Design of a questionnaire

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Steps of a questionnaire study

- ➢ Define the goal of your study
- ➢ Define the population
- ➢ Chose a sampling method
- ➢ Chose a medium
- ➢ Create the questionnaire
- ➢ Run a pre-test
- ➢ Run the study
- ➢ Analyze the data
- ➢ Report the results

Goal

What do you want to investigate?

Formulate a precise research question.

State a clear hypothesis that can be tested.

Population

Who do you want to investigate?

For L2 research this can be a complicated issue:

- Way of learning (class room – practice)

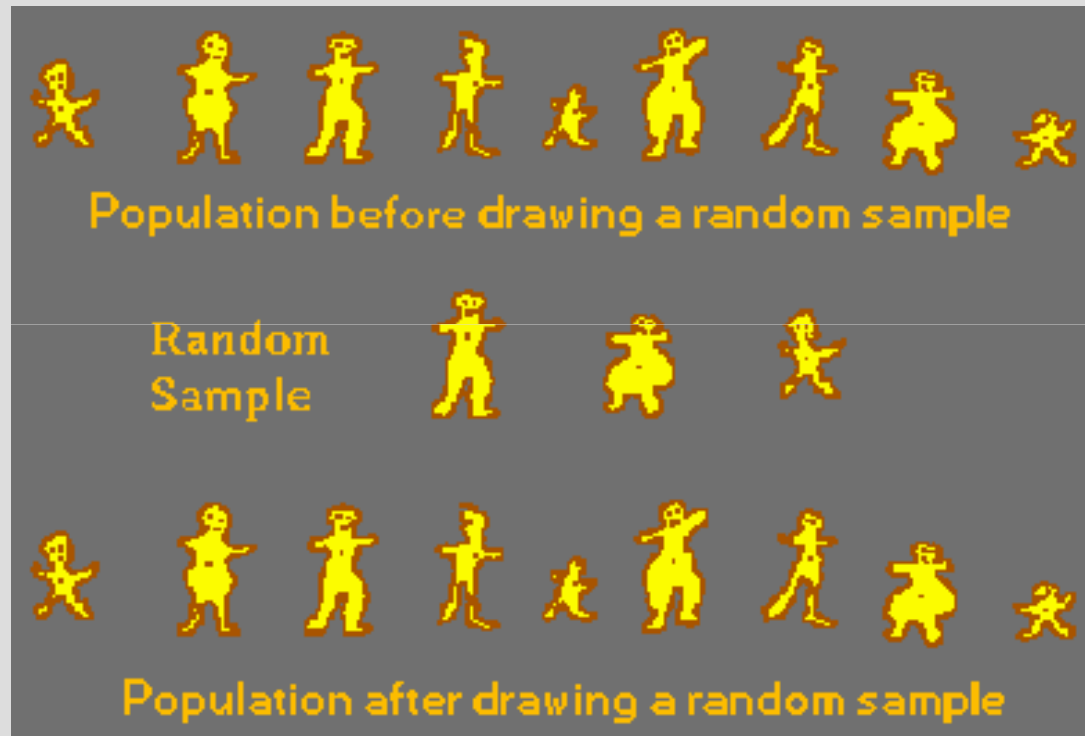- Years of learning

- Motivation

- ...

Sample

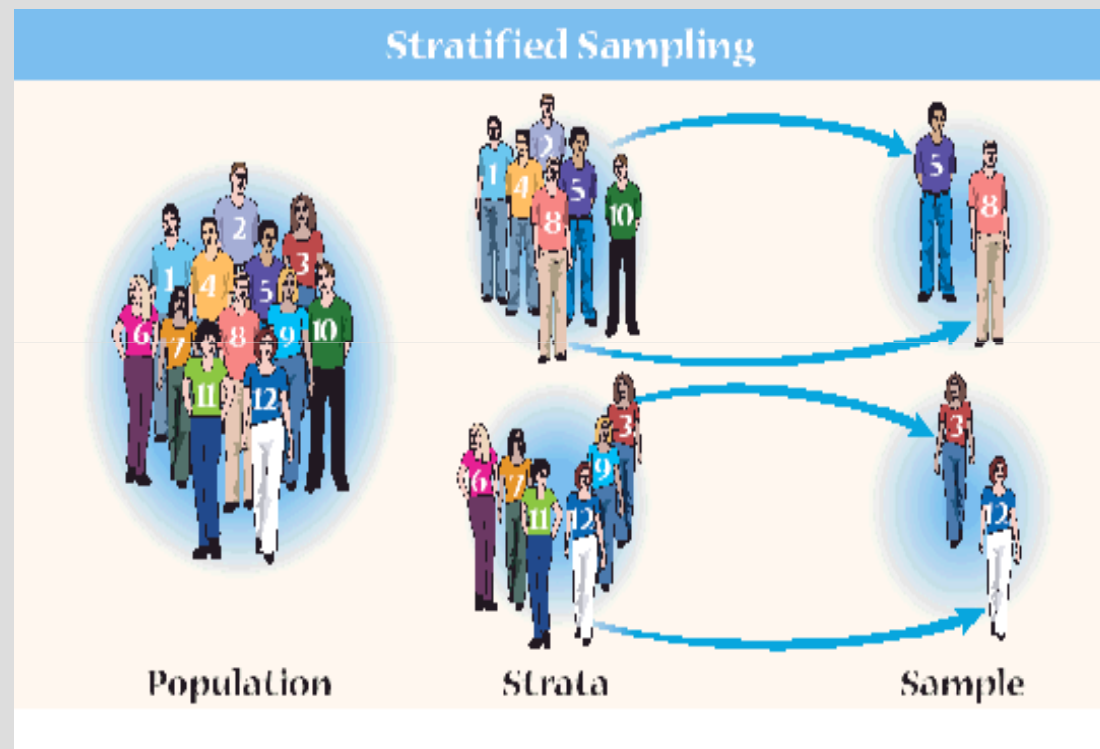How do you select your participants?

Sampling techniques:

- Simple random sampling

- Stratified random sampling
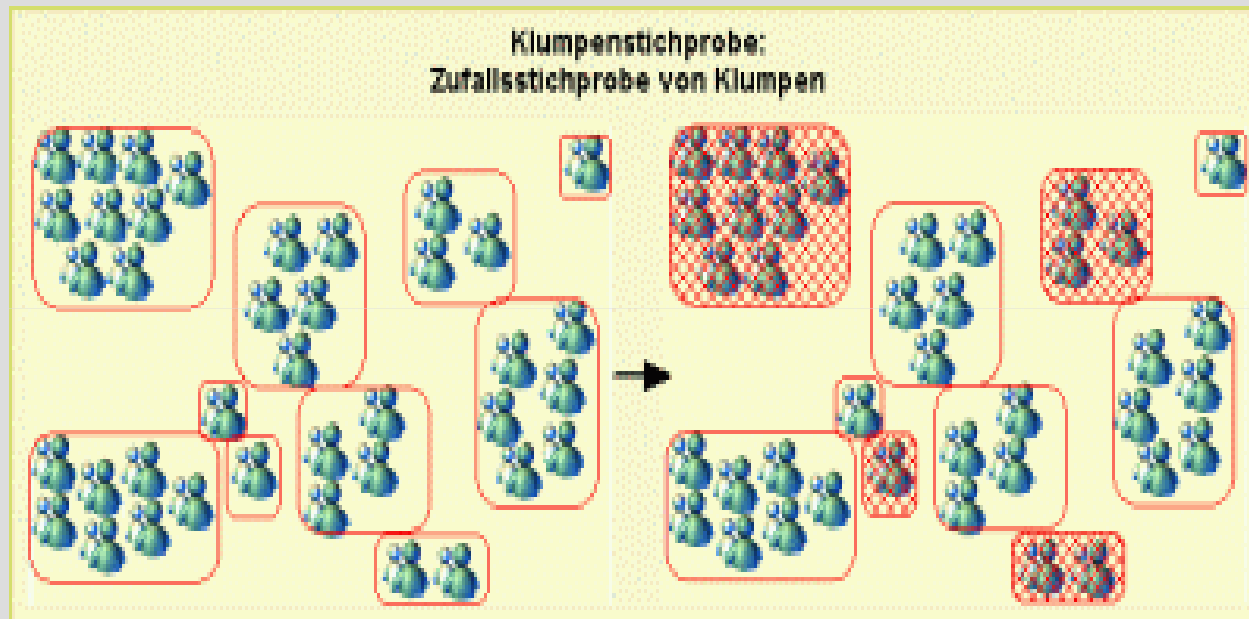
- Cluster sampling

Simple random sampling

Is used when nothing is known about the sample.

Stratified random sampling

Proportional sample vs. disproportional sample

Cluster sampling

Klumpenstichprobe:
Zufallsstichprobe von Klumpen

Medium

How do you want to select your data?

- Reading the questionnaire aloud
- Written questionnaire in presence of the researcher
- Written questionnaire by email/mail
- Internet survey

Questionnaire

Introduction:

- Welcome message
- Purpose
- Confidentiality
- Length

Introduction

Thank you for taking an interest in this study! This questionnaire investigates how native speakers of English use certain linguistic features. It has been designed for academic research, so you directly contribute to scientific progress at our university, xxx. All your personal data will be treated confidentially and will be annonymised in any future publications.

Please read the instructions carefully before you start filling out the complete questionnaire, which will take about 20 minutes. Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire!

Question types

Open question vs. closed question:

    (1)   What kind of music do you like?

    (2)   What kind of music do you like?

           (a) classical

           (b) pop

           (c) rock

           (d) country

           (e) don't know / not applicable

Rating scales

How would you rate this text book?

      1. Excellent

      2. Good

      3. Fair

      4. Poor

Indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 your interest in …

      1. British/American literature

      2. British/American music

      3. British/American politics

      4. ...

(where 1 means 'little interest' and 5 'very strong interest')

Rating scales

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The teacher provides constructive criticism				
The teacher follows the course schedule				
I would prefer to study more at home				

My grammar classes helped me to ímprove my English:

Strongly agree						Strongly disagree

Odd or even answering choices?

Questions

- Avoid double-barrel questions.

  The subject in German is the first element of the clause and sometimes appears in dative case. -> True/false?

- Avoid biased/emotional questions.

  Complex sentences are more difficult than simple ones. -> Agree/disagree

- Avoid multiple answering choices.

  Where do you live?

A house	
An apartment	
The suburbs	

Coding scheme

- If you ask open questions develop a coding scheme before you run the study.

Type of mistake	Subtypes	Scores
Word order	Inversion in question	2
	Subject after verb	4
	Tag question	1
Morphology	Number	1
	Case in pronouns	4
	Subject-verb agreement	2
Lexical choice	Semantically incorrect	3
	Stylistically inadequate	1
	....	

Layout

Pretest

- Run a pretest before you run the actual study.

- If necessary modify your questionnaire after the pretest (but never change the questionnaire/procedure of the actual study).

- Don't combine the results of your pretest with the results of the actual study.