Observational Research

Observer Roles
- **Participant Observation** - researcher joins with the group of individuals to be studied
  - **Complete Participant** - conceal role as researcher
  - **Participant Observer** - role as researcher is made clear to subjects
- **Nonparticipant Observation** - researcher does not participate in group activities or in any way act as a member

Behaviors Observed
- **Nonverbal** - motor behavior
- **Spatial** - relative location
- **Extralinguistic** - noncontent characteristics of speech
- **Linguistic** - content characteristics of speech

Advantages of Observation
- **Directness**
- **Non-Linguistic Behavior**
- **Natural Environment**
- **Contextual Background**
- **Longitudinal Analysis**

Disadvantages of Observation
- **Lack of Control**
- **Difficulties of Quantification**
- **Small Sample Size**
- **Difficulty Gaining Entry**
- **Anonymity/Sensitive Issues**

Types of Observational Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observer-Imposed Structure</th>
<th>Type of Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured</td>
<td>Completely Unstructured Field Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured</td>
<td>Structured Field Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Recording Behaviors**

- Frequency
- Duration
- Interval
- Magnitude Rating

**Frequency Checklist**

Subject: Elwood  
Observer: Argus  
Behavior(s): 1. Raise Hand; 2. Speak Out Of Turn  
Time Interval: 30 minutes/day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06/15</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/16</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sent to Principal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Duration Log**

Subject: Jake  
Observer: Argus  
Behavior(s): 1. In Seat; 2. On Task  
Date and Time Period: 06/15: 10:00-11:00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Onset</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00:00</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>6:30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00:45</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:04:15</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2:00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:07:00</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interval Log**

Subject: Betty Sue  
Observer: Argus  
Behavior: 1. In Seat; 2. On Task; 3. Touching Other  
Date/Time: 06/16; 9:00-9:10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minute</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>.00</th>
<th>.15</th>
<th>.30</th>
<th>.45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interobserver Reliability - 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observer 2</th>
<th>Occur</th>
<th>Not Occur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occur</td>
<td>Occurrence Agreement (A)</td>
<td>Disagreement (B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Occur</td>
<td>Disagreement (C)</td>
<td>Nonoccurrence Agreement (D)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interobserver Reliability - 2

Overall Agreement = \( \frac{A + D}{A + B + C + D} \)

Occurrence Agreement = \( \frac{A}{A + B + C} \)

Nonoccurrence Agreement = \( \frac{D}{B + C + D} \)

Exercise: Interobserver Reliability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lydia</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charlotte</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \text{Lydia: } \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline \text{Occur} & \text{Not Occur} \\ \hline 13 & 13 \\ \hline \text{Not Occur} & 3 & 4 & 7 \\ \hline \end{array} \]

\[ \text{Charlotte: } \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline \text{Occur} & \text{Not Occur} \\ \hline 16 & 4 \\ \hline \end{array} \]

Indirect Observations

- Physical Traces
  - Erosion Measures
  - Accretion Measures

Interviewing

Rapport: Establishing and Maintaining Trust

- Honesty
- Inconvenience
- Keep Your Word
- Flattery

Rapport: Establishing and Maintaining Respect and Acceptance

- Don’t adopt slang style
- Don’t appear shocked
- Be aware of observation
- Anticipate
- Remain neutral
**Principles of Interviewing: Communication Inhibitors**
- Competing Demands for Time
- Ego Threat
- Etiquette
- Trauma
- Forgetting
- Chronological Confusion
- Inferential Confusion
- Unconscious Behavior

**Principles of Interviewing: Communication Facilitators**
- Fulfilling Expectations
- Recognition
- Altruistic Appeals
- Sympathetic Understanding
- "Catharsis"
- Need for Meaning
- Extrinsic Rewards

**Approaches to Interviewing**
- Informal Conversational Interview
- General Interview Guide Approach
- Standardized Open-Ended Interview

**The Informal Conversational Interview**
**Strengths**
- Responsive to 
  - Individual Differences
  - Situational Changes
- Theory Development

**Weaknesses**
- More Time Consuming
- Interviewer Effects
- Difficult to Analyze

**General Interview Guide - Example**
**Teacher Observations About Child Functioning**
Basically cover impressions gained through teacher's own observations of the children during the normal course of instruction. Where appropriate include:
- Comments about continuities/changes/fluctuations
- Comments about child's work samples
- Organization of the Day (first interview only)
- any changes in organization (subsequent interviews only)

**General Behavior Topics**
- Physical/Gestural Characteristics
- Typical posture, bearing
  - and so on

**Standardized Open-Ended Interview - Example**
You said that there has been physical conflict between you and your (husband/partner) during the past year. I'd like you to tell me how the fight started, how it progressed, and how it ended. First, what was it that started the fight or disagreement that resulted in [LAST ITEM CIRCLED]? (RECORD ANSWER UNDER ACTION #1, INDICATE WHO DID IT AND TO WHOM) Now, what was the first thing that happened after [ACTION #1]? (RECORD ANSWER UNDER ACTION #2 AND GO ON TO ACTION #3. KEEP PROBING FOR WHAT HAPPENED NEXT UNTIL THE ENTIRE FIGHT IS COVERED.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who Did It</th>
<th>To Whom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1. Respondent</td>
<td>1. Respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Partner</td>
<td>2. Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Other</td>
<td>3. Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1. Respondent</td>
<td>1. Respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Partner</td>
<td>2. Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Other</td>
<td>3. Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1. Respondent</td>
<td>1. Respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Partner</td>
<td>2. Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Other</td>
<td>3. Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Research

Types of Survey
- Mail Questionnaire
- Interview
  - Personal Interview
  - Telephone interview

Advantages of Mailed Questionnaires
- Low Cost
- Time Savings
- Reduction in Biasing Error
  - No Interviewer Bias
  - Standardized Wording
- Greater Anonymity
- Considered Answers
- Accessibility
- Respondent Convenience

Disadvantages of Mailed Questionnaires
- Simple Questions/Format
- Lack of Flexibility
- No Control Over Environment
- Low Response Rate
- Verbal Behavior Only
- No Control Over Question Order
- Unanswered Questions

Increasing Response Rate
- Sponsorship
- Inducements to Reply
- Questionnaire Format
- Cover Letter
- Type and Timing of Mailing
- Follow-Up

Computer-Administered Questionnaires
Personal Interviews

Advantages of Personal Interviews
- Flexibility
- Control of Interview Situation
- High Response Rate
- Supplementary Information
- Completeness
- Greater Complexity

Disadvantages of Personal Interviews
- Higher Cost
- Interviewer Bias
- Lack of Anonymity
- Time
- Inconvenience
- Less Accessibility

Effects of Interviewer Characteristics
- Social Status
- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Clothing and Grooming

Telephone Interviews

RDD - Random Digit Dialing
- Randomly select area code
- Randomly select 3-digit prefix
- Randomly number from 0000 to 9999
- Repeat process for next number
CATI - Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing

Telephone versus Face-To-Face

- Telephone: Less Expensive
- Telephone: Slightly Lower Response Rate
- Telephone: Slightly Higher Termination Rate
- Telephone: More Accessibility
- Telephone: Harder To Develop Rapport