Third Edition

Straight Talk about COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS

Christine S.Davis
Kenneth A. Lachlan with
contributor Robert Westerfelhaus

Kendall Hunt
publishing company

Book Team

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer *Mark C. Falb*
President and Chief Operating Officer *Chad M. Chandlee*
Vice President, Higher Education *David L. Tart*
Director of Publishing Partnerships *Paul B. Carty*
Senior Developmental Coordinator *Angela Willenbring*
Vice President, Operations *Timothy J.* Beitzel
Senior Production Editor *Sheri Hosek*
Senior Permissions Editor *Caroline Kieler*
Cover Designer *Faith Walker*

Screen shots on these pages are used with permission of Microsoft: 259, 260, 261, 263, 268, 270, 271, 272, 273, 275.

Cover image © Shutterstock.com

Kendall Hunt
publishing company

www.kendallhunt.com
Send all inquiries to:
4050 Westmark Drive
Dubuque, IA 52004-1840

Copyright © 2017 by Kendall Hunt Publishing Company

PAK ISBN 978-1-5249-1613-8
Text ISBN 978-1-5249-1614-5

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Published in the United States of America

BRIEF CONTENTS

PART 1—Introduction to Communication Research **1**

Chapter 1—What Is Communication Research? 3
Chapter 2—Metatheoretical Considerations, Research Perspectives, and Research Paradigms 27
Chapter 3—Discovering What's Already Known: Library Research 45
Chapter 4—Writing a Literature Review 65

PART 2—Preparing to Conduct Research **89**

Chapter 5—Research Questions, Objectives, and Hypotheses 91
Chapter 6—Understanding Research Ethics 107
Chapter 7—Understanding Variables 123
Chapter 8—Understanding Sampling 145
Chapter 9—Ensuring Validity, Reliability, and Credibility 163

PART 3—Research Under the Quantitative Paradigm **185**

Chapter 10—Survey Research 187
Chapter 11—Quantitative Analysis of Text and Words: Content and Interaction Analysis 221
Chapter 12—Experiments 239
Chapter 13—Writing, Analyzing, and Critiquing Quantitative Research 255

PART 4—Research Under the Qualitative Paradigm **305**

Chapter 14—Introduction to Qualitative Communication Research 307
Chapter 15—Social Science Qualitative Approaches to Communication Research 345
Chapter 16—Social Constructionist and Arts-Based Qualitative Approaches to Communication Research 389
Chapter 17—Rhetorical Approaches to Communication Research 419

Appendices 435

Appendix A—Writing Research Proposals 437
Appendix B—Sample Informed Consent Form 439
Appendix C—How Your Objective, Research Question, and/or Hypothesis Relates to Your Methodology 441
Appendix D—Statistics Decision Chart 443
Appendix E—Style Manual Summary (APA, MLA, Chicago) 445

Index 447

CONTENTS

Preface xxi
Acknowledgments xxvii
About the Authors xxix

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION RESEARCH 1

Chapter 1: What Is Communication Research? 3

Chapter Outline 3
Key Terms 3
Chapter Objectives 4
What Will You Do with the Information You Learn in this Course? 4
What Is Research? 5
- Research 5
- Communication as Social Research 6
- Communication as Humanities Research 6
- Communication as Critical or Cultural Research 7

How Is Research Knowledge Distributed? 7
- Academic Publishing 7
- Social Dialogue and Public Policy 7
- Communication in the Popular Press 8

How Do We Know What We Know? 9
- Where Does Knowledge Come From? 9
  - Experience 10
  - Tenacity 10
  - Authority 11
  - Traditions, Customs, and Faith 12
  - Magic, Superstition, and/or Mysticism 13
  - Intuition or Hunches 13
  - A Priori Reasoning 13

What's Wrong with Everyday Ways of Knowing? 14
- Accuracy 14
- Overgeneralization 14

Cognitive Conservatism 14
Contradictory Knowledge 14
Scientific Reasoning 15
What Do Communication Researchers Do? 16
What Specific Areas Do Communication Researchers Study? 16
Scholarly Research 16
Applied Research 17
Nothing as Practical as a Good Theory 18
What Are Some Examples of Communication Research? 18
Where Do Communication Researchers Study? 18
In Businesses and Organizations 19
In Media 19
In Health Care 20
In Interpersonal Interactions 21
So What? 22
Glossary 22
References 23

Chapter 2: Metatheoretical Considerations, Research Perspectives, and Research Paradigms 27

Chapter Outline 27
Key Terms 27
Chapter Objectives 28
What Are the Goals and Methods of Communication Scholars and Everyday Observers? 28
Metatheoretical Considerations 28
Ontology 29
Epistemology 29
Axiology 30
Research Perspectives and Paradigms 30
Positivism 31
Interpretivism 32
Critical Perspective 33
Types of Research 36
Proprietary Research 36
Scholarly Research 36
Characteristics of Scholarly Research 36
Two Logical Systems 37
Inductive Model 37
Deductive Model 38
Model of Deduction/Induction 39
Qualitative and Quantitative Research 39
Qualitative Research 39
Quantitative Research 40
So What? 42

Glossary 42
References 43

Chapter 3: Discovering What's Already Known: Library Research 45

Chapter Outline 45
Key Terms 45
Chapter Objectives 45
What Are the Purposes of Library Research? 46
Types of Research 46
Primary Research 47
Secondary Research 47
Phases of Research 48
Using Library Research to Come Up with Your Research Question 49
Research Sources 50
Scholarly Journals 51
How Do You Access Scholarly Journals? 54
Finding Research Sources Using Search Strategies 55
Evaluating Research Sources 55
How to Read a Journal Article 58
Taking Notes on Research 61
So What? 63
Glossary 63
References 63

Chapter 4: Writing a Literature Review 65

Chapter Outline 65
Key Terms 65
Chapter Objectives 65
What's the Purpose of a Literature Review? 66
What Is a Literature Review? 67
Annotated Bibliography versus Synthesis of the Literature 67
Organizing the Literature Review 71
Citations 72
Avoiding Plagiarism 72
Writing Styles 74
American Psychological Association (APA) Style (6th edition, 2nd printing) 75
Body of the Paper 75
Reference List 80
In-Text Citations 83
Modern Language Association (MLA) Style (8th edition) 84
Chicago Style (16th edition) 85
Common Grammatical Errors 86
So What? 87

Glossary 88
References 88

PART 2: PREPARING TO CONDUCT RESEARCH 89

Chapter 5: Research Questions, Objectives, and Hypotheses 91

Chapter Outline 91
Key Terms 91
Chapter Objectives 91
How Do You Design Good Quality Research through Appropriate Questions and Hypotheses? 92
What Are the Functions of Theory, Research Objectives, Research Questions, and Hypotheses? 92
What Are Research Objectives? 93
How Do You Ask Research Questions? 95
Types of Research Questions about Communication 96
Questions of Definition 96
Questions of Fact 97
What Are Research Hypotheses? 98
Null Hypotheses 99
Forms of Relationships in Hypotheses 100
Directional and Nondirectional Hypotheses 102
How Do You Set Up Good Research Questions? 102
Conceptual Definitions 103
Operational Definitions 103
What Are the Boundaries of Research Questions and Hypotheses? 104
How Is Metatheory Related to Research Questions and Hypotheses? 105
So What? 105
Glossary 105
References 106

Chapter 6: Understanding Research Ethics 107

Chapter Outline 107
Key Terms 107
Chapter Objectives 107
Why Do We Care about Human Subjects Protection? 108
How Do We Follow Research Ethics and Ethical Guidelines? 110
Respect for Persons and Informed Consent 110
Nonmaleficence and Beneficence 113
Justice 115
Including Participants in Co-Constructed Research 116
Ethics in Reporting Findings 117
Who Oversees Research Ethics? Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) 118
How Do We Maintain Ethics through all Research Phases? 118
So What? 119

Glossary 120
References 121

Chapter 7: Understanding Variables 123

Chapter Outline 123
Key Terms 124
Chapter Objectives 124
What Is the Function of Variables in Communication Research? 124
What Is a Variable? 124
Revisiting Conceptual and Operational Definitions 125
Conceptual Definitions 125
Operational Definitions 125
Measured Operational Definitions 125
Experimental Operational Definitions 126
Operationalizing: Matching Your Variables to Your Study 126
Conceptual Fit 126
Measuring Variables 127
Self-Report 27
Social Desirability Bias in Self-Report data 127
Other Report 128
Limitations in Other Reports 128
Observing Behavior 128
Hawthorne Effect Bias in Observing Behaviors 128
Triangulation 129
Measurement 129
Nominal Level Measurement 129
Ordinal Level Measurement 130
Interval Level Measurement 130
Likert Scale 132
Semantic Differential Scale 133
Ratio Level Measurement 134
Types of Variables 134
Independent Variables 135
Dependent Variables 135
Examples of Independent and Dependent Variables 135
Extraneous Variables 136
Confounding Variables 136
Mediating Variables 138
Moderating Variables 138
The Different Types of Relationships between Variables 139
Reversible and Irreversible Relationships 139
Deterministic and Stochastic Relationships 139
Sequential and Coextensive Relationships 140
Sufficient and Contingent Relationships 140
Necessary and Substitutable Relationships 140
The Dimensions of Variables 140
Unidimensional Concepts 141
Multidimensional Concepts 141

So What? 141
Glossary 141
References 142

Chapter 8: Understanding Sampling 145

Chapter Outline 145
Key Terms 145
Chapter Objectives 146
How Important Is Sampling? 146
Sampling Theory 146
Generalizability and Representation 146
Sampling Frame 148
Unit of Analysis or Sampling Units 148
Sampling in Quantitative Research 149
Sampling Methods 149
Random Sampling 149
Simple Random Sample 149
Systematic Random Sample 149
Stratified Sample 150
Proportional Stratified Sample 150
Cluster Sampling 151
Nonrandom Sampling 151
Convenience Sample 151
Volunteer Sample 152
Snowball Sampling 152
Network Sampling 152
Advantages and Disadvantages 153
Response Rate and Refusal Rate 153
Sample Size and Power 154
Sampling in Qualitative Research 157
Sampling Methods 157
Purposive Sampling 158
Quota Sampling 158
Maximum Variation Sampling 159
Theoretical Construct Sampling 159
Typical and Extreme Instance Sampling 159
Sample Size and Data Saturation 160
So What? 160
Glossary 160
References 161

Chapter 9: Ensuring Validity, Reliability, and Credibility 163

Chapter Outline 163
Key Terms 163
Chapter Objectives 164
Thinking about the Quality of Your Observations 164
What Is Reliable? What Is Valid? What Is Credible? 164
Reliability 165

Physical and Social Measurement 165
Random Error 166
Types of Reliability 166
Test-Retest 166
Alternate Form 166
Split-Half 167
Item-Total 167
Inter-Coder 167
Reliability Statistics 168
Validity 169
Knowing What You Are Measuring 169
Face Validity 170
Criterion Validity 170
Predictive Validity 170
Concurrent Validity 171
Construct Validity 171
Convergent Validity 171
Discriminant Validity 171
Validity and Reliability Examples 172
Problems with Participants and Procedures 175
History 175
Maturation 176
Testing 176
Instrumentation 177
Hawthorne Effect 177
External Validity Threats 178
Ecological Validity Threats 178
Credibility 179
Member Checks 179
Data Triangulation 179
Credible Data Gathering, Coding, and Writing 179
Peer Reviews 180
So What? 181
Glossary 181
References 182

PART 3: RESEARCH UNDER THE QUANTITATIVE PARADIGM 185

Chapter 10: Survey Research 187

Chapter Outline 187
Key Terms 187
Chapter Objectives 188
Why Surveys? 188
Survey Research 188
Applications of Survey Research 189
Survey Research Measuring Attitudes 189

Survey Research Measuring Retrospective Behaviors 190
Political Polls 191
Evaluation Research 192
Market Research 192
Design Concerns 193
Sampling 193
Cross-Sectional Design 194
Longitudinal Design 195
Trend Study 195
Cohort Study 195
Panel Study 196
Measurement Techniques 197
Constructing a Survey Questionnaire 198
Writing Survey Questions 198
Strategies for Questions 198
Types of Questions 200
Structure and Arrangement of Questions 201
How to Choose the Right Format 202
Survey Administration 202
Researcher-Administered 203
Self-Administered 203
Interviews 204
Relative Pros/Cons of Different Survey Methods 207
So What? 217
Glossary 218
References 218

Chapter 11: Quantitative Analysis of Text and Words: Content and Interaction Analysis 221

Chapter Outline 221
Key Terms 221
Chapter Objectives 222
Exploring Quantitative Content Analysis 222
Why Analyze Content? 222
Content Analysis Versus Interaction Analysis 223
Content Structure 224
Distributional Structure 224
Interactive Structure 224
Sequential Structure 225
Content Analysis Logic 225
Unitizing 226
Sampling Units 226
Recording Units 226
Context Units 227

Sampling 227
Random Sampling 227
Stratified Sampling 228
Systematic Sampling 228
Cluster Sampling 228
Reliability 228
Coder Training 229
Inter-coder Reliability 229
An Example of the Content Analysis Process 230
So What? 237
Glossary 237
References 238

Chapter 12: Experiments 239

Chapter Outline 239
Key Terms 239
Chapter Objectives 239
What Is an Experiment? 240
Independent and Dependent Variables 240
What Are Independent Variables? 240
What Are Dependent Variables? 241
Good Questions for Experiments 241
Understanding Experimental Notation and Language 242
Observation 242
Induction 242
Random Assignment 242
Terminology 243
Designs and Validity 243
Preexperimental Designs 244
One Shot Case Study Design 244
One Group Pretest Posttest Design 244
Static Group Comparison Design 245
Quasi-Experimental Designs 245
Time-Series Design 245
Nonequivalent Control Group Design 246
Multiple Time-Series Design 246
True Experimental Designs 246
Pretest Posttest Control Group Design 247
Posttest-Only Control Group Design 247
Solomon Four-Group Design 248
Factorial Design 249
Field and Natural Experiments 251
So What? 252
Glossary 253
References 253

Chapter 13: Writing, Analyzing, and Critiquing Quantitative Research 255

Chapter Outline 255
Key Terms 255
Chapter Objectives 256
Now That I Have My Quantitative Data,
What Do I Do with It? Statistical Analysis of Quantitative Data 256
Know Your Variables, Research Questions, and Hypotheses 256
Describing or Summarizing Your Variables 261
Measures of Central Tendency 261
Frequencies and Visual Representation of Data 262
Measures of Dispersion 262
Comparing Groups to See if They Are the Same or Different 267
Nominal Data 269
Ordinal Data 273
Interval or Ratio (Scale) Data 274
Testing for Relationships (Association) between Two or More Variables 276
Nominal Data 277
Ordinal Data 278
Ratio Data 280
Specific Uses of Statistical Analysis 285
Content Analysis 285
Survey Research 287
t-Test Example 287
Regression Example 289
Experiments 291
Chi Square Example 291
Analysis of Variance Example 292
Writing Quantitative Findings 293
General Information about Quantitative Writing 293
Elements of the Paper 294
Introduction and Literature Review 294
RQs or H 294
Method 295
Results 297
Discussion 298
Evaluating and Critiquing Quantitative Research 299
So What? 301
Glossary 301
References 303

PART 4: RESEARCH UNDER THE QUALITATIVE PARADIGM 305

Chapter 14: Introduction to Qualitative communication Research 307

Chapter Outline 307
Key Terms 308

Chapter Objectives 309
Qualitative Approaches to Research 309
Qualitative Communication Research Paradigms 310
Social Science Paradigm 310
Social Constructionist Paradigm 311
Arts and Humanities Paradigm 312
Rhetorical Paradigm 312
Interpretive Research 312
General Characteristics of Qualitative Research 313
Research Questions or Study Objectives in Qualitative Research 313
The Role of Theory in Qualitative Research 313
Sampling in Qualitative Research 314
Data Collection in Qualitative Research 314
Observations 315
Types of observers 316
Types of observations 316
What observers observe 317
Field notes 317
In-Depth Interviews 319
Types of Interviews 320
Types of Questions 321
Interviewing Tips 323
Listening in an Interview 323
Probing and Clarifying 323
Challenges to Interviewing 324
Data Transcription 326
Challenges to Transcription 326
Texts and Artifacts 327
Ethics in Qualitative Research 327
Human Subjects Protection 327
Caring for Participants 328
Reflexivity 328
Participants as Co-Researchers 328
Analyzing and Writing Qualitative Research 329
Coding 329
Reading the Data and Making Analytical Notations 329
Developing a Code List 330
Coding your Data 331
Card Pile Sort Approach to Coding 332
Methods of Categorizing 332
Thematic Analysis 332
Analysis by Sensitizing Concepts 332
Frame Analysis 332
Social Network Analysis 332
Event Analysis 333
Schema Analysis 333
Interpretive Thematic Analysis 333
Analyzing Qualitative Data 333

Writing Qualitative Findings 335
Summary or Traditional Method of Writing 335
Dramatic or Scenic Method of Writing 336
Writing Performance Texts 336
Evaluating and Critiquing Qualitative Research 336
Ethical Criteria 337
Significance Criteria 337
RQ Criteria 337
Design/Methodology Criteria 337
Sampling Criteria 337
Data Collection Criteria 337
Analysis Criteria 338
Writing Criteria 338
Credibility Criteria 338
So What? 338
Glossary 339
References 343

Chapter 15: Social Science Qualitative Approaches to Communication Research 345

Chapter Outline 345
Key Terms 346
Chapter Objectives 346
Social Science Paradigm 346
Ethnography 347
Chicago School of Ethnography 347
Ethnomethodology 347
Ethnography of Communication 348
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Ethnography 348
The Role of Theory in Ethnographic Research 348
Sampling in Ethnography 348
Selecting and accessing a field site 349
Ethical Concerns Specific to Ethnographic Research 350
Data Collection in Ethnography 351
Analysis in Ethnography 351
Writing Ethnographic Findings 351
Examples of Ethnography 353
Focus Groups 354
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Focus Groups 354
The Role of Theory in Focus Group Research 355
Sampling in Focus Group Research 355
Data Collection in Focus Groups 355
Focus group moderating or facilitating 360
Ethical Concerns Specific to Focus Group Research 361
Analyzing Focus Groups 361

Writing/Presenting the Findings of Focus Group Research 362
Scholarly Examples of Focus Group Research 362
Industry Examples of Focus Group Research 367
Grounded Theory 368
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Grounded Theory Research 368
The Role of Theory in Grounded Theory Research 368
Sampling in Grounded Theory Research 368
Data Collection in Grounded Theory Research 369
Coding and Analysis in Grounded Theory Research 370
Writing Grounded Theory Findings 370
Examples of Grounded Theory Research 370
Phenomenology 371
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Phenomenology 372
Sampling in Phenomenology 372
Data Collection in Phenomenology 372
Analysis in Phenomenology 373
Writing the Findings in Phenomenology 374
Examples of Phenomenology 374
Case Study 375
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Case Studies 375
Sampling in Case Study Research 376
Data Collection in Case Study Research 376
Analysis and Reporting Case Study Research 376
Examples of Case Study Research 377
Discourse Analysis 377
Research Questions Addressed by Discourse Analysis 377
Data Collection in Discourse Analysis 377
Coding in Discourse Analysis 378
Writing Discourse Analysis Findings 379
Examples of Discourse Analysis 379
Conversation Analysis (CA) 380
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Conversation Analysis 380
Sampling in Conversation Analysis 381
Data Collection in Conversation Analysis 381
Transcription in Conversation Analysis (CA) 381
Coding in Conversation Analysis (CA) 382
Writing CA Findings 382
Examples of Conversation Analysis 383
Qualitative Content Analysis 383
Sampling in Qualitative Content Analysis 383
Coding in Qualitative Content Analysis 383
So What? 385
Glossary 385
References 386

Chapter 16: Social Constructionist and Arts-Based Qualitative Approaches to Communication Research 389

Chapter Outline 389
Key Terms 390
Chapter Objectives 390
Social Constructionist Paradigm 390
Characteristics of Research Under the Social Constructionist Paradigm 390
Autoethnography and Personal Narratives 391
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Autoethnography 391
The Role of Theory in Autoethnographic Research 392
Ethical Concerns Specific to Autoethnography 392
Sampling and Data Collection in Autoethnography 393
Analysis in Autoethnography 394
Examples of Autoethnography 396
Critical and Feminist Ethnography 397
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Critical Ethnography 397
How Critical Ethnography Uses/Incorporates Theory 397
Ethical Concerns Specific to Critical Ethnography 398
Data Collection in Critical Ethnography 398
Analysis and Writing in Critical Ethnography 398
Communication Activism and CBPR 399
Examples of Critical and Feminist Ethnography 399
Holistic Ethnography 399
Digital and Online Ethnography 400
Appropriate Research Questions for Digital Ethnography 401
Ethical Considerations for Digital Ethnography 401
Data Collection in Digital Ethnography 401
Analysis and Reporting in Digital Ethnography 402
Examples of Digital Ethnography 402
Arts-Based Paradigm 402
Characteristics of Research Under the Arts-Based Paradigm 402
Performance Studies 403
Ethnodrama and Ethnotheatre 404
Research Questions Appropriate for Ethnodrama and Ethnotheatre 404
Ethical Issues in Ethnodrama and Ethnotheatre 404
Data Collection in Ethnodrama and Ethnotheatre 405
Analysis in Ethnodrama and Ethnotheatre 405
Writing Ethnodrama and Ethnotheatre 405
Performative Writing 406
Examples of Performative Writing 406
Poetic Ethnography 408
Fiction as Method 409
Documentary, Video, or Visual Ethnography 410
Other Types of Arts-Based Research Methods 412
So What? 412
Glossary 413
References 414

Chapter 17: Rhetorical Approaches to Communication Research 419

Chapter Outline 419
Key Words 419
Chapter Objectives 419
Characteristics of Rhetorical Criticism 420
Appropriate Research Questions Answered by Rhetorical Criticism 420
Data in Rhetorical Criticism 421
Writing Rhetorical Criticism 421
Aristotelian Rhetoric 422
Narratives and Rhetorical Criticism 423
Burkean Criticism 425
Cultural Criticism 427
Semiotics 429
Rhetorical Criticism in the Workplace 431
So What? 431
Glossary 432
References 433

Appendices 435

Appendix A: Writing Research Proposals 437
Appendix B: Sample Informed Consent Form 439
Appendix C: How Your Objective, Research Question, and/or Hypothesis Relates to Your Methodology 441
Appendix D: Statistics Decision Chart 443
Appendix E: Style Manual Summary (APA, MLA, Chicago) 445

Index 447

PREFACE

Welcome to *Straight Talk about Communication Research Methods*! Through this textbook we hope you will catch our excitement with research. Your authors are researchers who—amazingly enough—love doing research. We may be crazy, and we may be academic nerds, but that's not why we love research. We think research is FUN! We feel investigating, following leads, and solving puzzles is exciting.

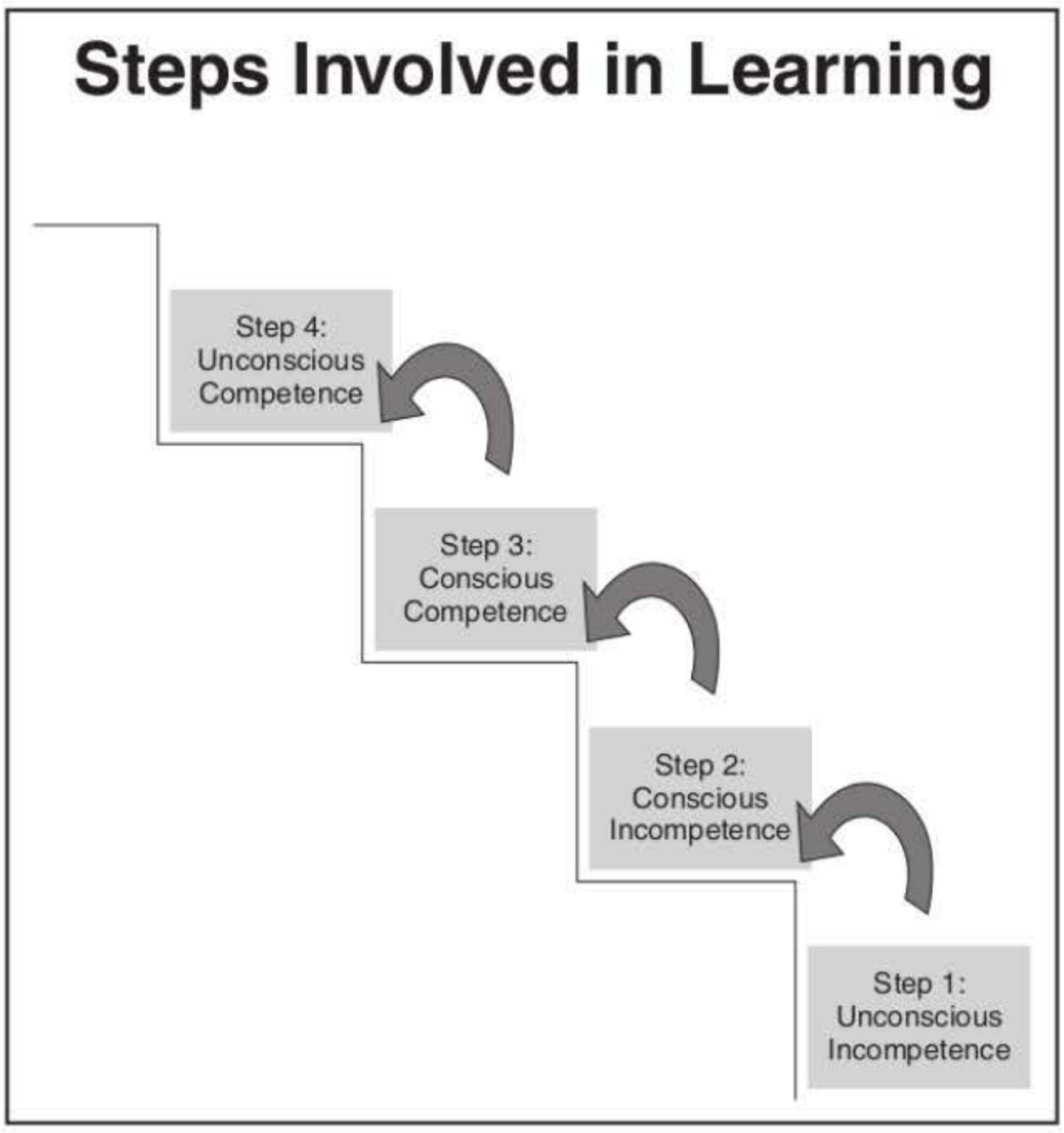
It is our hope that in this book we give you enough information about the foundations of research methods, the choices we as scholars make, and the methodological decisions driving communication scholarship to balance your desire to know and inquire into interesting communication questions while instilling an enthusiasm about the process!

Research is like being a detective. Both researchers and detectives are trying to find out something. Both are asking and answering questions. Both are trying to put together a puzzle to come up with a solution. In both, answering questions leads to more questions. And, in both, seeing patterns is crucial to solving the puzzle.

There is much about the social world that most of us think we know already; yet, there is also much left to learn. This book will ask you to question what you know, why you know what you know, and where that belief came from. While much of the material here is sometimes difficult to understand, we tell our students that their struggle with this material will allow them a place to store the other knowledge about communication and society. We also suggest that when your head begins to hurt, you have really begun the work of thinking about this material. Research Methods may not be an "easy A" class, but it's worth it! You'll learn a lot in this class—perhaps more information you'll use the rest of your career than many other classes. Our students would tell you that we also encourage them to talk with each other about this material. As communication scholars, we often overlook the powerful learning tool of discussing informally what we learn in the classroom. As you learn to talk about these conceptual ideas, you will begin to crystallize your understanding of both communication research methods and theory.

We hope that through this course you'll discover your own joy in conducting research. Some communication students are intimidated when they first encounter

research methods, and we'd like to lessen the intimidation factor for you. To do this, we want to introduce to you a model of the stages of learning (Dubin, 1962; Howell & Fleishman, 1982; Kirkpatrick, 1971).



Courtesy Christine Davis and Kenneth Lachlan. Copyright © Kendall Hunt Publishing Company

You're in Step 1 right now—Unconscious Incompetence. That means you know so little, you don't even know what you don't know! This is a pretty blissful place to be ("ignorance is bliss"), but we're about to move you out of your comfort zone. We're about to move you to Step 2—Conscious Incompetence. We're about to tell you what you don't know. We're going to teach you how to do things, which will move you to Step 3—Conscious Competence, and you will spend much of the semester moving between Steps 2 and 3. We'll teach you something, and you'll be very conscious of the fact that you're learning something new. By the end of the semester, you will have mastered many skills and competencies, and you will be in Step 4—Unconscious Competence for much of the course content. These stages are always uncomfortable because new learning feels awkward. Remember when you were first learning how to drive a car? There was a time when you had to remind yourself to push in the brake, and check your rear view mirror, and for a while that felt very uncomfortable. Luckily for you (and your parents), that stage didn't last long, and soon you were in the stage of Unconscious Competence in your driving—you could get in the car and drive without even thinking about it! We promise that by the end of the

semester, you will be in this final stage for research. You will be able to do things that, right now, you don't even know exist! And, you'll enjoy it!

We've based the structure of this textbook on adult learning theory. Adult learning scholars suggest that learning for adults must be experiential—taking into account the learners' experiences, and integrating the materials into their own lives, combining active experimentation with theory and practical life skills as participants learn both formally and informally through application of course materials to experiences (Dinmore, 1997; Knowles, 1984). Research has also shown that adult learners best remember concepts given to them as spaced repetition—repeated in intervals over time (Spieler & Balota, 1996). In this textbook, we give you information in small chunks that build upon each other, repeating then expanding knowledge. We'll give you multiple passes over concepts—introducing you to concepts in early chapters; then telling you more about those concepts in subsequent chapters. That's why it's going to be important for you to keep up with the material throughout the semester—you don't want to miss any of the early passes over the information.

In this third edition of *Straight Talk about Communication Research Methods*, we've made quite a few substantive changes. Of course, we've updated the information and the examples. We added sections and material on conducting research on, and involving, social media and digital media. Remembering that not all students might be planning to attend graduate school, and to show how research methods are relevant to all students, we added many more examples of how students might use Communication research methods in business and industry jobs after graduation. We greatly rewrote and expanded the qualitative methods section, and included much more detailed information about each method. We included an introductory overview of all qualitative methods (Chapter 14) for those students or classes who don't want to go into as much detail for each of the various qualitative methods. We then follow this with four chapters giving comprehensive instructions on how to conduct a number of different qualitative methods, from social science based qualitative methods (e.g., focus groups and grounded theory), to social constructionist-based qualitative methods (e.g., autoethnography and feminist ethnography), arts-based qualitative methods (e.g., ethnodrama and visual ethnography), and rhetorical criticism (e.g., Burkean criticism and narrative criticism). This edition includes many qualitative methods not included in the previous editions of the textbook as well as additional details about how to conduct each method.

When you graduate with a degree in Communication, your academic department is certifying you are properly socialized into our field. We are indoctrinating you into our community of knowledge—and, like every community of knowledge, we have ways of knowing, ways of seeing the world, ways of thinking, and ways of deciding. We require that you take classes in Communication Theory so you will learn how we in our community think about things. We require that you take classes in Research Methods so you will learn how we know things, describe things, and decide if something is true or not. You're probably had quite a few courses in our field by the time you take this course. You've been told a lot of things about the world, given a lot of facts, and memorized a lot of theories. Have you ever wondered where all

these things, facts, and theories came from? Did someone just make them up so you could have something to be tested on? We know sometimes it feels that way, but this semester you'll learn how to do the same type of research that communication scholars before you have done. You'll see firsthand how theories (and other research questions) begin as a curiosity—an "I wonder if . . ."—and how these musings and wonderings turn into full-blown research, then into facts, knowledge, and theories. Who knows? You might discover that you're the next George Herbert Mead, Barnett Pearce, Kenneth Burke, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, or Marshall McLuhan!

You'll also learn how people in our community prove a point. You'll learn that not everything you read or hear is true, and, as we said, you'll learn how to question what you hear and believe, and how to determine if you want to continue believing it. You'll learn how to make credible claims and how to back them up with evidence so other people will believe what you have to say.

By the way, throughout this textbook we are using the term Communication, or Communication Studies, to refer to our field of study. The field of Communication or Communication Studies is incredibly diverse. In most universities, our community of scholars can include people in fields as varied as health communication, interpersonal communication, organizational communication, cultural studies, rhetoric, mass media, public relations, broadcasting, and film studies, to name only some. At some universities, study of Communication is under an umbrella of Communication Studies; and at other universities, study in a field called Communication Studies is under an umbrella called Communication. When we use either term—Communication or Communication Studies—we are using the term to be inclusive of all scholarship in all forms of human communication—mediated or interpersonal, organizational or rhetorical.

Confused—or curious? For now, don't worry about what you don't yet know. Just sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride!

▼ Student-Oriented Pedagogy

Because we recognize the importance of assessing student learning, we have included features in each chapter that facilitate student learning and help instructors measure learning outcomes.

- Chapter Outlines serve as a map to guide you through the content of the text and focus on key points.
- Key Terms list shows important terms to focus on as you read the chapter.
- Chapter Objectives help you focus on the overall concepts, theories, and skills discussed in the chapter.
- Running Glossary provides the definition of a key term in the margin for quick clarification when reading the material.
- So What? chapter summary reviews the key points explored in the text.

- Chapter Glossary serves as a helpful reference tool at the end of each chapter.
- References list documents the research cited within the chapter.

Instructional Online Enhancements

Both students and instructors have access to online content that is integrated chapter by chapter with the text to enrich student learning. The Web access code is included on the inside front cover of the textbook.

Look for the Web icon in the text margins to direct you to various interactive tools.

References

Dinmore, I. (1997). Interdisciplinary and integrative learning: An imperative for adult education. *Education*, *117*(3), 452–468.

Dubin, P. (1962). *Human relations in administration*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Eves, H. W. (1987). *Return to mathematical circles: A fifth collection of mathematical stories and anecdotes.* Prindle, Weber, and Schmidt.

Howell, W. C., & Fleishman, E. A. (Eds.). (1982). *Human performance and productivity: Information processing and decision making*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1971). *A practical guide for supervisory training and development*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Knowles, M. (1984). *Andragogy in Action.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Spieler, D. H., & Balota, D. A. (1996). Characteristics of associative learning in younger and older adults: Evidence from an episodic priming paradigm. *Psychology And Aging*, *11*(4), 607–620. doi:10.1037/0882-7974.11.4.607

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors wish to gratefully acknowledge the support and encouragement by Kendall Hunt for this book, especially Paul Carty and Angela Willenbring. We would also like to thank and acknowledge the hard work and help of graduate assistant Rebecca Bubp.

Many people have helped and supported us while we worked on this book. Christine Davis acknowledges the memory of Horace Kelly and of Buddy Goodall, who both taught me and mentored me to be a much better researcher. I also want to express gratitude for Carolyn Ellis, Art Bochner, and Ken Cissna, who also mentored and supported me as a scholar. I also must mention the help and encouragement given to me by my husband, Jerry, without whose love and support I would never have achieved anything of significance; and colleagues Deb Breede, Jon Crane, Dan Grano, Shawn Long, and Maggie Quinlan, whose support was especially invaluable to me while I was writing this book. I also want to thank my co-author Ken Lachlan and our contributor Robert Westerfelhaus, both of whom have always been delightful collaborators.

Ken Lachlan would like to thank his graduate school mentors, Bradley S. Greenberg, Chuck Atkin, Stacy Smith, and in particular Ron Tamborini. I would also like to thank Patric Spence for his friendship and collaboration, and thank our frequent collaborators Jennifer Burke, Nick Bowman, Autumn Edwards, Chad Edwards, Donyale Griffin, Xialing Lin, J. J. McIntyre, Lin Nelson, Matt Seeger, Tim Sellnow, Ashleigh Shelton, Stephen Spates, and David Westerman. Finally I extend my deepest thanks to my wife, Heather Gallant-Lachlan. Words cannot adequately express my gratitude for her ongoing love, support, patience, and encouragement.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Christine Davis is Professor at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Her area of academic expertise is in Communication Studies, specializing in the intersection of family, culture, and health communication. Dr. Davis publishes regularly on topics such as children's health, end-of-life communication, disability, and qualitative research methods. Her preferred methodologies are autoethnography, narrative, and critical ethnography. She has over 30 years of research and corporate consulting experience, including as owner of a national marketing research firm and executive director of a nonprofit for older adults. She obtained all three of her degrees in Communication Studies. Her BA is from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (more commonly known as Virginia Tech), her M.A. is from the University of North Carolina–Greensboro, and her Ph.D. is from the University of South Florida. Christine has a loving husband, a wonderful daughter and son-in-law, the most adorable grandson ever, and an awesome Sheltie named Maggie. In addition to conducting research and teaching, she loves to sail, hike, jog, and swim.

Ken Lachlan is Associate Professor at the Department of Communication at the University of Connecticut. Prior to his academic career, he worked in public radio and television promotions for several years. His research interests include the psychological effects of mass media, health and risk communication, social robotics, and new media technologies. Recent publications have appeared in the *Computers in Human Behavior*; *Media Psychology*, and the *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, to name a few. Ken considers himself mostly a quantitative scholar, preferring experimental and survey methodologies in investigating his areas of interest. He has also served as a consultant statistician for various companies and government agencies. He holds a dual B.A. in Communication and Sociology from Wake Forest, an M.A. in Mass Communication from Bowling Green State University, and a Ph.D. in Communication from Michigan State. An avid jogger and diehard hockey fan, Ken lives in Hartford, CT with his wife and their cat.

Robert Westerfelhaus, contributor, is a professor in the Department of Communication at the College of Charleston (South Carolina, USA). He received his Ph.D. and M.A. from Ohio University, and earned his B.A. from Ohio Dominican University (ODU). He has published numerous articles, book

chapters, and encyclopedia entries regarding the mythic and ritual elements shaping American popular culture, examining how these elements reflect, inform, and perpetuate culturally constructed depictions of ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic class. In 2009–2010, he was a Fulbright Fellow at the Instytut Anglistyki of the Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Sklodowskiej in Lublin, Poland.