



What's A Theory?

Design Political Research: Week 8

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Oh, paradigm!



- What the bi~~ is paradigm?
 - "A model or frame of reference through which to observe and understand." (Babbie 32)
 - Epistemology? Approach? Method?

Common Paradigms

- Positivism
- Rational choice
- Structuralism
- Culturalism

Positivism

"Scientific truths could be positively verified through empirical observations and the logical analysis of what was observed." (Babbie 35)

- Reality is *independent* from human feelings, ideas, perceptions.
- Social phenomena have to be treated like *physical objects*.
- Knowledge is *value-free, objective, measurable*.
- Knowledge can only be accessed objectively through a *scientific approach*.

Three Pillars

- Rational choice
- Structuralism
- Culturalism

Theory



- Paradigm: A way of looking.
- Theory: An explanation of what we see.
 - Variables (IVs and DVs)
 - Relations

Components

- Axioms/assumption
- Proposition/argument

Example: Structural realism

- Assumptions
 - International Anarchy
 - States
 - Survival
- Arguments
 - Security dilemma
 - Relative rather than absolute power

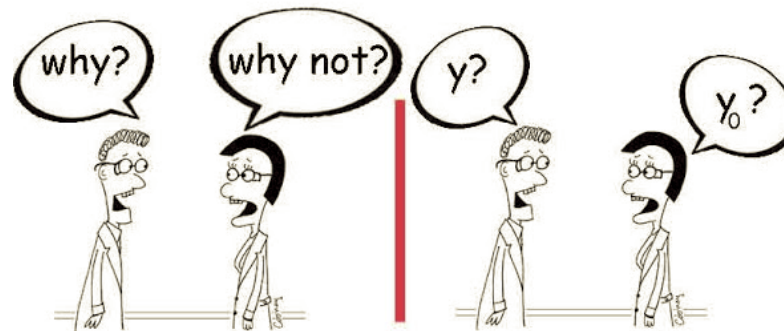


Hypothesis

"How reality works as the theory says?"

- Expectation
- Testable
- Real life

Null hypothesis?



The Difference is subtle

Humor Gags
blogspot.com

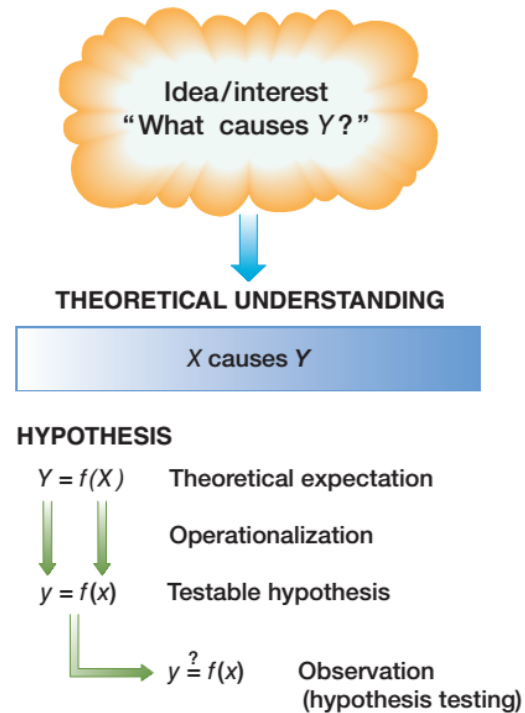
- Baseline: no relation
- Rejecting rather than proving

Hypotheses of Structural Realism

- Balance of power: internal and external
- Power distribution in the international system
 - Unipolar?
 - Multipolar?
 - Bipolar

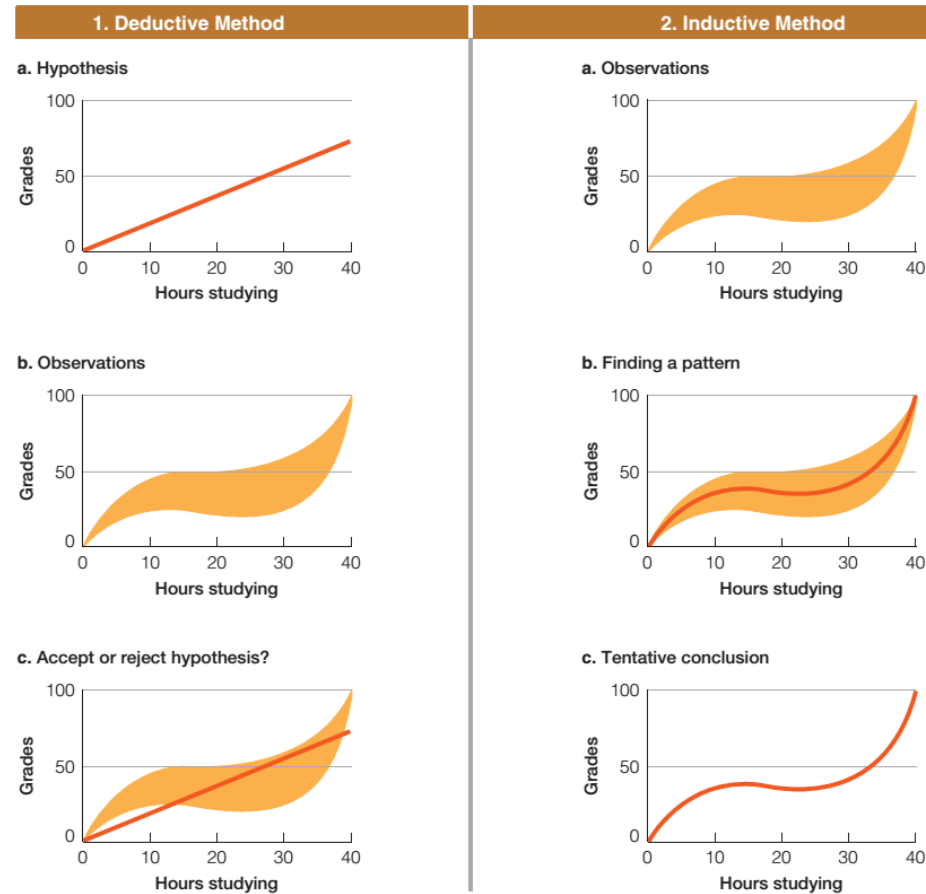


Chain everything up



- Well, deductively...

Deductive and inductive theories



Conduct deductive theory

1. Specify the topic.
2. Specify the range of phenomena.
3. Identify and specify concepts (variables).
4. Find out the relationships.
5. Reason logically from the propositions to the specific topic.

Conduct inductive theory



1. Observation
2. Generalization
3. Reasoning

Big data?



- Valuable
- Dynamic
- Skeptical