organization or quantification.

(2)

Andrew Carlisle

I looked at three different studies and how they analyzed/presented data. I saw a few different approaches.

Tables - good for quantitative data. It was easy to visually see important ideas, trends, etc. The tables were usually accompanied by explanations/descriptions.

Description of findings. These were written in a more prose style, with the authors explaining clearly what they discovered. This seemed more helpful for qualitative data.

Lists of findings. These were helpful to see commonalities in responses to open-ended survey/interview questions or discoveries from other qualitative data, like observations.

I saw different calculations, but many employed averages, percentages, and sums.

For my own plan, I am thinking of employing some different strategies of data collection. I want to create a questionnaire seeking quantitative data. I will plan to construct tables or other graphical representations of the findings. I will probably use some percentages, especially if I find strong correlations to demographic information (for example, x% of females preferred this, but only y% of males did). I also want to collect some quantitative

data, from my own observations (real time and/or recorded) and perhaps focus groups or interviews. I could also see lists as a nice way to present important findings.

(3)

Anastasiya Zerbino

Study 1 ‘Creating a learner-centered classroom environment’. In this study the author used both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques.
In order to analyze quantitative data the author designed a questionnaire including seven questions about student-centered and teacher-centered teaching and gave it to 130 students.

With the aim of getting more qualitative data, the author created a follow-up survey with open-ended questions, which helped to find out more about learner’s ideas. Both samples (the questionnaire and the follow-up survey) are presented in two tables. The results are displayed in two charts and eight SmartArt graphic diagrams. The calculations are presented in percentage and simple numbers (number of students).

Study 2 ‘Pair and group work activities: Keep them or leave them?’ The author designed a questionnaire including five open-ended questions and gave it to 23 students to find out their attitudes. ‘The data was analyzed by being put into categories depending on their frequencies in order to be able to identify the most prevailing ones.’ (Teacher-Researchers in Action, p. 167)

All the results in the article are presented in six tables, displaying the number of students and the subject of analysis (for example, reasons for enjoying / not enjoying pair work, frequency of participation, reasons for engaging / not engaging in pair work etc.).

Study 3 ‘Peer observation: a systematic investigation for continuous professional development.’ According to the two authors of this article, the data collection consisted of a cycle of three observations per teacher. Two teachers were supposed to observe and take notes on one another’s lessons. Later on, the notes were discussed during the post observation stage. The observations of the lessons were recorded with a combination of field notes and narrative summary format. Apart from that, there was also the video of the recorded lessons for the future analysis.

'It was also decided that the students’ perceptions of the different lessons should be collated and analyzed in order to triangulate the data collection' (Teacher-Researchers in Action, p. 76)

The examples of lessons observed are presented tables, displaying the stages of the lessons, the forms of interaction used by the teachers and lesson duration. The results of the research demonstrate the qualitative data, in the form of comments and reflections coming from two different teachers.

As for my research question: ‘How can effective questioning help my students develop their interaction skills?’ I think I will analyze the data using both quantitative and qualitative research. Previously I have already mentioned that I an planning to design a questionnaire. But I think it will contain both open-ended and closed-ended questions. This approach I believe will help me to come up with more accurate results.

(4)

Teresa Lam

I have read “Exploring students’ speaking anxiety in my classroom”, “Enhancing student motivation through reflection on motivation” and “Tackling speaking challenges faced by low-level learners of English through consultation with students”. Data is mainly presented in charts (pie chart and bar chart) and tables in which similar responses generated from open-ended questions are categorized into different criteria. The calculations used in these three studies are sums and frequencies.
As for my own data analysis, at the beginning I planned to use both observational and non-observational types of data; however, after reading the three studies, I decided to focus on using questionnaire only. For closed-end questions, I will use charts to show the sums and percentages of the responses and for open-ended questions, I will categorized the responses into different factors and show the frequencies in a table.

(5)

Ida Ninni

A collaborative action research teacher development programme (Yasemin Kırkgöz) is a case study to examine the nature of each teacher’s professional development. Data were collected from interviews, collaborative meetings, lesson observations and her field notes from the teachers who voluntarily participated in the study. In particular the author offer a lesson transcript, an observation data to illustrate the effect of CAR on the participants.

Huriye Jale Güneş Coşardemir (Does keeping ‘learning diaries’ increase students’ use of learning strategies and academic success in the classroom?)designed and implemented a small-scale research project that intended to introduce students to the concepts of adopting learning strategies through the use of diaries and then analysed the effects on their success and learner autonomy. The researcher gives representative examples of diary entries to show how some students negotiated the various steps involved in developing their LLS and learner autonomy.

Akile Nazim in “Preparing students for an academic presentation” used focus groups and surveys. The students’ responses were both qualitative and quantitative. The report includes percentage.

After these readings i decided to narrow my focus on what are the real obstacles to participation of my colleagues to the blended course that I designed. I will collect non-observational data: questionnaires and discussions