



# RESEARCH STRATEGY: Qualitative Research & Excellence in Writing

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# Research

- Who needs your research?
- What kinds of research do they need?
- Does the work they need from you contribute to your scientific reputation?
- Is it better to do it on your own or in collaboration with someone else?
- Why collaboration can be more beneficial?
- Is it possible to achieve equity and mutuality in the collaborative research?

# Strategy

- What exactly to study?
- What is the problem targeted by this study?
- What can my expertise contribute to problem-solving?
- Which research questions would allow me to address the problem in the best possible way?
- Would I achieve more if I studied the problem comparatively?
- What exactly should I study?
- Where to study it?
- How can I get access to the needed data?
- What limitations do I anticipate in data collection or analysis?



# Problem Statement

MAKE A STATEMENT:

WHAT IS THE MAJOR CHALLENGE FOR CREATING A  
WORLD-CLASS UNIVERSITY IN UKRAINE?

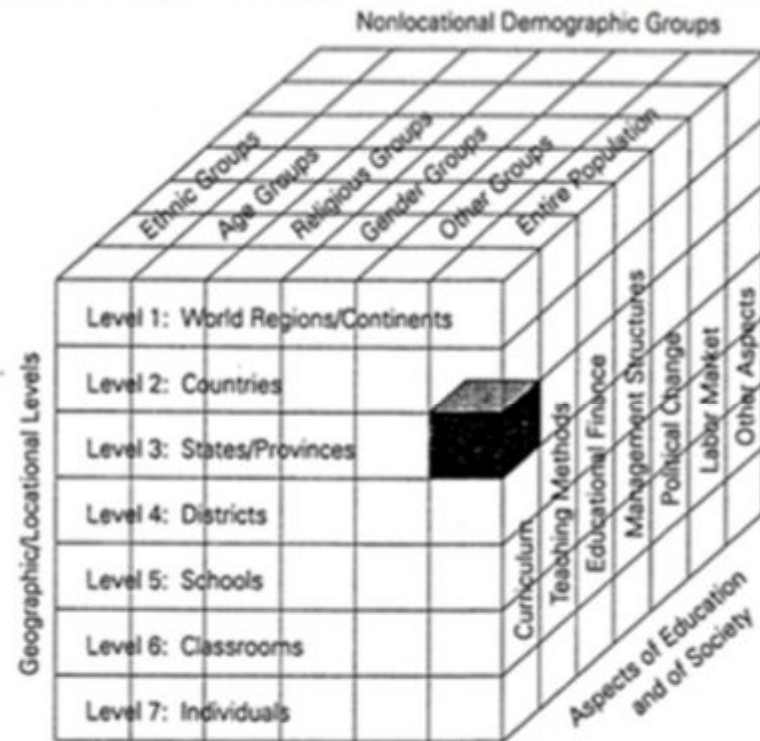
(Write down; 3 sentences; 8 min.)

# Problem Statement

- What makes the problem statement sound like it is a problem?
- What are the important segments of the problem statement?
- Is it important to say what (might have) caused the problem and what has been the progress so far?

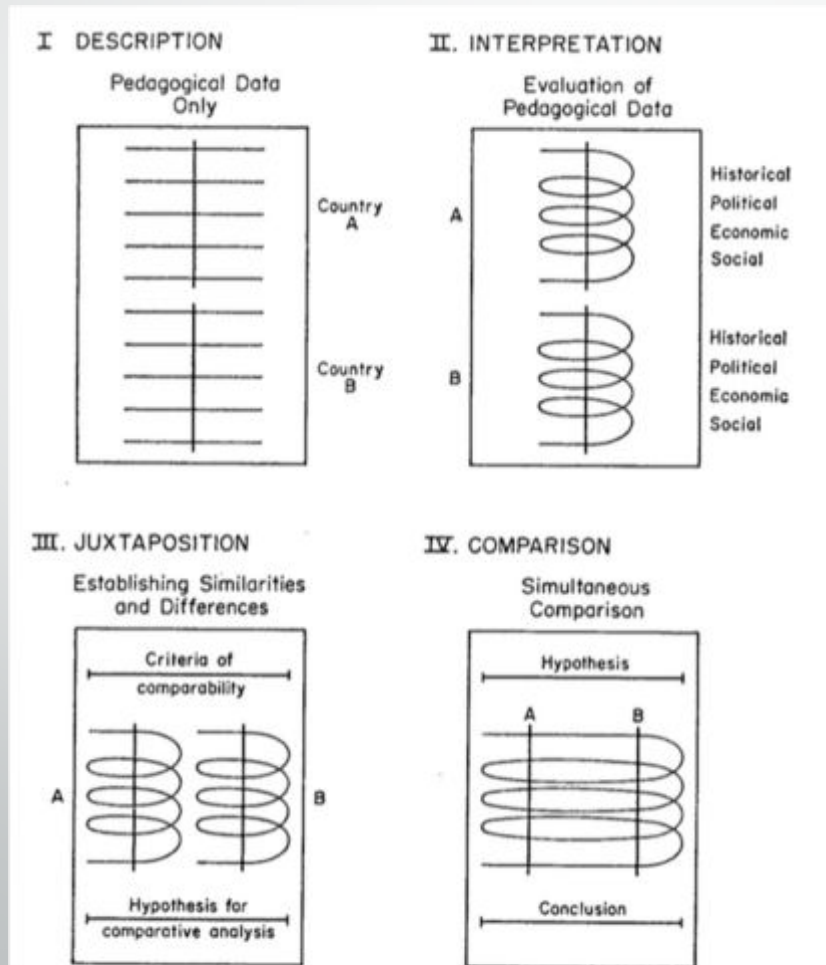
# UNIT OF ANALYSIS

*Figure 14.1: A Framework for Comparative Education Analyses*



Source: Bray & Thomas (1995), p.475.

# WHAT IF I COMPARE?



Source: Bereday (1964), p.28.



# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

MAKE 1-2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS  
TO **FRAME AND FOCUS ON**  
THE DECLARED PROBLEM



# Methodology Choice

- Which data collection methods, quantitative or qualitative, would be a better choice to answer the research questions?
- Which kinds of questions do I need to answer: how or how many? Why or what?
- Will I need to make generalizations?
- What kinds of generalizations: statistical or analytical – do I need to make? Why?

# Qualitative Research Methods

- Participant observation
- Action research
- Discourse analysis
- Ethnography
- (Auto)-biography
- Document/content analysis
- Interview
- Focus group
- Open-question questionnaire
- Case-study (mixed; controversial)

# Interview vs. Focus Group

- Sample
- Access
- Protocol:
  - Interview/ focus group structure
  - Timing
  - Place
  - Verification
  - Publication
  - Ethics

# Interview

- Structured
  - Introduction
  - Order of questions
  - (Provocative) character of questions
  - Participant choice in answering
  - Depth
  - Interviewer's references to personal experiences
  - Interviewer's references to media reports
  - Interviewer's references to scientific reports
  - Asking for artefacts/ copies etc.
- Semi-structured
- Unstructured

# Focus group

- Number of participants (3-5)
- Diversity of participants
- Structure of conversation
  - introduction of project objectives
  - agreement on the conversation structure
  - interview style questions
  - (semi-, un-) structured
  - equal engagement – facilitation
  - timing
  - additional data/ follow-up



# Interview: Exercise

WHAT MAKES A MAJOR CHALLENGE FOR  
YOUR UNIVERSITY TO BECOME WORLD-  
CLASS?

(INTERVIEW: 10 min. each)



# Interview vs. Focus Group

IF YOU WERE THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT,  
WHICH 3 KEY STEPS WOULD YOU  
UNDERTAKE TO TURN YOUR UNIVERSITY  
INTO A WORLD-CLASS INSTITUTION?  
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOICE.

(FG: 20 min)



# Post-Interview and Post-Focus Group

- Post-interview/focus group reflection
- Description of the environment
- Description of the participants' behaviour
- Immediate insights
- Outstanding points
- Coding of participants' names and affiliations
- Data storage
- Transcription
- Verification
- Quotations to be used





# DATA ANALYSIS

- Data coding
  - key themes
  - key sub-themes
  - outliers
- Mind-mapping
- Patterning
- Ordering
- Tabulation/categories
- Communication style (journal)
- Significance
  - empirical
  - methodological,
  - theoretical
  - developmental

# Further Reading: Methodology

Berg, B.L. (1998) *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Browne M.N. and Keeley S.M. (1990) *Asking The Right Questions*. London: Prentice-Hall

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Krueger, R.A. (1994) *Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research (2nd Ed.)*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

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