

## 2.1 ANALYSIS-BREAKING DOWN; CREATING LAYERS

---

### Learning Objectives

- ❖ Appreciate the purpose for conducting analysis in academic text.
- ❖ Recognize analysis as an act of breaking down
- ❖ Recognize the importance of identifying the elements that emerge as a result of conducting an analysis of a complex whole.
- ❖ Note the different formats the analysis of text may take.
- ❖ Differentiate between lists that are derived from an analysis and those that are not.
- ❖ Extend the understanding of analysis as breaking down to incorporate the idea of analysis as creating layers of meaning.
- ❖ Recognize some specific ways of treating with the content of academic text that are extensions of the basic act of doing analysis.

## Calypso music – analysis in the calypso

We start off this unit by listening to the calypso, *Calypso Music*, composed and sung by the Trinidad and Tobago calypsonian, David Rudder. If you have never heard it before, you should listen to it at least twice. In the first instance, you should try to get a sense of the message it is conveying. Then after you think you have a good enough grasp of its content, listen again and try to answer the question, “Where is the analysis in this calypso?”

**Click on the link on the course page to begin listening.**



**Figure 2.1 - David Rudder Album**

We will return to this calypso later in the Unit.

Analysis starts with the recognition that some content is complex, and, in order for readers to be able to extract the totality of its meaning, it must be pulled apart to reveal the constituent parts that contribute to the meaning of the whole.

## Analysis - breaking down into component parts

This understanding of analysis is reflected in the definition of 'analyze' found in the merriam-webster.com online dictionary which states as follows:

*To analyse is to divide a complex whole into its parts or elements;  
(it) suggests separating or distinguishing the component parts of  
something.*

An analysis therefore involves a whole that is complex, in that it comprises many interrelated parts. These parts are often referred to as constituent or component parts: they are the items or elements that make up the whole. The purpose of doing an analysis therefore is to separate and make visible the individual parts that are embedded in the complex whole.



**Figure 2.2 – Breaking down complex whole into constituent parts**

The idea of analysis as breaking down is easily recognized when the component parts or dimensions appear as a series of items or elements. Following are two examples:

**Extract 2.1***Eight Essential Components of Communication*

In order to better understand the communication process, we can break it down into a series of eight essential components:

1. Source
2. Message
3. Channel
4. Receiver
5. Feedback
6. Environment
7. Context
8. Interference

Each of these eight components serves an integral function in the overall process. Let's explore them one by one.

**Source**

The source imagines, creates, and sends the message. In a public speaking situation, the source is the person giving the speech. He or she conveys the message by sharing new information with the audience ...

**Message**

"The message is the stimulus or meaning produced by the source for the receiver or audience". When you plan to give a speech or write a report, your message may seem to be only the words you choose that will convey your meaning. But that is just the beginning ...

In the extract above, the whole is the *communication process*, and its component parts are the eight items listed. Authors recognize that, most of the time, it is not enough to simply name the component parts: additional information is required to ensure that readers grasp the complete meaning of the constituent elements. In this instance therefore, the authors go on to explain

each component. The point to be noted here is that authors typically provide additional information to convey the full meaning of the component.

A similar approach of creating a list to reveal component parts applies in this second extract.

### Extract 2.2

Table 1.1 [not given here] shows a straightforward comparison of traditional and e-learning skills. Many of the individual skills can be broken down into a variety of sub- or related skills, for example:

1. Reading skills: browsing/scanning skills (particularly important when using the world wide web to locate relevant websites);
2. Writing: summarising the key points; referencing information; keeping records;
3. Research skills: searching skills are essentially a part of research skills

It is very clear that this segment of text is intended to serve an analysis of traditional and e-learning skills. The author actually uses the phrase 'broken down into' to draw attention to the act of analyzing a complex whole. Moreover, the prefix sub-, when added to 'skills' is another indicator that the items listed are a part of, that is, components of the preceding skills.

It should be noted though that the act of breaking down need not necessarily generate a list as the items may simply be incorporated into the paragraph as is the case in the following extract:

### Extract 2.3

Like most tourism products, [visitor] attractions comprise three parts – the core product, the tangible product and the augmented product. All of these components are seen as a continuum, with the basic benefits at one end and the add-ons at the other, with the intent that the visitors are given an unforgettable 'wow' experience (Hudson 2008).

The core product is the main benefit sought by the customer. In terms of visitor attractions, this is often the atmosphere or imagescape. Imagescape themes for visitors are wide and ranging

and focus on history and heritage, transport, science and technology, war, entertainment, the natural and physical worlds, society and culture, politics and so on.

Wanhill (2008, 19) believes that the 'right imagescape has four main elements, namely entertainment, education, aesthetics and escapism and these are embodied in all truly successful visitor attractions, be they theme parks in the private domain or heritage attractions in the non-commercial sector'. As can be seen from Figure 4.2, the tangible aspect of the attraction specifies the features and benefits residing in the attraction itself (safety, service delivery, on-site attractions). The augmented imagescape works to ensure that the visitor has a totally satisfying experience by adding facilities such as catering and retailing, car parking ... and so on (Hudson 2008).

As was the case in Extracts 2.1 and 2.2, additional information is provided here to ensure that readers grasp the full meaning of the components. Another important feature of this exercise is that the components that emerge as a result of the breaking down are all interrelated: there is a necessary connection between and among them linked as they are to the same overarching complex whole.

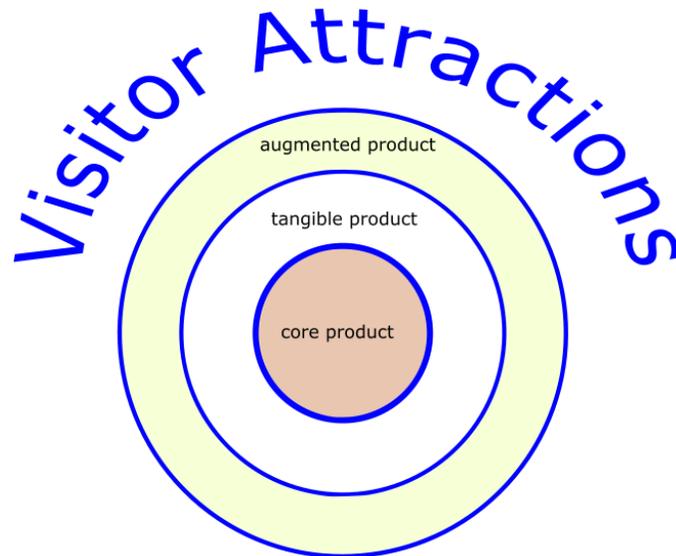


Figure 2.3 – Interrelated components of complex whole

## Not every list based on analysis

While the list is a typical vehicle for presenting the components arising from the analysis of a complex idea, one should be careful not to treat every list of items as if it is the result of an analysis. Consider the following two extracts:

### Extract 2.4

The major current and future technical training needs identified in this study were,

- Culinary skills
- Tour guiding
- Food and beverage service skills
- Maintenance related skills

The following recommendations are made to address these technical skills deficiencies.

- Culinary skills  
*Culinary skills training, and in particular, chef training, remain the most critical technical skills deficiency in the Caribbean tourism industry. ...*

These skills were identified after a study had been conducted to determine the areas of work in which staff were not functioning at the expected standard. As a result of that study, it was recommended that staff be trained to upgrade their skills in the areas listed. These skills are not elements emerging from an analysis of

the phrase 'technical training needs'. In other words they did not arise out of a breaking down of the phrase itself. Consequently, they cannot be considered as being embedded or inherent in the idea of technical training needs.

Let's review a second extract.

### Extract 2.5

In most traditional learning environments (e.g. colleges and training centres) the tutor is probably the most important component in the students' learning experience. They provide the critical elements of

- Support – providing help when things go wrong or to prevent errors;
- Direction – explaining what the key issues are in understanding the subject;
- Explanation – providing feedback on progression and advice on what is good practice
- ....

What this list contains are several activities that tutors typically undertake as they assist their students. The author does not present these 'critical elements' as if they are embodied in a single more complex idea. This is therefore not an example of breaking down into constituent parts. It simply lists the functions that a tutor is required to undertake.

Through analysis, authors break down, open up and pull apart complex ideas to allow readers to get a fuller picture of all that the idea entails.

## Analysis – creating layers of meaning

As a complement to the notion of analysis as breaking down into constituent parts, you may find it useful to consider the exercise as one in which authors create layers of meaning.

Let us review the three examples above to see how this works.

In *Extract 2.1* the analysis of the phrase *communication process* yields eight components that constitute a lower level of information. Each of these components contributes a specific meaning to the complex idea that is the *communication process*. The authors go further and provide explanations of each component. In the process, they have generated yet another layer of meaning.

This pattern is repeated in *Extract 2.2*. The brief notes accompanying each of the sub-skills (reading skills, writing, research skills etc.) serve to clarify the author's understanding of each of these terms. Thus 'browsing/scanning' is an example of the reading sub-skill and 'summarising key points' an example of writing skills.

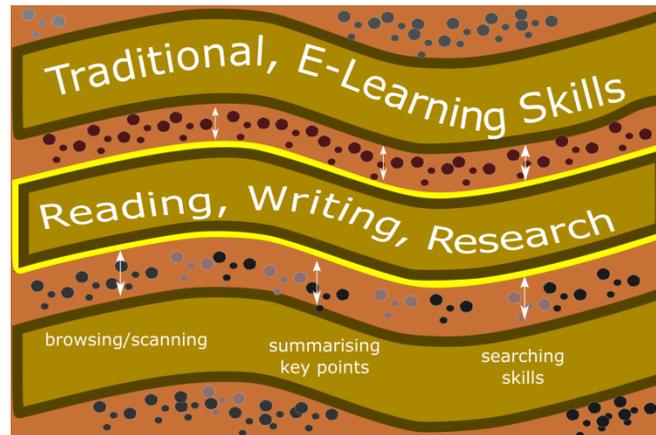


Figure 2.4 – Analysis – creating layers of meaning

In the case of *Extract 2.3*, the second lower level provides concrete examples of each of the three constituent parts (or products) that comprise visitor attractions.

In addition to the idea of breaking down into constituent parts, analysis may also be viewed as the creation of several interconnected layers, with the lower layer(s) illuminating the meaning of the upper layer(s).

This dual interpretation of what analysis entails provides readers with the opportunity to fully experience the breadth and depth of the content they engage with.

### Classify, compare/contrast, distinguish/differentiate

As an extension of the approach outlined above, authors also engage in a form of analysis that entails looking at the components they identify in relation to one another, in order to highlight those features that show similarities or differences. When authors classify, compare/contrast, distinguish and differentiate, they are essentially engaging in the exercise of analysis, breaking down a complex idea into its component parts. However, at this extended level, they do not leave it up to the readers to recognize the relationship among the parts. Rather, they consider it important to specify the nature of the relationship whether in terms of similarities or differences. Following are two examples.

**Extract 2.6****Typology of events:**

Events can be classified on the basis of size and type. In terms of size, common categories are hallmark events, mega-events, major events and local/community events. ...

Some hallmark events in the Caribbean include Carnival in Trinidad and Junkanoo in The Bahamas.

Whereas hallmark events tend to become synonymous with a place, mega-events are those events that affect whole economies and have global reach and appeal. These events command significant media coverage and attract large numbers of tourists. Events in this category include the Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup and Commonwealth Games. The main difference between mega-events and major events is the scale of the event. The latter attracts significant local interest, large numbers of participants and generates substantial tourism revenue. Two major events in the Caribbean are the CARIFTA Games and the recently held Top Gear Festival in Barbados. On the other hand, local/community events target mainly local audiences and are organized primarily for the enjoyment of locals. The Nine Mornings Festival in St. Vincent and the Fisherman's Day in Guadeloupe are examples of events with a local scope in the Caribbean.

In addition to the size of the event, another classification is the type of the event. The most notable types of events are sporting events, business events and festivals ....

This extract is a clear example of classification: events are classified, that is, placed into categories, according to size and type. Within the classification, note that the author not only provides examples of the respective components of size and type respectively, but also contrasts the components to highlight their differences. Note also the use of the phrase ‘on the other hand’ that signals that what is to follow is being contrasted with what when before it.

Figure 2.5 graphically organizes this information to show both vertical and horizontal relationships among the constituent elements. What is also evident is that the analysis has yielded layers of meaning with each layer providing greater insight about the one preceding it.

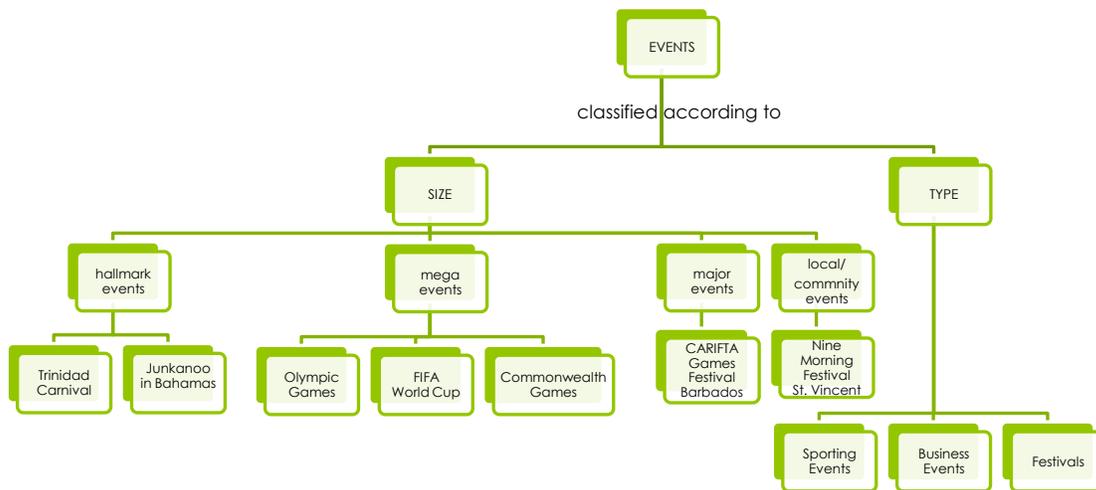


Figure 2.5 - Classification – Breaking down to show both Vertical and Horizontal Relationships

**Extract 2.7**

According to a Caribbean Tourism Organization report on Soft Adventure Tourism in 2006, the Caribbean attracts two types of soft adventure travellers – the mainstream traveller and the high-end soft adventurer. The mainstream travellers tend to range between the ages 25-50. They require high levels of health and safety and are interested in high thrill but low exertion activities ... On the other hand, the high end soft adventurers are more affluent, mainly Continental Europeans who are more sophisticated travellers expecting higher quality, uniqueness, and higher levels of authenticity than their mainstream/mass traveller counterparts. The

average age range of high-end soft adventurers is 40 years old. These adventurers are more likely to explore while on holidays than their North American counterparts partially due to the average length of stay being 10-14 days as opposed to four to five days for their North American counterpart.

Not only does the author breakdown the idea of 'soft adventure traveler' into two types, but sets up the description of each type in a manner intended to contrast the two. The attributes or characteristics of each type are selected and arranged to show how each differs from the other. In addition phrases like 'on the other hand', 'more ... than' and 'as opposed to' are appropriately used to influence the reader to see one type as being different from the other.

As noted earlier, in these forms of analysis, the author goes the additional step to specify how the components relate to one another, whether through their similarities or their differences.

Beyond this basic approach, analysis is conducted for specific purposes. The sections that follow focus on these advanced forms of analysis.

## Key Takeaways

### ❖ Analysis entails

- breaking down a complex idea into its component parts,
- providing additional information, to broaden understanding of each component
- This additional information may take the form of explanations, descriptions or further analysis,

❖ As a complement to the breaking-down idea, analysis may also be viewed as an exercise in creating layers of meaning.

❖ There is an interconnectedness between the layers with each lower layer shedding light on the one preceding it.

❖ In an additional approach to basic analysis, authors arrange the components to show the relationship among them.

**Please note that there is just one test at the end of the Unit**