# Exercise 3.2: Try It Out

Segment the following text by t-unit and then move it into Excel or MaxQDA. Make sure to number and label the segments if necessary. Compare your results with others in your class.

The language people speak or write becomes research data only when we transpose it from the activity in which it originally functioned to the activity in which we are analysing it. This displacement depends on such processes as task-construction, interviewing, transcription, selection of materials, etc., in which the researcher's efforts shape the data. Because linguistic and cultural meaning, which is what we are ultimately trying to analyse, is always highly context-dependent, researcher-controlled selection, presentation, and recontextualisation of verbal data is a critical determinant of the information content of the data. Data is only analysable to the extent that we have made it a part of our meaning-world, and to that extent it is therefore always also data about us. Selection of discourse samples is not governed by random sampling. Discourse events do not represent a homogeneous population of isolates which can be sampled in the statistical sense. Every discourse event is unique. Discourse events are aggregated by the researcher for particular purposes and by stated criteria. There are as many possible principles of aggregation as there are culturally meaningful dimensions of meaning for the kind of discourse being studied.

For discussion: What issues did you have to resolve to do this segmenting?