



## 4.3 Interpretation

When you have identified significant relations in the object you are analysing, you will then have to think about the importance and meaning of these relations.

As shown above, in your analysis, these relations will have been identified in terms of similarity, correlation, difference, opposition, contradiction, anomaly, and so on. Your analysis will also have identified significant themes and lines of thought represented by words and phrases.

You will now need to ***speculate about the possible significance and meaning of these. This is known as interpretation.***

**This is equivalent to asking the question: 'SO WHAT?'**

Aspects of interpretation include the following overlapping but discrete terms:

**Inference**

**implication**

**meaning**

### (i) Inference

***To infer something is to arrive at a conclusion*** based on information provided in the premises, which are assumed to be true.

(We have previously discussed inference in terms of inference indicators which are used to signal an argument).

- (i) All T cells studied so far have been shown to have characteristic A.
- (ii) Investigation has shown that wherever characteristic A is present, characteristic B can also be found.
- (iii) After examination, this new cell is found to be a T cell with characteristic A.
- (iv) Therefore, this cell probably has characteristic B.

Here, the relations of 'similarity' and 'correlation' have been used to infer a *probable* conclusion.

***The significance of this finding will only make sense in relation to the research question or questions which are driving the analysis.***



**(ii) Implications**

“The relationship holding between two propositions in which one is logically deducible from the other.” (This is a copied definition – so, needs to be paraphrased.)

**(iii) Significance**

Having reached certain conclusions by a process of inference, and then perhaps putting some of these inferences together to establish some implications, it will now be necessary to consider how important these are. This will be done considering

***Their significance in relation to the research question which you have posed: and what has already been done so far in the area...***