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In the Name of God

Research Methods in Applied Linguistics (1)

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Research Methods in Applied Linguistics (1)

A 2-credit course in English Translation Field; to be offered in 8th semester.

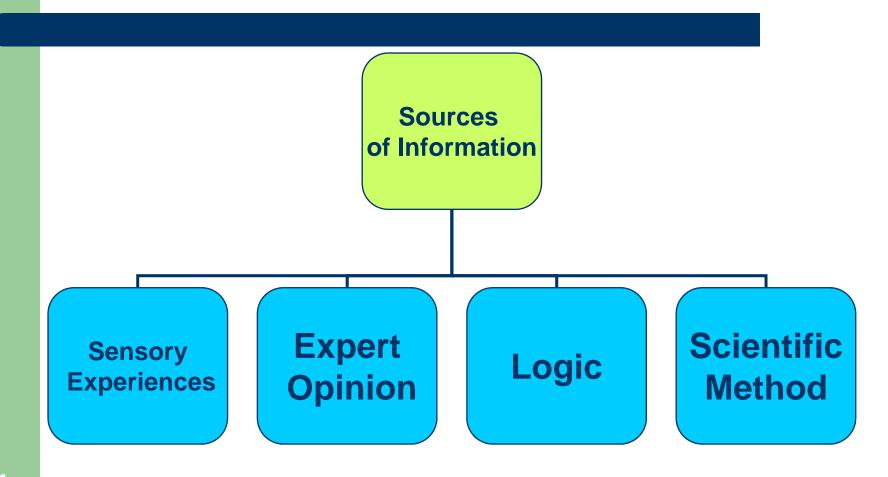
Chapter 1 : Background Introduction

Knowledge: A body of facts and hypotheses that enables one to understand phenomena and to solve problems

- Why did the early man progress slowly
 - 1 unreliable information; metaphysical explanation
 - 2 difficulties in transferring the information from one generation to the next

(1-1) Sources of Information

Chapter 1



(1-1) Sources of Information

Chapter 1

(1- 1-1) Sensory Experiences:

The accumulation of information through senses from one's personal experiences

- availability: good
- dependability: doubtful; needs verification
- cannot be accepted readily; multiple sensation better

(1-1) Sources of Information

Chapter 1

- (1-1-2) Expert Opinion: eg. An authority in a specific field; or beliefs inherited by tradition
 - better, but still subjective in nature, so not to be accepted as facts and should be subjected to empirical investigations
 - disagreement between authorities,
 eg. different language teaching methods

(1-1) Sources of information

Chapter 1

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(1-1-3) Logic:
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- a) Deduction (Aristotle)
 major + minor premise = conclusion
 - 1) All men are moral.
- 2 Ali is a man.
- 3 Ali is moral
- **b) Induction** (Frances Bacon) from many different instances to a general law
- a compromise between the two better

(1-1) Sources of information

Chapter 1

(1-1-4) Scientific Method:

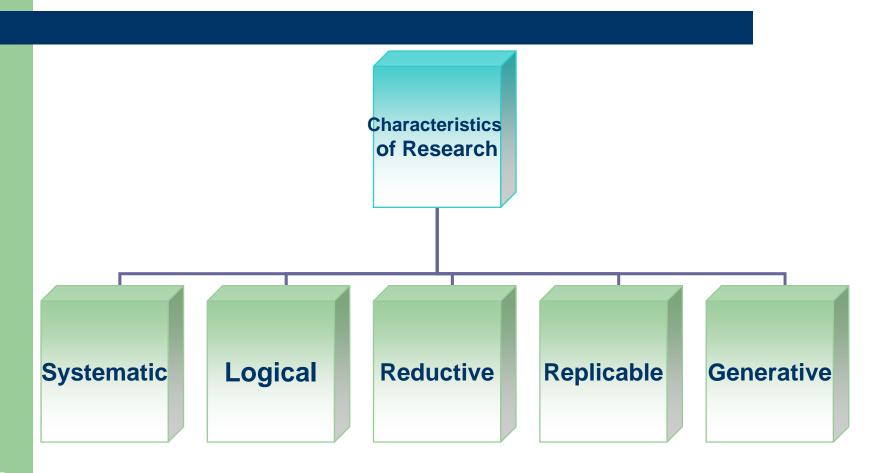
based on Logical Positivism; objectivity; examining only directly observable phenomena

- both in social and natural science
- Positivism: not very successful in studying human behavior
- Post (new) Positivism: Research is a systematic approach to answering questions.

4 - Some differences between social and natural sciences

- 1- repeatability of the phenomena
- 2 objectivity of the data
- Which one is more probabilistic, then?

Chapter Two: Principles of Research



(2-1) Characteristics of Research Chapter Two

- (2-1-1) systematic: It is based on pre-established rules and regulations; following the principles of:
 - a) constancy: Some phenomena do not change their basic characteristics in a given period of time.
 - b) uniformity: There are commonalities between the members of one class.

Characteristics of Research Chapter Two

(2-1-2) Research is Logical:

Logic is employed at every step of research especially regarding the premises and the language and its interpretation and in making conclusions and generalizations.

Characteristics of Research Chapter Two

(2-1-3) Research is Reductive

- a) Conceptual: Making generalizations; not checking all the instances
- b) Practical: The findings of researchers are transferred to other researchers avoiding repetition; accumulative; additive

Characteristics of Research

Chapter Two

(2-1-4) Replicable: repeating the same study with another group for in a different situation further confirmation

Possibilities:

- a) If agreement, that's O.K
- b) If partial agreement, seek justification
- c) If contradiction, do more and more replication

Characteristics of Research

Chapter Two

(2-1-5) Research is Generative:

- unexpected situations arise leading to new questions when answering the original one.
- A part of research report is suggestion for further studies.
- Generativity of research implies that there is no end to research.

(2-2) Kinds of Research Chapter Two

Kind of Research Confirmatory **Exploratory**

(2-2) Kinds of Research

Chapter Two

Kind:

- a) Confirmatory: partial or complete replication of previous research; more common in language studies
- **b) Exploratory**: for studying an unknown phenomenon; more common before, more difficult, sometimes based on trial and error

(2-3) Methods of Research Chapter Two

Method of Research

Pure

Applied

(2-3) – Methods of Research

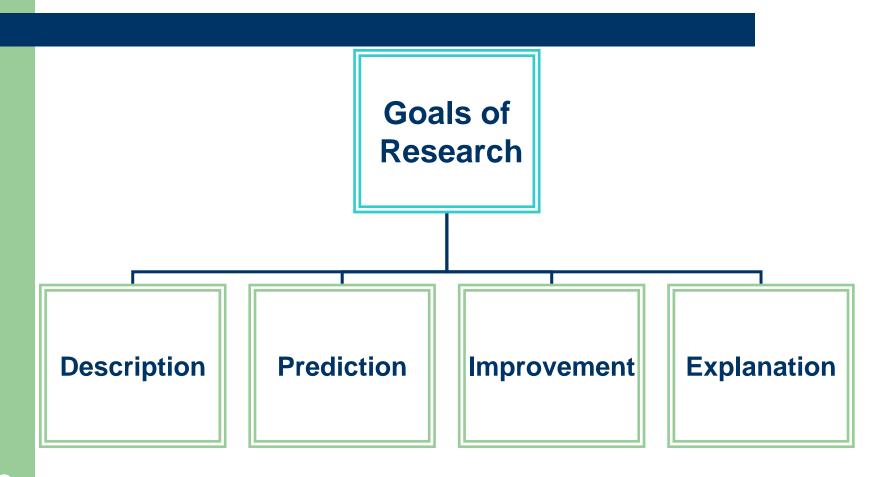
Chapter Two

Method:

- a) Pure: research for the sake of research eg. nuclear power, Chomsky's studies
- b) Applied :uses the findings of pure research
- eg. sociolinguistics ,language teaching
- responsible for the good or evil of the findings

(2-4) Goals of Research

Chapter Two



(2-4) Goals of Research

Chapter Two

- (2-4-1) **Description**: eg. Language acquisition; functions of language
- (2-4-2) Prediction: eg. L1 development : babbling, one-word, two-word, telegraphic speech
- (2-4-3) Improvement: eg. In language instruction or method
- (2-4-4) Explanation: eg. Language achievement or failure; making more holistic generalization

(2-5) Steps in conducting research

Chapter Two

(2-5-1) Forming a research question:

Hypothesis; review of literature; refining and modifying the question + variables

(2-5-2) Selecting an appropriate method : research design, relation between variables

(2-5) Steps in conducting research

Chapter Two

(2-5-3) Hypothesis Testing: involving data collection + data analysis using statistics + interpretation of results

(2-5-4) Preparing the research report: to share the findings with others

Section Two: Formulating Research Question

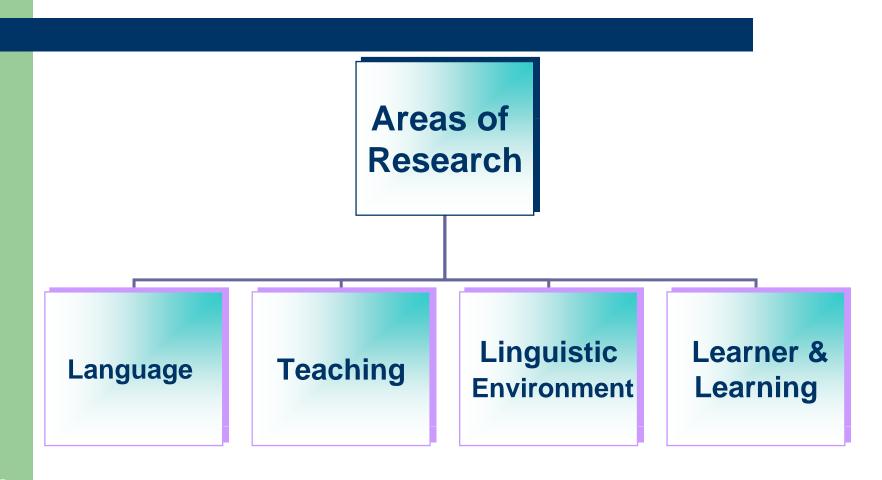
Three Steps

- 1 Determine an area of research
- 2 Formulate a research question within the area
- 3 Identify the parameters and characteristics of the question

Chapter 3 : Areas of Research in Language Education

- (3-1) Teaching
- (3-2) Language
- (3-3) Linguistic environment (Sociology)
- (3-4) Learner and Learning (psychology)

Areas of Research in Language Education Chapter 3



(3-1) Questions in Linguistics

chapter 3

- language description based on different theories
- components of language: syntax, semantics, pragmatics, discourse, phonology, morphology
- language acquisition L1 vs. L2
- Contrastive Analysis (CA), Error Analysis (EA)

(3-2) Questions in Teaching Methodology chapter 3

- **© Curriculum development**: time to start language teaching; length; intensity of the program
- **syllabus design and material development**: the content of courses; selection and sequencing
- **teacher training**: pre-service and in-service training
- teaching methods
- **evaluation and assessment system**

(3-3) Questions on factors influencing TEFL chapter 3

(3-3-1) Cognitive Factors: Process, style, strategy; cognitive styles

(eg. field dependent vs.; field independent) transfer; interference; overgeneralization left- vs. right-hemisphere dominance

3-3 Questions on factors influencing TEFL chapter 3

(3-3-2) Affective Factors:

self-esteem, inhibition, anxiety (facilitative vs debilitative); motivation (integrative vs instrumental), personality types (eg. introversion vs. extroversion)

3-3 Questions on factors influencing TEFL chapter 3

(3-3-3) Social Factors: use vs. usage; Schumann's Acculturation Model; attitude vs. motivation (Gardner and Lambert 1972)

(3-4) Other related questions chapter 3

- (3-4-1) Questions in Language and Literature readability and text simplification (word vs. structure), culture load of the texts
- (3-4-2) Questions in language and technology programmed instructions (unsuccessful); mechanical and computerized lab. computerized dictionary and audio-visual aids

(3-4) Other related questions chapter 3

(3-4-3) Questions in language and politics

- policy making; coining new words
- deciding on first second, and foreign language (= language planning);
- developing appropriate equivalents

Chapter 4: The Research Question

- 1 **Introduction**: the problem of how to start
 The professors can give advice but should not give
 topics to the students because:
 - a) This stage is an important part of doing research for which the students need practice.
 - b) The professors' areas of interest may differ from the students'.

(4-1) Characteristics of a good research question Chapter 4

- (4-1-1) within the domain of the interest of the researcher
- (4-1-2) relevance of the topic to the benefits of the society and the immediate environment
- (4-1-3) manageability of the topic in terms of facilities, time, cost and social and educational limitations

(4-2) Narrowing down a topic Chapter 4

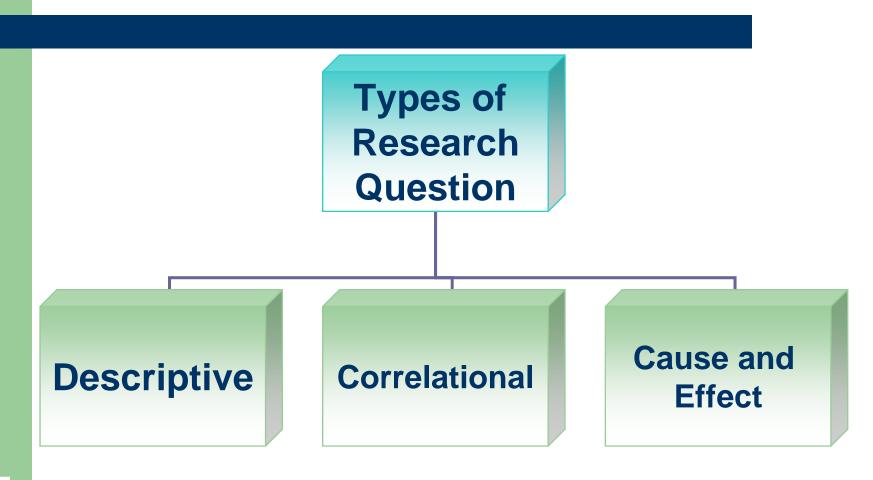
- Through reading and thinking about the topic to make it clear, to the point and manageable
- Avoid qualitative words such as how, effective, etc.

Eg. Compare:

- 1 How do people acquire their native language?
- 2 In what order does an Iranian child acquire speaking Farsi?

(4-3)Types of Research question

chapter 4



(4-3)Types of Research question

chapter 4

- a) Descriptive: eg. Frequency of errors; duration or intensity of a program; sequence of acquisition of a phenomenon
 - It is concerned with who, when, what, and where of an even or behavior

(4-3)Types of Research question

chapter 4

- b) Correlational: the degree of relationship between two or more factors eg. Between skills and components; between traits and achievement
- c) Cause-Effect: causal relationship: the effect of A on B eg. A certain strategy or method on achievement

(4-4) Forming a Hypothesis chapter 4

- **Hypothesis**: a tentative answer to a question. It is a kind of generalization about the relationship between two or more factors.
- a) null=nondirectional: No relationship is predicted.
- b) alternative or directional: A relationship between two factors is predicted.

Chapter Five : Review of the Related Literature

Relevant questions

- 1 How comprehensive should the review be?
- 2 How many sources are sufficient?
- 3 What kind of materials qualify for the task?
- 4 Where should one get relevant materials?
 - 5 How should the materials be read or covered?

(5-1) Goals of literature review:

- A) to put the topic within a scientific perspective
- B) to reformulate and modify the research question
- C) to avoid mere duplication of previous research
 - D) to pinpoint the pitfalls of the previous research and attempt to remedy them

(5-2) Hints when doing literature review:

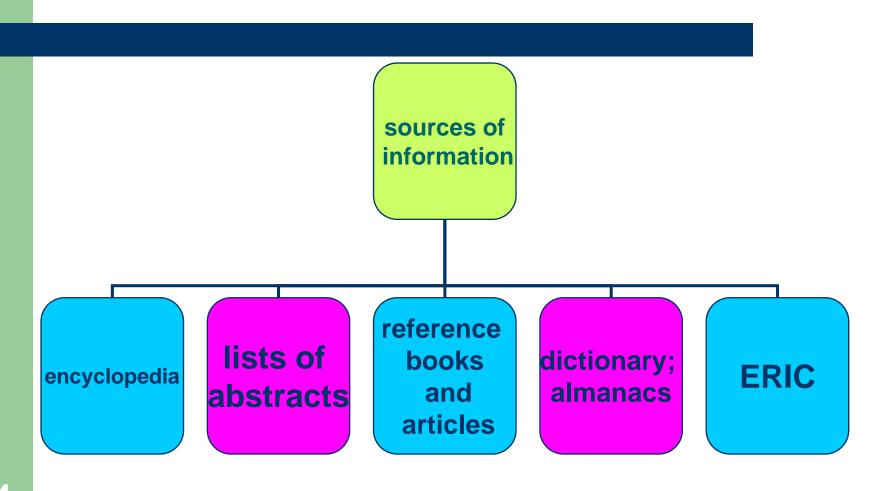
Chapter Five

Be selective in reading; read only more relevant materials

focus on three aspects of the previous research

- 1 theory: from which hypotheses are generated .
- 2 method: subjects, data collection, design, procedure, statistical analyses
 - 3 data analysis

(5-2) Finding the sources of information



(5-2) Finding the sources of information

- A) encyclopedia: eg. Britannica, Americana: to get general overview
- **B)** lists of abstracts: MA, Ph.D. dissertations, book abstracts etc.
- C) reference books and articles: key (=most relevant) authors, topics, and studies

(5-3) Finding the sources of information

- **D) dictionary; almanacs** (published every year giving information on various subjects), year books, educational handbooks, statistical information published by different organizations, book reviews and periodicals(most important and up- to- date)
- **E) ERIC**: Educational Resource Information Center (Internet)

(5-4) More to do in Literature Review

- 1 Reading and organizing the materials
- 2 Recording the bibliographical information
 - full name of the author
 - full title of the document
 - place, publisher, and the date of publication
 - the page number from which the information is extracted

(5-4) More to do in Literature Review Chapter Five

3 – Taking Notes from the Material

- A) Use direct questions rarely; make paraphrase
- B) Take note of even seemingly unimportant things
- C) keep notes in files and organized
- D) Be comprehensive, taking all sides, pros and cons into account

(5-5) Documenting the Source Chapter Five

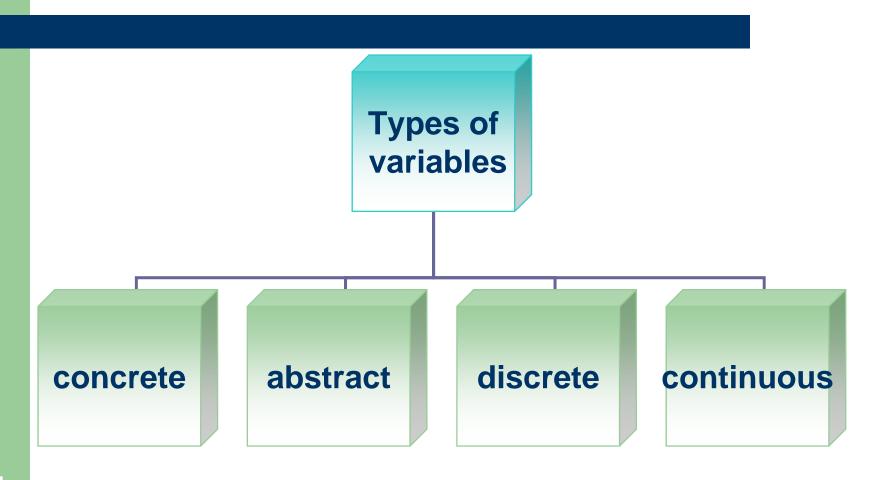
Two Styles

- (5-5-1) MLA: (Modern Language Association): the date of publication at the end; capitalizing the first letters of the title
- (5-5-2) APA: (American Psychological Association) the date after the author's name; only the first letter of the first word in the title is capitalized

Chapter 6: Characteristics of a Variable

- (6-1) **Definition of a variable**: an attribute changing from one setting to another
- (6-2) Different types of variables
 - a) concrete: eg. height (objectively measured)
 - b) abstract: eg. happiness (subjectively measured)
 - c) discrete: of all or nothing eg. left handedness, nationality
 - d) continuous: eg. intelligence

Different Types of Variables Chapter 6



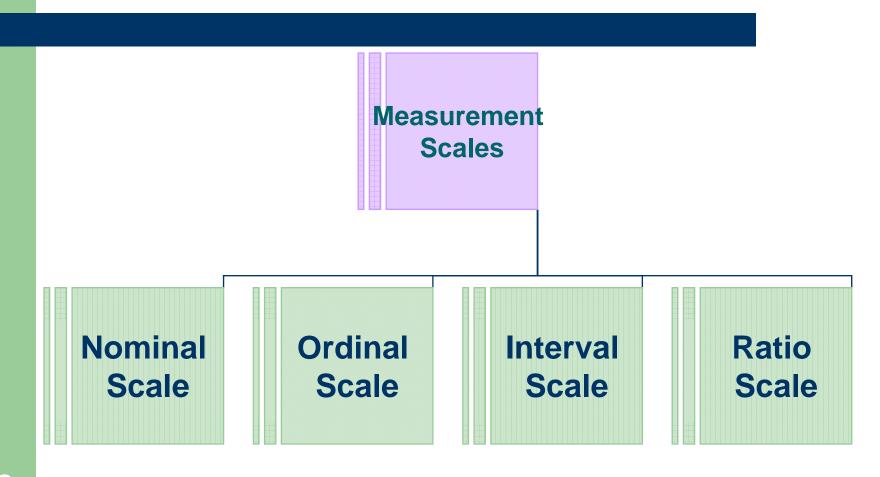
Characteristics of a Variable Chapter 6:

(6-3) definition of a variable

- a) Theoretical: Any variable operates within some sort of theoretical framework.
 - eg. communicative ability may be defined differently by different theories
- b) Operational: in terms of its measurable characteristics eg. class participation and achievement

(6-4) Measurement Scales of Variables

Chapter 6



(6-4) Measurement Scales of Variables Chapter 6

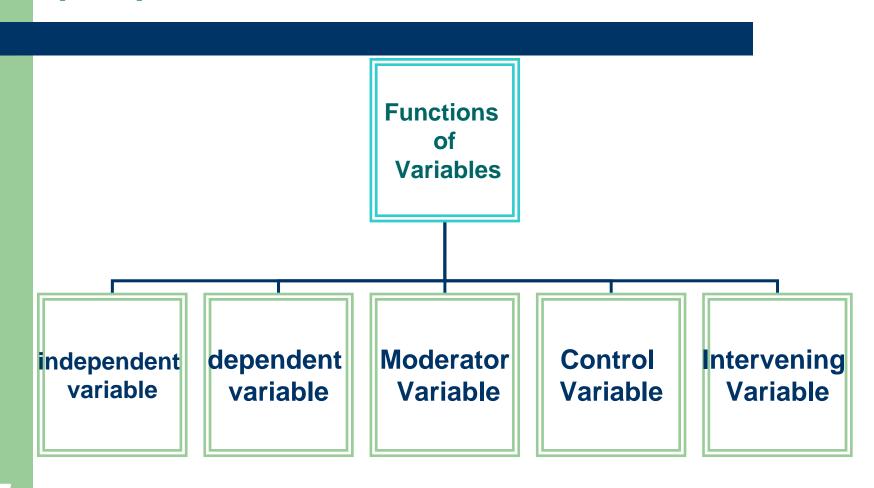
(6-4-1) Nominal Scale: numbers lack mathematical value, just naming eg. Discrete variables like nationality, age (6-4-2) Ordinal Scale: rank ordering, with mathematical values without equal distance between the ranks eg. in football, or in Konkoor

(6-4) Measurement Scales of Variables Chapter 6

- (6-4-3) Interval Scale: equal distance between the ranks which have mathematical value; eg. scores on tests in social sciences
- (6-4-4) Ratio Scale: with true or absolute zero and negative values eg. temperature in natural science

(6-5) Convertability of Measurement Scales Chapter 6

- from interval to ordinal or nominal possible not vice versa eg. rank order correlation
- the role and function of a variable are important factors in determining the desired kind of measurement scale



- (6-6-1) independent variable: selected and manipulated by researcher eg. method of instruction
- (6-6-2) dependent variable: measured to see the effect of independent variable eg. achievement

(6-6-3) Moderator Variable: is another variable which can affect the outcome of the research eg. sex, but unlike independent variable it cannot be manipulated.

(6-6-4) <u>Control Variable</u>: remain constant to neutralize its potential effect eg. nationality
(6-6-5) <u>Intervening Variable</u>: Not controllable, nor measurable, nor observable eg. psychological factors involved

Variable functions are research dependent:

the function of a variable can vary from one research to another

eg. Proficiency can be dependent or independent or control or moderator in different studies.

Section Three:

Selecting an Appropriate Research Method

Chapter 7: Historical Method of Research

Why Historical research: understanding of present state needs studying its origins, developments and modifications and the factors contributing to such processes eg. present teaching methods; materials; translation styles

Historical Method of Research Chapter 7

■ Historical research vs. Review of Literature:

Historical research involves testing a hypothesis while literature review is a report of what others have done to consolidate a position on an issue.

(7-1) Historical Method of Research

Chapter 7

Which one studies what is left from the previously living subjects; historical research or review of literature?

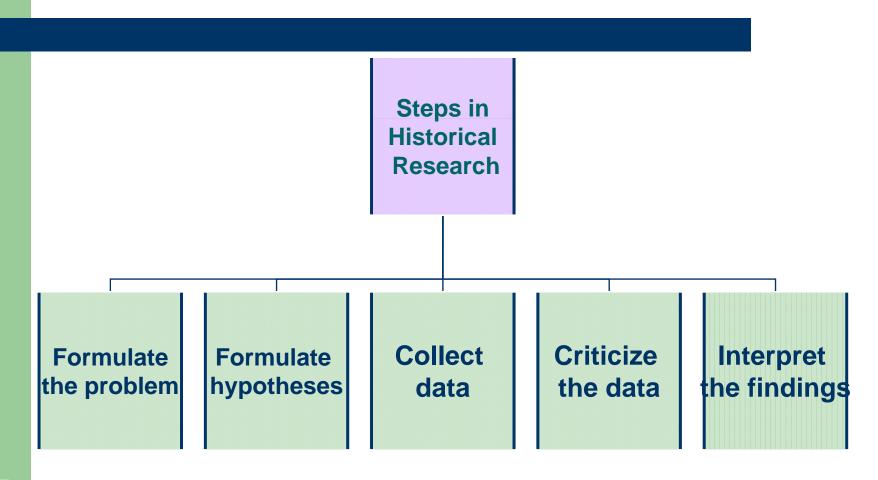
a criticism against historical research:

Controlling variables is impossible so making generalizations is rather difficult.

(7-2) Advantages and Purposes of Historical Research Chapter 7

- 1 finding solutions for the present problems rooted in the past
- 2 making suggestions for future affaires based on the findings
- 3 cause and effect of different factors in different cultures
- 4 reevaluating the data which are the basis for certain hypotheses, theories or generalizations

(7-3) Steps in conducting Historical Research Chapter 7

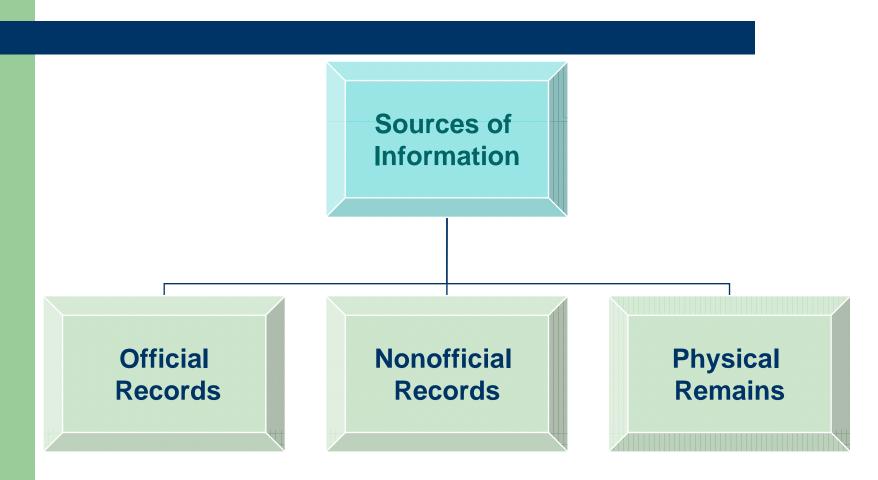


(7-3) Steps in conducting Historical Research Chapter 7

- 1 Formulate the problem.
- 2 Formulate hypotheses to explain the events.
- 3 Collect data.
- 4 Criticize the data.
- 5 Interpret the findings.

(7-4) Sources of Information

Chapter 7



(7-4) Sources of Information Chapter 7

- (7-4-1) Official Records: eg. laws, reports, proceedings, decrees
- (7-4-2) Nonofficial Records: eg. diaries, personal records, oral traditions
- (7-4-3) Physical Remains: eg. building, facilities, manuscript
- Primary (first hand) Vs. Secondary (Second hand) Source
- The eyewitness for the primary source is not necessarily alive.

(7-5) Criticizing the Document Chapter 7

- (7-5-1) External Criticism (= authenticity), genuineness.
 - the question of "Did something really happen?"
 - tests of handwriting, scripts, type, spelling, language usage, available knowledge

(7-5) Criticizing the Document

Chapter 7

(7-5-2) Internal Criticism (= truthfulness) evaluation of the accuracy and truthfulness of the content of the document.

■ What is **Bias** and how can it be avoided?

(7-6) Some advice to check internal validity or accuracy Chapter 7

- (7-6-1) obtaining information about the knowledge and competence of the author
- (7-6-2) examining the time elapse between the event and the creation of the document
- (7-6-3) being careful about the bias and the motive of the writer

(7-6) Some advice to check internal validity or accuracy Chapter 7

- (7-6-4) cross-validation of the data: to check agreement between what one said and what others said
- eg. a report about education in ancient Rome pp:140-141

More examples: investigating extinct animals like dinosaurs, or geographical changes, wars and some other social events like revolutions or social reforms

Chapter 8 : Descriptive Method of Research

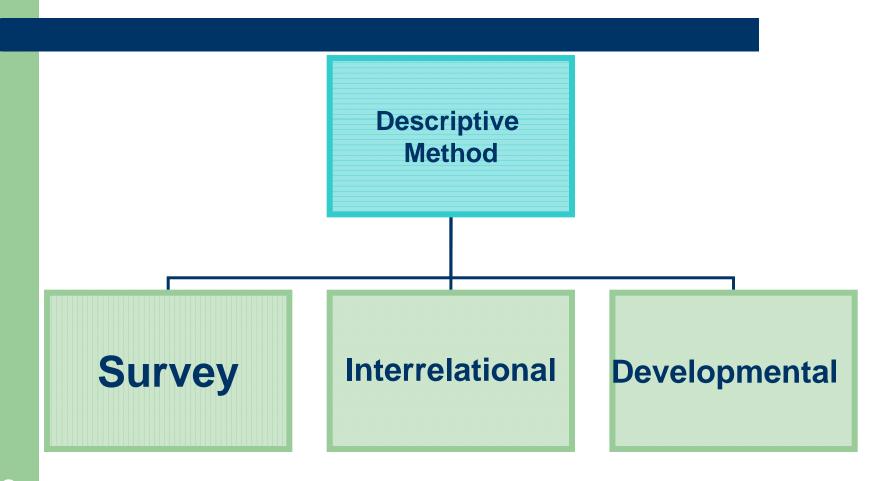
very useful and versatile in educational setting

- 1 most useful in applied Linguistics
- 2 has variety of techniques to suit every research question

Three Major Groups for Descriptive Method:

- 1 Survey
- 2 Interrelational
- 3 Developmental

Descriptive Method of Research



Chapter 8

Intentions of survey:

- A) describing the nature of existing conditions
- B) identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared
- C) attempting to determine the potential relationship between two conditions

Chapter 8

Types of Survey

school

social or community

public opinion

Chapter 8

Types of Survey:

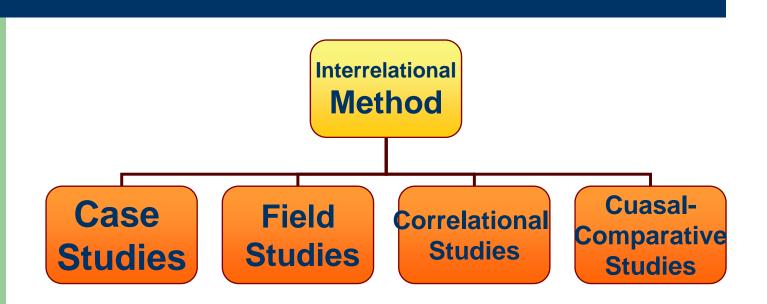
(8-1-1) school: eg. settings of learning, characteristics of educational personnel and the system, nature of students, the learning process, teachers, motivation, teaching methods, tests etc.

Chapter 8

(8-1-2) social or community survey:
eg. health, employment, minority groups
(8-1-3) public opinion: people's preferences through opinion polls, interest to political and industrial organizations

- Three types of information can be obtained from the respondents in a survey:
 - 1 Facts: sociological or demographic information
 eg. sex , age , race , income , education –
 all are verifiable
 - **2 opinion**: feelings, preferences, likes, dislikes (unverifiable)
 - 3 behavior eg. frequency of an activity (verifiable)

- Instruments which can be used in survey for data collection:
 - 1 Questionnaire
 - 2 Interviews
 - 3 observations etc



- (8-2-1) Case Study: an intensive investigation of a social unit eg. speech therapy
 - similar to survey but more intensive and less extensive; narrower in scope but more exhaustive and qualitative in nature
 - good for making hypothesis not making generalizations about the population

- (8-2-2) Field Study: involves direct observation of naturally occurring events; requires direct observation
- A Natural Event: one that is not created, sustained, or discontinued solely for the sake of research, hence called Naturalistic Method too.

Chapter 8

■ Sampling:

- a) continuous time sampling eg. Motivation to study the whole term
- b) time point sampling eg. motivation to study before exam

- (8-2-3) Correlational Study: gotogetherness of two or more variables eg. Correlation between reading and writing skill
 - possibilities: positive, negative, neutral
 - no causal relation is claimed, just a relationship which should be made meaningful by relating it to a theory

Chapter 8

(8-2-4) <u>Causal-Comparative</u>: studying cause-effect relationships by observing existing consequences and searching back through the data for plausible causal factors eg. Finding out if pre-school education has had any effect on the success of high-achievers at school

Chapter 8

(8-2-4) Cuausal-Coparative

- similar to and different from correlational study: both are descriptive; but
- Causal-Comparative: two or more groups and one independent variable, involving comparisons
- **□ correlational**: one group + two or more variables, involving gotogetherness

Chapter 8

(8-2-4) Causal-Comparative

- also similar to and different from experimental study; both involve cause-andeffect relation and comparisons
- ■In Experimental the cause is deliberately made and the effect is observed

- In Causal-Comparative the effect is observed and the cause looked for, so the independent variable naturally occurs and is not manipulated.
- also called **Ex-post-facto**: (= after the fact) but this term is not exclusive to causal-comparative method

- Some drawbacks of Interrelational Method :
 - 1 no control over variables , so the effect can be the result of other factors
- 2 not a single factor may affect the result
- 3 connection between two variables do not mean causal relationship
 - Nevertheless it's practical: less costly and quite useful

(8-3) Developmental

Chapter 8

Developmental Method

Longitudinal

Cross-sectional

(8-3) Developmental

Chapter 8

It mainly deals with the changes that happen over time

Eg. child language development; cognitive processes and interlanguage studies

(8-3-1) Longitudinal: exploratory; time consuming; focuses on one subject but several variables

(8-3) Developmental

Chapter 8

(8-3-2) Cross-sectional: focuses on more subjects but fewer variables; confirmatory in nature, and findings of different groups are not comparable; less time consuming and more practical; but does not provide as detailed information as the other one

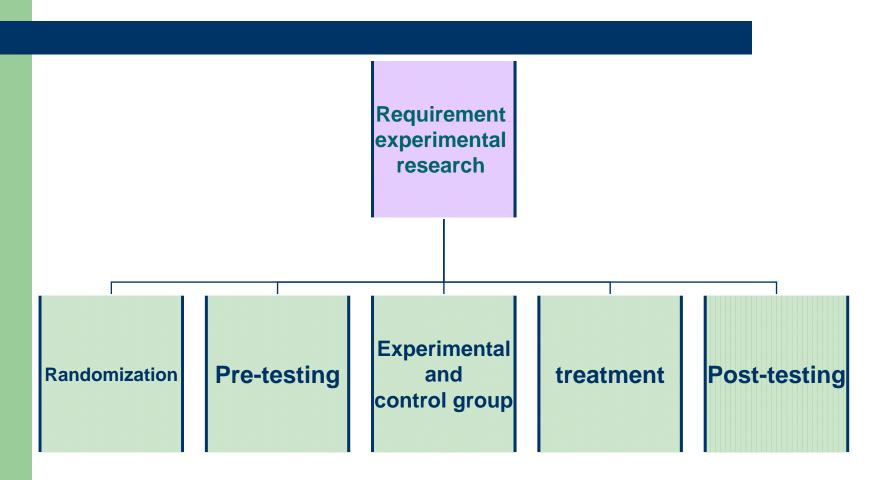
Chapter 9 : Experimental Method of Research

■ To some people Experimental Research is considered as the peak of scientific research.

Principles of the Experimental Method

- A) Most Demanding: It requires rigorous principles.
- B) Most Productive: It provides conclusive answers to complex questions.

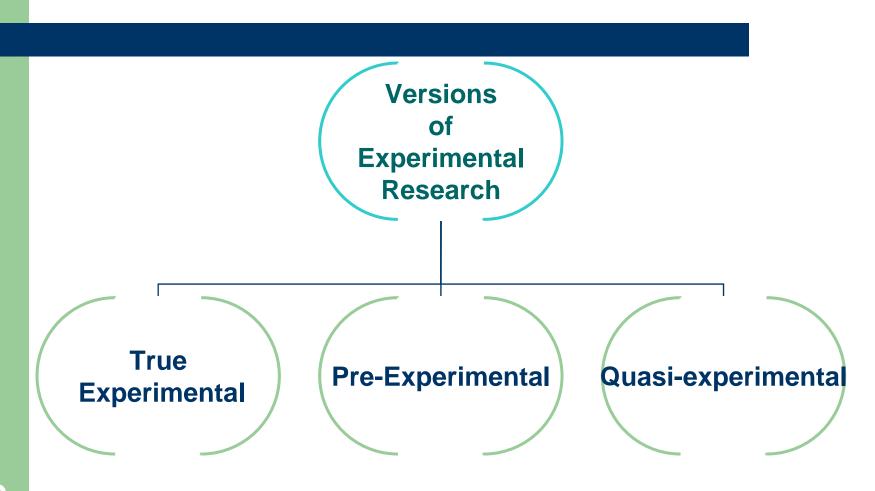
(9-1) Requirement of a typical experimental research Chapter 9



(9-1) Requirement of a typical experimental research Chapter 9

- (9-1-1) Randomization
- (9-1-2) Pre-testing
- (9-1-3) Having experimental and control group
- (9-1-4) Offering a treatment to the experimental group and placebo to the control group
 - (9-1-5) post-testing

(9-2) Different version of experimental studies Chapter 9



(9-2) Different version of experimental studies Chapter 9

- (9-2-1) <u>True Experimental</u>: All the above principles are met.
- (9-2-2) <u>Pre-Experimental</u>: One or two principles are ignored.
- (9-2-3) Quasi-experimental: There is compensation for the violation of certain principles.

Chapter 9

(9-3-1) Randomization: To avoid bias; every member of a given population has an equal chance of being selected. This procedure helps select a representative sample of subjects.

Chapter 9

(9-3-2) Experimental and control group: involves two purposes:

- 1) The researcher should make sure that the relationship between the variables is not only causal but also one variable causes the other one.
- 2) He should make sure that the outcome of the study is due to the variable under study, not other variables.

Chapter 9

(9-3-3) Pretest: It is used to make sure about the equality of the two groups before the experiment and to make strong statement about the cause-effect relationship between the variables after the experiment.

- (9-3-4) Treatment: It is given to the experimental group and placebo to the control group.
- In educational settings, the independent variable is often the introduction of a new instructional procedure or an educational factor. This variable is called a treatment in the context of experimental research.

Chapter 9

(9-3-5) Posttest: It is measuring the dependent variable to see the effect of treatment as compared with the control group which received placebo or no treatment.

■ If the difference is not significant the treatment is not effective.

(9-4) Validity of Research

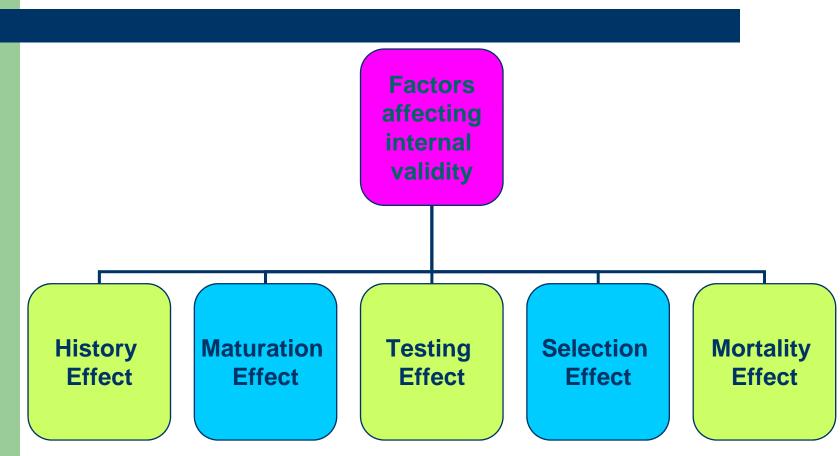
- Verifiability : Replications should give similar results .
- Applicability: The findings should be applicable in similar situations.

Two Types of Validity

Chapter 9

(9-5) <u>Internal Validity</u>: The extent to which the outcome of the research is due to the manipulation of independent variable and not others (importance of control variable). This is unique to experimental research.

Chapter 9



Chapter 9

(9-5-1) <u>History Effect</u>: Whatever happening to the subjects outside the experimental environment; eg. receiving another type of treatment somewhere else

(9-5-2) Maturation Effect: any process that involves systematic changes over time, regardless of specific events eg. In longitudinal research eg. natural language development vs. formal instruction-based method

Chapter 9

(9-5-3) <u>Testing Effect</u>: The pretest may give some awareness to the subjects regarding the purpose of the experiment, so in posttest they are better prepared; analogous to practice effect in testing.

Chapter 9

(9-5-4) Selection Effect: If randomization is weak or impossible, we can use *matching*

eg. dividing the subjects into two groups based on their proficiency level so that both groups are equal in terms of proficiency

(9-5-5) Mortality Effect: loss of the subjects during the experiment especially in longitudinal study. It is also called *Attrition*.

(9-6) External Validity

Chapter 9

Applicability of research findings in other similar settings = generalizability of findings, from sample to population. It is true for all methods of research.

(9-6) External Validity

Chapter 9

- Internal validity requires maximizing control.
- External validity requires more real life—like or naturalistic situation in research with less control.
- There should be a balance or trade-off to keep both.

Pre-Experimental Methods One-Group One-shot Intact Group Pretest Study **Case Study** posttest Study

with lower internal and external validity

(9-7-1) One-shot Case Study:

no control group, with treatment and test

X T

this can function as a pilot study

(9-7-2) One-Group Pretest posttest Study:

often used by teachers

T1 X T2

(9-7-3) Intact Group Study:

no randomization

<u>G1 X T</u>

G2 O T

■ X= treatment O= placebo

(9-8) Quasi-Experimental Method

Chapter 9

Quasi-Experimental Method

Time – Series Study

Equivalent
Time Series
Method

(9-8) Quasi-Experimental Method Chapter 9

It is a practical compromise between true experimentation and the nature of human language behavior to be investigated.

(9-8) Quasi-Experimental Method Chapter 9

(9-8-1)Time – Series Study:

is the most common type; no control group

T1 T2 T3 X T4 T5 T6

■ the number of pre or post tests is not fixed, but there should be enough to show a trend (see diagrams p.190)

(9-8) Quasi-Experimental Method Chapter 9

(9-8-2) Equivalent Time Series Method:

T1 X T2 / T3 O T4 / T5 X T6 / T7 O T8 ? ...

■ This process is repeated three to five times and then the scores on Os and Xs are compared.

(See diagrams p.191)

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