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Survey Research Design

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to describe survey research design in the context of language education research. In the field of second language education, language surveys are defined as “any studies that gather data on the characteristics and views of informants about the nature of language or language learning through the use of oral interviews or written questionnaires (Brown 2001: 2)”. In this chapter, we will focus mainly on the written questionnaire as it is a major instrument of data collection for a survey. As McKay (2006: 35) points out “surveys are often thought of as exclusively written questionnaires”. The process to design a survey which can yield valid and reliable data will be discussed in this chapter. Then, a section on survey results analysis and a sample study will also be presented at the end of the chapter.

Creswell (2012: 376) maintains that survey research designs are “procedures in quantitative research to collect quantitative, numbered data using questionnaires and statistically analyse the data to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the surveyed population and to test research questions or hypotheses”. Survey studies are useful for describing trends, obtaining information for needs analysis and curriculum development, program evaluation as well as gaining behavioural and attitudinal data. As Gu (2016: 567) notes, the data obtained from survey research can be “insightful and satisfying when patterns emerge from a large number of respondents. When apparent differences or similarities