

## Preface

*Understanding Research in Applied Linguistics* is an introductory textbook that specially aims at helping undergraduate students to gain a basic understanding of theoretical as well as practical aspects of conducting research in language-related areas, with a particular focus on applied linguistics research. The book can also be used for the purpose of background reading by novice researchers, language teachers, and students at MA TESOL/TEFL programs. The premise of the book is that anyone who is studying or working in the field of applied linguistics or other related disciplines would need to understand basic concepts, approaches, and methods in research, conduct it in practice, and be familiar with how to report research findings.

This textbook consists of 18 chapters in five parts. Each part contains a number of chapters and the focus of each chapter is described in the introductory section at the beginning of each part.

The chapters in Part I present an introduction to science and research, introduce major areas of research in applied linguistics, deal with the research process, and provide background information on the concepts of research paradigms and approaches.

Part II is particularly about quantitative research in applied linguistics. Each chapter in this part introduces a key issue in quantitative research. The issues include exploring the nature of quantitative variables, formulating quantitative research questions and hypotheses, explaining quantitative sampling procedures, and discussing quantitative data collection and analysis.

The focus of Part III is on qualitative research in applied linguistics. This part introduces major approaches to qualitative research. Further, qualitative sampling strategies are treated in a chapter in this part. It also presents chapters on qualitative data collection and qualitative data analysis.

Part IV introduces the commonly used research methods in three chapters. These methods are descriptive research, experimental research, and historical research. For each method, the important research strategies or research designs are explained. Practical issues regarding the use of the methods are also discussed in the corresponding chapters.

Part V is the last part that presents the two final chapters. The first chapter in this part discusses validity issues in quantitative and qualitative research. The second chapter—the final chapter of the book—presents explanations and practical considerations that would help the reader write up his/her research report using an academic writing style.

The chapters in the present book include various sections and components. In addition to the relevant content covered in each chapter, there are a number of tasks which can be conducted individually, in pairs, or in groups. Each task is presented in a separate box with the relevant task number in the chapter (e.g., Task -).

Also, additional information or sample materials extracted from other sources are displayed in separate boxes which are called exhibits (e.g., Exhibit -). Each exhibit supplements the content covered in the chapter and would help the learner develop a more detailed understanding of the topic in question. Wherever applicable, the contents of tasks and exhibits have been extracted from real-world studies to create more authentic and meaningful input. Students are encouraged to refer to the original papers if they feel the need to obtain further information about these real studies, their procedures, and/or their findings.

Furthermore, in the boxes that carry the title “Moment of Reflection”, a number of relevant quotes and anecdotes are presented to attract students’ attention and motivate them to think more critically about the content, creating a space for further reflection. A few illustrations are also provided to add a comical taste to the academic discussions.

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**Spring /**

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