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There you are talking to a psychology undergraduate about your research when it suddenly dawns on you that you are talking two different languages - methodologically speaking. You thought you understood what the student was saying but little did you know that they thought you meant something else entirely. So here is the latest set of helpful translations to help you get by.

**Methodological Term** Undergraduate student translation

- **Bar chart**: Timetable of events for Student Union pub crawl
- **Cardinal numbers**: The Vatican's lottery selections
- **Central tendency**: Liberal Democrat supporter
- **Chi Square**: Japanese tourist attraction
- **Class interval**: Five minute fag break in lecture
- **Cluster analysis**: Study of crowd behaviour
- **Collaborative research**: Student excuse for copying each other
- **Content analysis**: The art of skim reading journal papers
- **Contingency tables**: Spare office furniture
- **Controlled observation**: Drug free and sober while watching TV
- **Cross sectional research**: Did the whole project in one afternoon
- **Dependent variable**: A what?
- **Disclosure**: Mediocre film starring Demi Moore
- **Dissertation abstract**: Yes it is a bit, isn't it?!
- **Double blind study**: Neither student or supervisor knew what the hell was going on during the project
- **Ecological validity**: Research carried out by a member of *Greenpeace*
- **Experimenter effects**: Hangover
- **Exploratory research**: Only managed to run two subjects
- **Independent t-test**: Statistical test done without help from anyone else
In depth case study  Mum's life story
Indirect observation  A friend of a friend told me
Inferential statistics  Guessed whether the result was significant
Inter-rater reliability  Made up and agreed the results with their best friend
Invasion of privacy  Supervisor checking raw data and reading through the appendices
Longitudinal research  Took more than three weeks to do the project
Matched pair  First two people who signed up for an experiment
Mean  Most common description of the project marker
Median  Person who claims they can talk to the dead
Multiple regression  Something for a paraphiliac no doubt
Multivariate statistics  Most common cause of hyperventilation in undergraduate students
Naturalistic observation  Research done in the pub
Non-treatment group  NHS patients
Observer bias  Manchester United fan
Opportunity sample  The five people who were conned into taking part
Order effects  Remembering whose round it is in the pub
Parametric  Ambulance driver
Path analysis  Gardener's Question Time
Predictive validity  Co-author of the study was Uri Geller
Psychometric tests  Psychology examinations
p value  Price of toilet use in London train stations
Qualitative project  Option to avoid doing statistics
Random number tables  Examination hall layout
Random sample  Using non-psychology students
Repeated measures  Answering all exam questions with the same material
Role-play  Pretending to be a 2i student in front of supervisor
Self-selected sample  Choosing all your family and friends to take part
Semantic differential  Was he the goalkeeper in the 1972 Polish World Cup Squad?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Term</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snowball sampling</td>
<td>Drinking Advocaat and lemonade in the pub all evening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social desirability</td>
<td>Inviting subjects for a drink in the pub afterwards</td>
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<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>Occasional bondage with partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard error</td>
<td>Using ANOVA to analyse everything at every opportunity in the vain hope of impressing supervisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standardised procedure</td>
<td>Experiment that always defaults to Murphy's Law</td>
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<td>Subject pool</td>
<td>University swimming baths</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Something done in a house before moving in</td>
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<td>Target population</td>
<td>The Conservative Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test-retest reliability</td>
<td>Getting best friend to check analysed data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three-way ANOVA</td>
<td>Three students trying to analyse project results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type 1 error</td>
<td>Name, supervisor and title of project wrongly spelt on dissertation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type 2 error</td>
<td>Forgetting to press &quot;save&quot; after four hours of data inputting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unstructured interview</td>
<td>Supervision meeting</td>
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</tbody>
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N.B. About half of these have been published previously. See:
