People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Mohammed Khider University of Biskra

Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

Department of English Language and Literature

Research Methodology

Syllabus for Second year LMD

Prepared by: Dr. Messaouda BENDAHMANE

Academic Year: 2023/2024

General Course Information

Course Title: Research Methodology

Teaching Unit: Methodological

Target Audience: Second year LMD

Coefficient: 02

Credit: 04

Average teaching Hours: 45 hours (15 weeks)

Number of Sessions per Week: 2 sessions (of one hour and a half for each**)**

Course Delivery Modality: Tutorials (TD)

Follow up and Mode of Evaluation: progressive 50 % (formative assessment) + summative (written exam) 50%

Introductory Note

Research methodology is one of the most important disciplines at university. All students are expected to be acquainted with the necessary research skills and strategies needed to conduct a research which is academically appropriate. The importance of research methodology lies in helping students to improve performance and achievement throughout the different domains of their studies.

Being aware of the fundamental nature of research methodology as a standing discipline and as a key factor in the field of research allows students to involve in the world of academia and write papers of different scientific nature such as dissertations, theses, articles, and so forth. Put it differently, research methodology provides a meticulous research plan and structure to keep students or the researchers-to be- on track by making this process smooth, effective and most importantly manageable. Thus, it gives research legitimacy and provides scientifically sound findings.

Henceforth, it is of vital importance for students to start studying *Research Methodology* as a subject at this level to be well-prepared with the strategies, tools, techniques and methods that enable them to carry out and understand the nature of research. This course is also presented to raise students' interest in this discipline and help to grasp the rules readily and to know how to apply them effectively in their own research to get fruitful results.

Course Description and Outline

1. Course Description

This course is an initiation to research methodology that aims to introduce L2 students to scientific research and guide them to make a comprehensive understanding of research methodology and its crucial importance ad value. As far as the course content is concerned, the lectures attempts to provide grounding theory on some fundamental concepts in order to acquaint students with competences and skills required to carry out a research project. This course aims to elucidate how to formulate a research problem, conduct a critical literature review, take the necessary steps to carry out an effective scientific research project in educational setting and write a clear and compelling research report.

2. General Course Objectives

By the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- Discover basic terminology and fundamental concepts related to academic work and research.
- Distinguish between research and research methodology
- Identify appropriate research topics and research problems in English studies.
- Select and formulate a researchable (topic) problem
- Develop research strategies

- Acquire skills related to searching for reliable academic resources.
- Develop techniques of critical review of literature.
- Evaluate literature form a variety of sources.
- Develop skills related to observation, objective reasoning, scientific curiosity, argumentation and openness to discussion.

3. Prerequisite of the Course

Students should be aware of basic techniques of English use.

4. Methodology of Teaching

Lessons are presented mostly in a form of teacher-student interaction based on discussion and students' engagement in lesson delivery. The lesson is followed by a set of activities that aim mainly to involve learners in the learning process and encourage them in knowledge construction by experiential participation and active collaboration in lesson presentation. Different methods of teaching are employed by the instructor to attain the aforementioned objectives including:

- Class Discussion
- PowerPoint presentation
- Online (Moodle) course presentation (PDF handouts)
- Homework
- Mini projects
- Students' class presentation

5. Course Structure

This course provides an introduction to research methodology for second year LMD students of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. It introduces students to some basic concepts related to academic research, and ultimately focuses on to developing a range of essential skills involved in accomplishing a research project. It attempts to acquaint learners with the necessary information about how research is done and help them practise meaningful learning and scientific inquiry through class assignments and projects. This course is divided into four parts or themes:

The first theme entitled **Introduction to Research** consists of introducing the meaning of research and its fundamental aspects.

The second theme is labelled **Research and Research Methodology**. It aims to shed light on the distinction between research and research methodology as well as bring clarifications to some important elements related to academic research within the framework of research methodology such as research process, research design, and research approach.

The third theme is devoted to the **Research Problem** including problem identification, considerations in selecting a research problem, formulation and evaluation of a research problem and statement of the problem.

The fourth theme is dedicated to tackle issues related to **Literature Review**. It highlights the importance of literature review and its functions, ways of reading the literature and taking notes, using sources and avoiding plagiarism by considering ethical

principles. The course ends up with a research project which includes the most important elements that have been studied throughout the course lectures.

5. Course Thematic Content

Theme I. Introduction to Research

1. Knowledge Construction
2. Defining Research
3. Objectives of Research
4. Motivation in Research
5. General Characteristics of Research
6. Criteria of Good Research
7. Significance of Research

Theme II. Research and Research Methodology

1. Research Method vs. Research Methodology
2. Types of Research
3. Research Process
4. Research Design
5. Research Approach

Theme III. The Research Problem

1. Defining the Research Problem
2. The Importance of the Research Problem

3. Sources of Research Problem for Learners of English
4. Considerations in Selecting the Research Problem
5. Characteristics of the Research Problem
6. Formulation and Evaluation of the Research Problem
7. Statement of the Problem
8. Let's Practise: analysis and evaluation of research problem examples and writing a problem statement

Theme IV. The Literature Review

1. Literature Review
2. Sources of Information
3. Reading the Literature on a Topic
4. Taking Notes
5. Using Sources
6. Citing Sources
7. Plagiarism
8. Ethical Issues / considerations in Reseach
9. Project Work (Essay Writing)

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Knowledge Construction

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Define knowledge construction
- ✓ Understand the process of knowledge construction
- ✓ Determine the different methods underpinning the construction of knowledge
- ✓ Elucidate the importance of knowledge construction and application

Introduction

Undoubtedly, it is essential for students to master the important information they are presented in the different subject contents they have at university. But, in many cases, students are required to reproduce the same information they were initially given. This alone does not give students the critical thinking and reasoning skills that they will need for success in higher academics. The huge amount of information so readily available through the Internet and other sources, students must be able to integrate and evaluate information in order to use it productively, and apply this knowledge to new situations and new problems.

1. Sources of Acquiring Knowledge

People have accumulated a body of knowledge from the time they were born to the present day. One important reason behind people craving for knowledge is curiosity-the desire to discover one's environment, learn new things and improve one's life through problem-solving. For this purpose people depend on several methods / sources of acquiring knowledge as follows:

a. Learned Authority: people refer to an authority such as a teacher, a parent, a boss, an expert or a consultant and seek his / her advice. Such an authority may be based on knowledge or experience or both. For example, if a learner has difficulty in learning a particular subject, he / she may consult a teacher. Learned authority could also be a book / dictionary / encyclopaedia / journal / web-site on internet.

b. Tradition: people tend to easily accept many of the traditions of their culture or forefathers. For example, in matters of food, clothing, communications, religion, one relies on family traditions. On the other hand, students, in case of admission criteria and procedures, examination patterns and procedures, methods of maintaining discipline, co-curricular activities, acceptable manner of greeting teachers and peers rely on school traditions. Long established customs or practices are popular sources of acquiring knowledge. This is also known as tenacity which implies holding on to a perspective without any consideration of alternatives.

c. Experience: Our own prior personal experiences in matters of problem-solving or understanding educational phenomena is the most common, familiar and fundamental source of knowledge.

d. Scientific Method: In order to comprehend and accept learning acquired through these sources, we use certain approaches which are as follows:

(i) Empiricism: It implies relying on what our senses tell us. Through a combination of hearing and seeing we come to know the sound of a train. i.e. through these two senses, we learn to associate specific sounds with specific objects. Our senses also enable us to compare objects / phenomena / events. They provide us with the means for

studying and understanding relationships between various concepts (eg. level of education and income).

(ii) Rationalism: It includes mental reflection. It places emphasis on ideas rather than material substances. If we see logical interconnectedness between two or more things, we accept those things. For example, we may think that conducive school / college environment is expected to lead to better teacher performance.

(iii) Fideism: It implies the use of our beliefs, emotions or gut reactions including religion. We believe in God though we had not sensed God, seen or heard Him nor had concluded that His existence is logically proved.

2. Definition of Knowledge Construction

The search for knowledge is closely linked to the object of study; that is, to the reconstruction of the facts that will provide an explanation to an observed event and that at first sight can be considered as a problem. It is very human to seek answers and satisfy our curiosity. From a constructivist perspective, learning is the process through which people construct meaning that is adaptive in the context in which it was built. This is done by experiencing the world and building on our prior knowledge. In this sense, they "learn best when they are socially interacting within an authentic situation that is relevant to their prior knowledge and goals, and that fosters autonomous and self-directed functioning." (Doolittle & Hicks, 2012)

Knowledge construction is a process by which learners actively build their understanding of a topic or concept through exploration, reflection, and interaction. It involves constructing meaning from the information and experiences gained through learning activities and projects. It is a critical component of effective learning and plays a vital role in the classroom setting (both virtual classrooms and in-person classrooms).

Knowledge construction activities require students to generate ideas and understandings that are new to them. Students can do this through interpretation, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation. In stronger activities, knowledge construction is the main requirement of the learning activity. The strongest activities require students to apply the knowledge they constructed in a different context, helping them to deepen their

understanding further, and to connect information and ideas from two or more academic disciplines (for example, integrating learning from both science and literature).

3. Why is Knowledge Construction Important?

One of the key reasons why knowledge construction is so important is that it promotes deeper learning and understanding. When students engage in knowledge construction, they can strengthen their understanding of the material. This is because they integrate new information with their current topic knowledge. The result is a more robust and lasting comprehension of the material. This leads to a more meaningful and memorable learning experience for students, which can impact their future academic and professional success.

Another reason why knowledge construction is critical in the classroom is because it helps students develop essential skills and competencies. These skills include critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. These skills are increasingly in demand in today's rapidly changing world and are essential to success in academic and professional settings.

When students engage in knowledge construction, they build practical skills. These skills can be applied in real-world situations, reinforcing and deepening their understanding of the material. This leads to a stronger sense of the material overall.

4. How Do Students Engage in Knowledge Construction during Learning Activities and Projects?

Students engage in knowledge construction through various learning activities and projects that promote active exploration and reflection. Some examples of these activities include:

- **Discussions and debates:** students can engage in discussions and debates about a topic, which can help them to gain new perspectives, clarify their understanding of the material, and learn from one another.

- **Group projects:** students can work together on group projects, where they can collaborate to construct new knowledge, share their insights and experiences, and learn from one another in a collaborative learning environment.

- **Inquiry-based learning:** Inquiry-based activities encourage students to explore a topic, ask questions, and connect new information with their existing knowledge.

- **Reflection:** students can reflect on their learning experiences through journaling or other written activities. This helps to solidify their understanding of the material and reflect on their learning journey.

5. What are the Future Implications of Knowledge Construction for Education?

The role of technology in education is increasing. This has the potential to enhance the power of knowledge construction. Virtual learning activities and projects allow students to engage in active exploration and reflection from anywhere and at any time. As a result, it has the potential to become even more effective.

The construction of knowledge is an active process that happens through individual or social engagement. So, learners are not passive receptors; they should be engaged in active learning and supported in the construction of meaning, beyond the classic repertoire of listening, reading, and memorizing.

The construction of knowledge is fostered by authentic and real-world environment. Relevant problems and experiences which are linked to the real world where the learning process is taking place should be explored by learners.

The construction of knowledge happens by building on people's prior knowledge and experience. All learning is built on what the participants already know. This includes all types of learning acquired in any context: cultural knowledge, personal knowledge, metacognitive knowledge, and tacit knowledge.

The construction of knowledge is fostered by the learner's development of self-regulation and self-awareness. Thus, learners should be provided by skills, information, tools and contexts in which they develop their ability to manage their own learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, knowledge construction is a critical component of effective learning and plays a vital role in the classroom setting. Encouraging active construction of understanding promotes deeper learning and helps students develop essential skills. This leads to success in both academic and professional backgrounds. However, planning and hands-on learning activities can overcome challenges in implementing knowledge construction.

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An Introduction to Research

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Identify the meaning of research
- ✓ Explain how research is used to develop new knowledge
- ✓ Identify the objectives of research
- ✓ elucidate the characteristics of research
- ✓ Accentuate the importance, need and significance of research for academic and scientific development

Introduction

Research is required in any field to come up with new theories or modify, accept, or nullify the existing theory. It is search for knowledge or a process that shows how to solve any problem scientifically. Many discoveries and inventions took place through research and world has got so many new theories which help the human beings to solve their problems. It is, therefore, a systematic effort to gain new knowledge in any kind of discipline. For example, Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, JC Bose, John Dewey, Skinner, Piaget and many other scientists and researchers brought innovation and accomplished a

perceptible scientific progress. For that, we may say that it is a journey from known to unknown.

Research is an activity that leads us to finding new facts, information, assisting us in verifying the available knowledge and in making us question things that are difficult to understand as per existing data. To be successful learner, it is important for you to know how to go about making the right decisions by being knowledgeable about the various steps involved in finding solutions to problematic issues.

1. Definitions of Research

Research is a process to discover new knowledge to find answers to a question. According to Thyer (2001), the word research is composed of two syllables, re and search.

Re: is a prefix meaning again, anew or over again.

Search: is a verb meaning to examine closely and carefully, to test and try, or to probe. Together they form a noun describing a careful, systematic, patient study and investigation in some field of knowledge, undertaken to establish facts or principles.

Creswell, (2008) defines research as a systematic investigation to establish the facts. In the broadest sense of the word, the definition of research includes any gathering of data, information and facts for the advancement of knowledge.

In the same vein, Rajasekar et. al. (2006) regard research as a logical and systematic search for new and useful information on a particular topic. It is an investigation of finding solutions to scientific and social problems through objective and systematic analysis. All in all, it is a search for knowledge which leads to discovery of hidden truths. Here knowledge means information about matters. The information might be collected from different sources like experience, human beings, books, journals, nature, etc. Only through research is it possible to make progress in a field because it leads to new contributions to the existing knowledge by seeking predictions of events, explanations, of relationships and theories for them. This is done with the use of study, experiment, observation, analysis, comparison and reasoning.

Research means a search for knowledge. It aims at discovering the truth. It is the search for knowledge through objective and systematic method of finding solution to problems. It is carried on both for discovering new facts and verification of old ones. Therefore, research is a process of systematic in-depth study or search of any particular topic, subject or area of investigation backed by collection, computation, presentation, and interpretation f relevant data.

Research is a structured enquiry that utilizes acceptable scientific methodology to solve problems and create new knowledge that is generally applicable. Scientific methods consist of systematic observation, classification and interpretation of data.

2. Objectives of Research

The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered yet. Though each research has its own specific purpose, there are some general objectives:

- To gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it.
- To portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation, or a group.
- To determine the frequency with which something occurs or with which it is associated with something else.
- To test a hypothesis of a casual relationship between variables.

3. Motivation in Research

What makes people think to undertake research? This is a question of fundamental importance. The possible motives for doing research may be either one or more of the following:

1. Desire to get a research degree along with its consequential benefits;

2. Desire to face the challenge in solving the unsolved problems, i.e., concern over practical problems initiates research;

3. Desire to get intellectual joy of doing some creative work;

4. Desire to be of service to society;

5. Desire to get respectability.

However, this is not an exhaustive list of factors motivating people to undertake research studies. Many more factors such as directives of government, employment conditions, curiosity about new things, desire to understand causal relationships, social thinking and awakening, and the like may as well motivate (or at times compel) people to perform research operations.

4. General Characteristics of Research

Research is a process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting information to answer questions. But to qualify as research, the process must have certain characteristics: it must, as far as possible, be generalised, controlled, rigorous, systematic, valid and verifiable, empirical and critical.

- **Generalised-** The researcher usually divides the identified population into smaller samples depending on the resource availability at the time of research being conducted. This sample is understood to be the appropriate representative of the identified population; therefore, the findings should also be applicable to and representative of the entire population.

• **Controlled** - The concept of control implies that, in exploring causality in relation to two variables (factors), you set up your study in a way that minimizes the effects of other factors affecting the relationship. Some variables are classified as controlling factors and the other variables may be classified as possible effects of controlling factors. Laboratory experiments as in pure sciences like chemistry can be controlled but any study that involves societal issues cannot be totally controlled because in real life there are many factors that affect an outcome.

• **Rigorous** - you must be careful and scrupulous in ensuring that the procedures followed to find answers to questions are relevant, appropriate and justified. Again, the

degree of rigor varies markedly between the physical and social sciences and within the social sciences.

• **Systematic** - the procedure or process being developed to undertake a study should be carefully drafted to ensure that resources utilization is optimized. Chaotic or disorganized procedures would never yield expected outcomes. I other words, the steps should follow a logical sequence to get to the desired outcome. this implies that the procedure adopted to undertake an investigation follow a certain logical sequence. The different steps cannot be taken in a haphazard way but some procedures must follow others.

• **Valid and verifiable** - It is the extent to which a concept, conclusion or measurement is well-founded and likely corresponds accurately to the real world. The word "valid" is derived from the Latin validus, meaning strong. This should not be confused with notions of certainty nor necessity. The validity of a measurement tool (for example, a test in education) is considered to be the degree to which the tool measures what it claims to measure. Validity is based on the strength of a collection of different types of evidence. In terms of research validity is the strength with which we can make research conclusions, assumptions or propositions true or false. Validation refers to accuracy of measurement whether or not it measures what it is supposed to measure. It also ascertains the application of research in finding the solution to an issue in different conditions. This gives a clear direction to the research activity. The findings of a study should be verifiable by the researcher as well as anyone else who wants to conduct the study on similar guidelines/ under similar conditions.

• **Empirical** – The processes adopted should be tested for the accuracy and each step should be coherent in progression. This means that any conclusions drawn are based upon firm data gathered from information collected from real life experiences or observations. Empirical nature of research means that the research has been conducted following rigorous scientific methods and procedures. Quantitative research is easier to prove scientifically than qualitative research. In qualitative research biases and prejudice are easy to occur.

• **Critical** - critical scrutiny of the procedures used and the methods employed is crucial to a research enquiry. The process of investigation must be foolproof and free from drawbacks. The process adopted and the procedures used must be able to withstand critical scrutiny.

For a process to be called research, it is imperative that it has the above characteristics.

5. Criteria of Good Research

Whatever may be the type of research works and studies, one thing that is important is that they all meet the common ground of scientific method employed by them. One expects scientific research to satisfy the following criteria:

1. The purpose of the research should be clearly defined and common concepts be used.

2. The research procedure used should be described in sufficient detail to permit another researcher to repeat the research for further advancement, keeping the continuity of what has already been attained.

3. The procedural design of the research should be carefully planned to yield results that are as objective as possible.

4. The researcher should report with complete frankness, flaws in procedural design and estimate their effects upon the findings.

5. The analysis of data should be sufficiently adequate to reveal its significance and the methods of analysis used should be appropriate. The validity and reliability of the data should be checked carefully.

6. Conclusions should be confined to those justified by the data of the research and limited to those for which the data provide an adequate basis.

7. Greater confidence in research is warranted if the researcher is experienced, has a good reputation in research and is a person of integrity.

6. Significance of Research

- It helps in framing of policies: Research helps in the framing of various government policies. Nearly all the government policies and budgets are planned and executed through research with the help of researcher. Annual budget, monthly budget, monetary and economic policies are all framed by the government. The government is assisted by various organizations for framing the policies through research.

- Basic aim is to gain knowledge: It leads to many ideas and changes old facts.

- It is used in business organization: Many business companies hire researcher to work on various things. It is used in studying the changes taking place in the market. It helps in capital budgeting, tax management and cost saving policies.

- It leads to discovery and innovation of unknown facts and unexplored theories. It leads to the growth of the society and its citizens. It gives chance to the researcher to go deep into the subject and to innovate it.

- It avoids superstitious beliefs, myths and prejudices: Many people are still not aware of the research activities and its importance. Many ancient beliefs and myths have been proven wrong with the help of research.

- It leads to development of social welfare and society.

Content Review

1) Define research

2) Clarify how you will ensure quality in research?

3) What are the characteristics of research?

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Research Method vs. Research Methodology

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Differentiate between research method and research methodology
- ✓ Recognize the importance of both concepts for scientific research

Introduction

Method and methodology form an essential part of any research process. Researchers apply both concepts to conduct their observations or analyses. Knowing the differences and types of methods and methodologies can help learners follow the established strategies or processes required for a successful research project.

1. Definition of Method

Plainly means a particular procedure for accomplishing or approaching something, especially a systematic or established one. Researchers implement systematic methods to conduct a research. They define the research topic to establish a deeper and clearer understanding in the methods section. Furthermore, methods consist of all techniques, strategies, and tools employed by a researcher to complete the experiment and find solution to the research problem. It encompasses both qualitative and quantitative method of

performing research operations, such as survey, case study, interview, questionnaire, observation, etc.

2. Definition of Methodology

Research methodology is a systematic way to solve a problem. It is a science of studying how research is to be carried out. Essentially, the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology. Its aim is to give the work plan of research. In other words, it represents the rigorous analysis of the methods applied in the stream of research, to ensure that the conclusions drawn are valid, reliable and credible too.

Thus, methodology can be understood as a set of specific procedures used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about a topic. It is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. The most important methodological choice researchers make is based on the distinction between qualitative and quantitative data i.e. whether it would collect descriptive data or a quantifiable data.

3. Key Differences between Methods and Methodology

Basis of Comparison	**Research Method**	**Research Methodology**
Meaning	Research Method implies the methods employed by the researcher to conduct research.	Research methodology signifies way to efficiently solving research problems.
What is it?	Behaviour, instrument or tool used in the selection and construction of the research technique	Science of understanding, how research is performed methodically

Encompasses	Carrying out experiment, test, surveys and so on.	study different techniques which can be utilized in the performance of experiment, test, surveys etc.
Comprise of	Different investigation techniques.	Entire strategy towards achievement of objective.
Objective	To discover solution to research problem.	To apply correct procedures so as to determine solutions.

The process of research addresses two major questions i.e. what is to be found and how it is be found. It is like planning a journey where we first decide where we are going and then we decide how we shall be travelling. We have to identify important stopovers and routes, check points, modes available to reach the destination. The steps involved in finding responses to the research questions comprise research methodology. At each operational step in the research process one is required to choose from a variety of methods, procedures and models of research methodology which help you to best achieve the objectives.

Conclusion

The scope of research methodology is wider than that of research method, as the latter is the part of the former. For understanding the research problem thoroughly, the researcher should know the research methodology along with the methods.

In a nutshell, research method refers to the technique which can be adopted to explore the nature of the world that surrounds us. On the contrary, research methodology is the foundation, which helps us to understand the determinants influencing the effectiveness of the methods applied

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Types of Research

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Distinguish between different types of research.
- ✓ Recognize the significance of each type of research

Introduction

Research can be classified on the basis of time, purpose, settings, place and technique. Some research have similarities and some have little variations. But all the types of research share similar significance.

1. Basic Research

It is also called as pure research. Research for the sake of enhancement of knowledge is termed as Basic Research. It is done with the intention of overpowering of the unknown facts. It is concerned with the generalizations and also with the formulation of new theory. Basic research may not produce solutions or results to the present problem

but it contributes something to the scientific knowledge. Though its work may have zero importance, but it may become useful in the future.

2. Applied Research

It is also called as practical research or "need based" research. The main intention is to find solutions to the current problems being faced by an institution, society, business or in government offices. Research to identify social, political and economic changes, which has adverse effects in different sectors are some of the examples of applied research. This type of research is mainly carried on with the secondary data.

3. Empirical Research

It is often referred to as experimental research. In this research, primary data is collected and analyzed, and then interpretation is done and subjected to hypothesis testing. Researcher should develop his experimental designs and should provide working hypothesis before the commencement of his research for good output.

4. Qualitative Research

As the name itself suggests, this research is concerned with the qualitative process. It generally works with the study of human behaviour. By this research one can find the body language, attitude, opinions, feelings etc. from the opposite person through observation. It is mainly helpful for Psychiatrists and interviewers. Many techniques are being used like word association test, sentence completion, drawing pictures, etc. It is needed in times where quantitative research does not work.

5. Quantitative Research

This research is mainly concerned with the measurement of phenomenon in terms of quantity. It involves collecting and analyzing numerical data. It is ideal for identifying trends and averages, making predictions, testing relationships, and generalizing results for large populations subjected to statistical analysis. It relays mainly on primary data like survey method and questionnaire method.

6. Descriptive Research

As the name itself indicates, this research directly deals with description. It includes different data collection like survey method and fact finding techniques. The main character of this research is that, the researcher does not have control over the variables. He should describe what has happened and what is happening.

Some Other Types of Research

Apart from the above types of research, there are many other classifications like

Longitudinal Research which is spread over for a long period of time. In this change takes place gradually.

Historical Research which is concerned with the collecting of auto biographies, letters, documents, enquiries for knowing the past. Simulation Research deals with the creation of an artificial environment which is quite similar to real environment. Depending upon the need of the situation we can create and adjust to it.

Check your understanding

Which type of research do you think you are more likely to use in the educational setting? Justify

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The Research Process

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Determine the different steps governing the research process
- ✓ Understand the role of each step and its importance for the research

Introduction

Conducting research might be difficult, but there are clear processes to follow. The research process consists of a series of systematic procedures that a researcher must go through in order to generate knowledge that will be considered valuable by the project and focus on the relevant topic.

1. Research Process

Scientific research involves a systematic process that focuses on being objective and gathering a multitude of information for analysis so that the researcher can come to a conclusion.

The r**esearch process** is a set of ordered steps a researcher takes to ensure that all parts of an investigation are completed to a high standard. Following the research process

allows the researcher to cover all angles and ensure that the information they gather is reliable and effectively presented. The scientific research process is a multiple-step process where the steps are interlinked with the other steps in the process. If changes are made in one step of the process, the researcher must review all the other steps to ensure that the changes are reflected throughout the process.

1. Formulating the Research Problem

There are two types of research problems: those which relate to states of nature and those which relate to relationships between variables. At the very outset the researcher must single out the problem s/he wants to study, i.e., s/he must decide the general area of interest or aspect of a subject-matter that he would like to inquire into. Initially the problem may be stated in a broad general way and then the ambiguities, if any, relating to the problem be resolved. Then, the feasibility of a particular solution has to be considered before a working formulation of the problem can be set up. The formulation of a general topic into a specific research problem, thus, constitutes the first step in a scientific enquiry. Essentially two steps are involved in formulating the research problem, viz., understanding the problem thoroughly, and rephrasing the same into meaningful terms from an analytical point of view.

2. Extensive Literature Survey

Once the problem is formulated, a brief summary of it should be written down. It is compulsory for a research worker writing a thesis for a Ph.D. degree to write a synopsis of the topic and submit it to the necessary Committee or the Research Board for approval. At this juncture the researcher should undertake extensive literature survey connected with the problem. For this purpose, the abstracting and indexing journals and published or unpublished bibliographies are the first place to go to. Academic journals, conference proceedings, government reports, books etc., must be tapped depending on the nature of the problem. In this process, it should be remembered that one source will lead to another. The earlier studies, if any, which are similar to the study in hand, should be carefully studied. A good library will be a great help to the researcher at this stage.

3. Developing a Working Hypothesis

A research in any field of study does not give proper results unless and until we develop a working hypothesis. It is a tentative statement or assumption regarding the solution to the problem of study. It is an assumption which is used to draw the logical consequences. It is the key point of study and hence it should be limited and should contain much knowledge. It is helpful for researcher for predictions and also maintains complete focus on the study. It should be precise and clearly defined. It gives an idea of the type of data to be used and type of method or techniques for the study. In some research activities like exploratory or formulative, hypothesis is not used for testing.

4. Preparing the Research Design

The research problem having been formulated in clear cut terms, the researcher will be required to prepare a research design, i.e., he will have to state the conceptual structure within which research would be conducted. The preparation of such a design facilitates research to be as efficient as possible yielding maximal information. In other words, the function of research design is to provide for the collection of relevant evidence with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money. But how all these can be achieved depends mainly on the research which may be grouped into five main categories: (i) Explanation, (ii) Description, (iii) Diagnosis, (iv) Experimentation and (v) correlation.

A flexible research design which provides opportunity for considering many different aspects of a problem is considered appropriate if the purpose of the research study is that of exploration. But when the purpose happens to be an accurate description of a situation or of an association between variables, the suitable design will be one that minimises bias and maximises the reliability of the data collected and analysed. There are several research designs, such as, experimental and non-experimental hypothesis testing. Experimental designs can be either informal designs (such as before-and after without control, after-only with control, before-and-after with control) or formal designs (such as completely randomized design, randomized block design, Latin square design, simple and complex factorial designs), out of which the researcher must select one for his own project.

The preparation of the research design, appropriate for a particular research problem, involves usually the consideration of the following:

(i) the means of obtaining the information;

(ii) the availability and skills of the researcher and his staff (if any);

(iii) explanation of the way in which selected means of obtaining information will be organised and the reasoning leading to the selection;

(iv) the time available for research;

(v) the cost factor relating to research, i.e., the finance available for the purpose.

5. Determining Sample Design

The researcher must decide the way of selecting a sample or what is popularly known as the sample design. In other words, a sample design is a definite plan determined before any data are actually collected for obtaining a sample from a given population. A brief mention of the important sample designs is as follows:

- Deliberate sampling
- Simple random sampling
- Systematic sampling
- Stratified sampling
- Quota sampling
- Cluster sampling and area sampling
- Multi-stage sampling
- Sequential sampling

6. Collecting the Data

The method of gathering or collecting the data is planned in data collection design. There are many types for collecting the data. The two types of collecting data are Primary data and Secondary data. Some of the important methods for collecting the Primary data are as follows:

Questionnaire: The method of collecting data in vast geographical areas is done through Questionnaire method. Hence questionnaires are mailed to the research areas and they are distributed among the respondents. It is a time saving and economical method but the main drawback is that the answers given by the respondents are not accurate.

Interview: The investigators prepare a set of questions and ask them in a serial vise to the respondents. There are different types of interview like personal, group, mock and telephone interview. It is fast procedure. We can get extra information which is related to the topic. But it is costly. Some respondents may try to hide some answers. It saves much time of the investigator.

Observation: This is also one type of collecting data primarily. In this researcher observes the day to day process of the society or a single person. Sometimes researcher has to involve in the process. It discovers the human behaviour of the respondent. No doubt this method is cost effective but the data collected is also limited. It can't predict the happenings of the future.

Secondary data can be collected through books, published articles, internet and syndicate services. Syndicate services are companies which collect and sell data to various people who are in need. It is suitable for researcher who wants to survey on large population. The disadvantage of this method is that the researcher will not enjoy extra information and it is very costly. Though the data can be collected in a short span of time but the accuracy cannot be stated.

7. Execution of the Project

After preparing a good design for the process of research, the researcher should move on to the next step of execution. From this stage the researcher starts executing the research design. Training should be given to the surveyors and a working manual should be given to them. The collection of data should be carefully handled.

8. Analysis of Data

Soon after the collection of data, the researcher turns to the process of analyzing the collected data. The raw data will be tuned. There are many things used for analysis like coding, tabulation, editing and statistical analysis. Data will be collected in the form of questionnaires or schedules. Hence the data collected in short forms will be elaborated through coding. Editing can be done at the time of collecting or collecting the data.

Through editing the researcher removes all the mistakes in the project. It will be polished. Through tabulation the researchers do the work of preparing the tables.

9. Hypothesis-Testing

After analysing the data as stated above, the researcher is in a position to test the hypotheses, if any, he had formulated earlier. Do the facts support the hypotheses or they happen to be contrary? This is the usual question which should be answered while testing hypotheses. Various tests, such as Chi square test, t-test, F-test, have been developed by statisticians for the purpose. The hypotheses may be tested through the use of one or more of such tests, depending upon the nature and object of research inquiry. Hypothesis testing will result in either accepting the hypothesis or in rejecting it.

10. Generalisations and Interpretation

If a hypothesis is tested and upheld several times, it may be possible for the researcher to arrive at generalisation, i.e., to build a theory. As a matter of fact, the real value of research lies in its ability to arrive at certain generalisations. If the researcher had no hypothesis to start with, he might seek to explain his findings on the basis of some theory. It is known as interpretation. The process of interpretation may quite often trigger off new questions which in turn may lead to further research.

11. Preparation of the Report or the Thesis

Finally, the researcher has to prepare the report of what has been done by him. Writing of report must be done with great care keeping in view the following:

1. The layout of the report should be as follows:
   (i) the preliminary pages;
   (ii) the main text, and
   (iii) the end matter.

In its preliminary pages the report should carry title and date followed by acknowledgements and foreword. Then there should be a table of contents followed by a list of tables and list of graphs and charts, if any, given in the report.

2. The main text of the report should have the following parts:

(a) Introduction: It should contain a clear statement of the objective of the research and an explanation of the methodology adopted in accomplishing the research. The scope of the study along with various limitations should as well be stated in this part.

(b) Summary of findings: After introduction there would appear a statement of findings and recommendations in non-technical language. If the findings are extensive, they should be summarised.

(c) Main report: The main body of the report should be presented in logical sequence and broken-down into readily identifiable sections.

(d) Conclusion: Towards the end of the main text, researcher should again put down the results of his research clearly and precisely. In fact, it is the final summing up.

Conclusion

The research process involves several steps that make it easy to complete the research successfully. The steps in the research process described above depend on each other, and the order must be kept. So, if we want to do a research project, we should follow the research process steps.

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The Research Design

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Understand the meaning of research design
- ✓ Differentiate between the different types of research design
- ✓ Recognise the characteristics of each type of research design

Introduction

Conducting research implies that researchers have a clear idea of what they want to achieve and how to accomplish it. To this end, they are required to plan ahead before they begin their journey. A good research design enables them to collect accurate and reliable data to draw valid conclusions.

1. Definition of Research Design

Research design refers to the overall plan, structure or framework that guides a research project, from its conception to the final data analysis. Research design involves choosing the right methodology, selecting the most appropriate data collection methods, and devising a plan (or framework) for analyzing the data. In short, a good research design helps to structure our research

2. The Types of Research Design

There are five most common types of research design — descriptive, explanatory, experimental, diagnostic and correlational designs. Researchers use different designs to accomplish different research objectives. At a higher level, we can say that research can also be classified as quantitative or qualitative. Some studies exhibit both qualitative and quantitative characteristics which are shown in the table below:

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Focuses on putting ideas and hypotheses to the test.	Concentrate on generating ideas and developing a theory or hypothesis.
Math and statistical analysis were used to examine the situation.	Summarizing, classifying, and analyzing data were used to conduct the analysis.
Numbers, graphs, and tables are the most common forms of expression.	Mostly represented with words
It necessitates the participation of a large number of people.	Only a few people are required to answer.
Closed questions (multiple choice)	Open-ended inquiries
Key terms: testing, measurement, objectivity, replicability	Key terms: understanding, context, complexity, subjectivity

2.1. Descriptive Research Design

Descriptive research refers to a systematic process of observing and describing what a subject does without influencing them. Methods include surveys, interviews, case studies, and observations. Descriptive research aims to gather an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon and answers when/what/where. It is the most generalised form of research design. To explore one or more variables, a descriptive design might employ a wide range of research approaches. Unlike in experimental research, the researcher does not control or change any of the variables in a descriptive research design; instead, he or she just observes and measures them.

2.2. Explanatory Research Design

Explanatory research is established to explore phenomena that have not been researched or adequately explained before. Its purpose is to discover the why and what of a subject under investigation. In short, it is a type of research design that is responsible for finding the *why* of the events through the establishment of cause-effect relationships. The most popular methods of explanatory research are:

- Literature research
- In-depth interview
- Focus groups
- Case studies

2.3. Experimental Research Design

Experimental research is a type of research design in which the study is carried out utilising a scientific approach and two sets of variables. The first set serves as a constant against which the variations in the second set are measured. Experimental research collects data to assist you in making better judgments. Experimentation is used in any research undertaken in scientifically appropriate settings. The effectiveness of experimental investigations is dependent on researchers verifying that a variable change is due only to modification of the constant variable. The study should identify a noticeable cause and effect. The traditional definition of experimental design is "the strategies employed to collect data in experimental investigations." There are three types of experimental designs:

- Pre-experimental research design
- True experimental research design
- Quasi-experimental research design

2.4. Diagnostic Research Design

Diagnostic research design is a type of research design that tries to investigate the underlying cause of a certain condition or phenomenon. It can assist you in learning more about the elements that contribute to certain difficulties or challenges that your clients may

be experiencing. This design typically consists of three research stages, which are as follows:

- Inception of the issue
- Diagnosis of the issue
- Solution for the issue

2.5. Correlational Research Design

A correlational research design looks into correlations between variables without allowing the researcher to control or manipulate any of them. Correlational studies reveal the magnitude and/or direction of a link between two (or more) variables. Correlational studies or correlational study designs might have either a positive, negative or zero.

Correlational Studies Direction or Types	**What Happens?**	**Example**
Positive correlation	Both variables change in the same direction	As the price of petrol increases, the fare of an auto increases too.
Negative correlation	The variables change in opposite directions	As tea consumption increases, tiredness decreases
Zero correlation	There is no relationship between the variables	Tea consumption is not correlated with height

Correlational research design is great for swiftly collecting data from natural settings. This allows you to apply your results to real-world circumstances in an externally legitimate manner. Correlational studies research is a viable choice in a few scenarios like:

- To investigate non-causal relationships
- To explore causal relationships between variables
- To test new measurement tools

Think and answer

Define research design
What is experimental design?
What is quasi-experimental design?

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The Research Approach

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Understand the meaning of the qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches
- ✓ Highlight the significance of each approach

Introduction

Generally speaking, qualitative and quantitative approaches are the most common approaches utilized by researchers. While these two approaches are often presented as a dichotomy, in reality it is much more complicated. Certainly, there are researchers who fall on the more extreme ends of these two approaches, however most recognize the advantages and usefulness of combining both methods (mixed methods).

1. What is Research Approach?

Research approach refers to the systematic and structured ways that researchers use to conduct research, and they differ in terms of their underlying logic and methods of inquiry. It can be defined as the collection of procedures and plans that decide the overall process of research. Research approach decides the methods for data collection, analysis,

and interpretation. The concept of research approach is followed in the entire research process. There are many factors the selection of research approach, such as, research objective, experience of research, and the audience of research study.

2. Types of Research Approaches

Research approaches can be of three types, i.e., qualitative and quantitative and mixed method.

2.1. Qualitative Approach

There are different definitions for qualitative research. In general, these methods aim to address societies' scientific and practical issues and involve naturalistic and interpretative approaches to different subject matters. These methods utilize various empirical materials such as case studies, life experiences, and stories that show the routines and problems that individuals are struggling with in their lives through focusing on their in-depth meaning and motivations which cannot be defined by numbers. Qualitative research discusses two general criteria including:

• The way to do things

• The outcome of tasks

Qualitative research aims to collect primary, first-hand, textual data and analyze it using specific interpretive methods. It is a useful method in studying a phenomenon with limited accessible information as its nature is exploratory. Thus, the qualitative approach can discover new insights, ideas, and generate new theories. It often concentrates on findings of the events in a particular context in a specific time without considering the consequences and results that may happen in the future or other contexts to generalize the results of the study.

2.2 Quantitative Approach

Quantitative research is the method of employing numerical values derived from observations to explain and describe the phenomena that the observations can reflect on them. It applies the empirical evaluations intending to determine to which degree a norm or

standard is fulfilled in a particular policy or program. Finally, the collected numerical data is analyzed using mathematical methods.

Besides, both qualitative and quantitative research approaches are designed to describe a topic; however, the last part of the definition is the difference which concentrates on different types of analysis methods which is mathematical using statistics in quantitative research. Gathering all these points together, quantitative research aims to define a particular phenomenon by collecting numerical data to address specific questions such as how many and what percentage in different fields including education, psychology, physics, biology, natural sciences, etc. Furthermore, non-numerical information can also be collected in numerical forms using specifically designed instruments. These methods enable collecting quantitative data even from subjects which are about beliefs and attitudes. In other words, quantitative methods are the ways of determining social reality and employing specific questions to achieve numerical data for these specific purposes.

2.3 Mixed-method Approach

Mixed-method methods simply employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches based on the purpose of the study and the nature of the research question aiming to provide a better understanding of the subject. However, the focus can be on both methods equally or on one of the methods considering the selected integration process.

Utilizing the integration of both methods can help researchers to address complex research circumstances in different research fields such as social and health research. As these methods cover the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative methods, they can be useful in case that employing one of the approaches is not adequate in a study.

Nowadays, in an interdisciplinary research atmosphere, a team of researchers with different methodological choices and interests can also benefit from utilizing mixed methods. Mixed methods are utilized in different fields and disciplines ranging from psychology to health and education as well.

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The Research Problem

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Define the research problem
- ✓ Depict the main sources for selecting or identifying the research problem
- ✓ Identify the major criteria of the research problem selection
- ✓ Depict the essential characteristics of the research problem

Introduction

It is believed that a good piece of research starts as questions that need to be answered, or situations that confront people in their daily lives, at work or at school, and require an immediate remedy. However, the word problem may cause different controversies for novice researchers who are usually unaware of the various principles of scientific research. All research studies start as question to be answered or a problem that people encounter and want to find solutions to. Let us agree that the research problem is the first and most important step of any research because it is like the basis upon which the research process is constructed.

1. Defining the Research Problem

A research problem is a statement about an area of concern, a condition to be improved, a difficulty to be eliminated, or a troubling question that exists in scholarly literature, in theory, or in practice that points to the need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation.

Broadly speaking, any question that we want to be answered and any assumption or assertion that we want to challenge or investigate can become a research problem or a research topic for a study. However, not all questions can be transformed into research problems and some may prove to be extremely difficult to study.

According to Kothari (2010), Research problem, in general, refers to some difficulty which a researcher experience in the context of either a practical or theoretical situation and want to obtain the solution for the same.

According to Bryman (2007), a research problem is a definite or clear expression [statement] about an area of concern, a condition to be improved upon, a difficulty to be eliminated, or a troubling question that exists in scholarly literature, in theory, or within existing practice that points to a need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation.

A research problem does not state how to do something, offer a vague or broad proposition, or present a value question. It should be noted that although the formulation of research problem might seem easy, this is not true. It is somehow difficult to formulate the research problem simply and clearly. Formulating an idea into a problem that is researchable is quite complex. It may take years to decide for some and just a few minutes for others to decide the research problem to be studied.

Significant knowledge of both the subject area and research methodology are highly required to succeed in developing a neat problem for research. It is essential for the problem we formulate to be able to withstand scrutiny in terms of the procedures required to be undertaken. Hence, we should spend considerable time thinking it through (Kumar, 2011).

2. The Importance of the Research Problem

Having an interesting topic is not a strong enough basis for academic research. Without a well-defined research problem, you are likely to end up with an unfocused and unmanageable project. For example, you might end up repeating what other people have already said, trying to say too much, or doing research without a clear purpose and justification. Rather, you need a clear problem in order to do research that contributes new and relevant insights.

The formulation of a research problem is the first and most important step of the research process. It is like the identification of a destination before undertaking a journey. In the absence of a destination, it is impossible to identify the shortest – or indeed any – route. Similarly, in the absence of a clear research problem, a clear and economical plan is impossible. To use another analogy, a research problem is like the foundation of a building. The type and design of the building are dependent upon the foundation. If the foundation is well designed and strong you can expect the building to be also. The research problem serves as the foundation of a research study: if it is well formulated, you can expect a good study to follow. According to Kerlinger (1986, p. 17), "if one wants to solve a problem, one must generally know what the problem is. It can be said that a large part of the problem lies in knowing what one is trying to do".

3. Sources of Research Problems for Learners of English

For many students, the process of choosing a topic is fraught with anxiety and indecision. In some contexts, the department provides a list of potential topics. At undergraduate level, many students have not yet formed a clear idea of their specific academic interests or where they can expect to work after graduation and this can hinder the process of arriving at a topic. As indicated below, it is helpful to inform one's thinking from a variety of sources and reflect critically on the information one gathers. This will be particularly helpful during the process of narrowing the research topic and formulating a research question (or questions).

3. 1.Your university studies

Look at the course material and lecture notes from the subjects included in your degree programme. Consider the following:

- What did you enjoy doing? What did you find interesting?
- What did you find difficult? What did you dislike studying?
- What study-related problems did your fellow students experience during their studies?
- What topics or issues might be particularly relevant to your future career?

3.2. Your school years

Think back to your school years. What issues or problems do you remember related to teaching, learning and communication in the school context? These may be specific to teachers and the teaching process, fellow students, learning materials, the curriculum…etc.

3.3. Your work experience

Some students may already have professional language teaching or translation experience, whether from full-time or casual part-time work. Such experience can provide valuable insights into language-related issues that arise in work-related contexts, some of which may invite research. If you have work experience, reflect on issues that arose during your interaction with learners, colleagues, texts and didactic materials.

3.4. The world around you

Non-academic texts such as magazines, newspapers or institutional websites are often an important source of information about topics of current concern or importance in society. Taking notes of recurring topics or issues, different points of view and examples is a good way of tracking public discussions and framing of topics in the public arena. For instance, you may identify certain tensions relating to language instruction or language use within particular contexts that invite further exploration.

Digital texts often represent a less formal text type but they are also an important medium for the use of English. Consider the use of English on the Internet and in

telecommunications within your cultural context. English commonly appears in emails and text messages, and on social networking sites. What could you investigate about language use in these texts?

Texts are not the only sources of information; social contacts, whether family or acquaintances, can help stimulate your thinking. For instance, talk to people in your family who are teachers or who work in institutions where foreign languages are used (such as businesses or banks) and enquire into their experience and views on the position and use of particular languages.

3.5. The university library

Browsing the bookshelves in the sections for English language, linguistics, translation and education can be an effective way to gather ideas. While your university likely has an electronic catalogue, leafing through the physical books in specific subject areas can provide insights into commonly addressed topics and may help to generate ideas for further work. Once you identify topics that appear relevant to your context or interests, search for other books on the same general theme.

4. Considerations in Selecting a Research Problem

A good problem statement begins by introducing the broad area in which your research is centered, gradually leading the reader to the more specific issues you are investigating. In selecting a research problem/topic there are a number of considerations to keep in mind which will help to ensure that a study will be manageable and that you remain motivated. The considerations are:

i. Persuasive Topic: The problem that is taken up for research should not only be of ample interest to the researcher but also the one that is continuously motivating to ensure consistent efforts to find a solution. The significance is greatly reduced if the idea is to just get some superficial knowledge about the problem and not to lead the researcher to resolve.

ii. Viability: A problem that has been identified to be studied should be decided on the basis of whether it is actually possible to be resolved. A problem which has not been foreseen earlier may be selected but then the resources availability should be considered.

iii. The So What Test: A research problem should be able to pass the *"So What" test* in social research to ascertain the meaningfulness and relevance of studying a particular problem. If the problem does not lead to a result which may lead to further study or analysis, then, it has to be avoided.

According to Kumar (2011), a few more considerations that assist a researcher to ensure that the study will remain manageable and that you will remain motivated are:

a. Interest: Interest should be the most important consideration in selecting a research problem. A research endeavor is usually time consuming, and involves hard work and possibly unforeseen problems. One should select topic of great interest to sustain the required motivation. If you select a topic that does not greatly interest you, it could become extremely difficult to sustain the required motivation and put in enough time and energy to complete it.

b. Magnitude: It is extremely important to select a topic that you can manage within the time and resources at your disposal. Narrow the topic down to something manageable, specific and clear. Sufficient knowledge about the research process is needed to be able to visualize the work involved in completing the proposed study. Even if you are undertaking a descriptive study, you need to consider its magnitude carefully.

c. Measurement of concepts: If you are using a concept in your study (in quantitative studies), make sure that you are clear about its indicators and their measurement. For example, if you plan to measure the effectiveness of a health promotion program, you must be clear as to what determines the effectiveness and how it will be measured. You should not use concepts in a research problem that you are not sure how to measure it. This does not mean that you cannot develop a measurement procedure as the study progresses.

d. Level of expertise: Make sure that you have an adequate level of expertise for the task you are proposing. Allow for the fact that you will learn during the study and may receive

help from your research supervisor and others, but remember that you need to do most of the work yourself.

e. **Relevance:** Select a topic that is of relevance to you as a professional. Ensure that a study adds to the existing body of knowledge, bridges current gaps, or is useful in policy formulation. This will help you to sustain your interest in the study.

f. Availability of Data: If any topic entails the collection of information from secondary sources (office records, client records, census or other already-published reports, etc.) make sure that this data is available and in the format you want before finalizing a topic.

g. Ethical Issues: Another important consideration in formulating a research problem is the ethical issues involved. In course of a research study, the study population may be adversely affected by some of the questions (directly or indirectly); deprived of an intervention; expected to share sensitive and private information, or expected to be simply experimental 'guinea pigs'. How ethical issues can affect the study population and how ethical problems can be overcome should be thoroughly examined at the problem-formulation stage.

5. Characteristic of Research Problem

Knowing the characteristics of a research problem is instrumental in formulating a research inquiry.

a. Novel: An ideal research problem introduces a fresh perspective, offering something new to the existing body of knowledge. It should contribute original insights and address unresolved matters or essential knowledge.

b. Significant: A problem should hold significance in terms of its potential impact on theory, practice, policy, or the understanding of a particular phenomenon. It should be relevant to the field of study, addressing a gap in knowledge, a practical concern, or a theoretical dilemma that holds significance.

c. Feasible: A practical research problem allows for the formulation of hypotheses and the design of research methodologies. A feasible research problem is one

that can realistically be investigated given the available resources, time, and expertise. It should not be too broad or too narrow to explore effectively, and should be measurable in terms of its variables and outcomes. It should be amenable to investigation through empirical research methods, such as data collection and analysis, to arrive at meaningful conclusions A practical research problem considers budgetary and time constraints, as well as limitations of the problem. These limitations may arise due to constraints in methodology, resources, or the complexity of the problem.

d. Clear and specific: A well-defined research problem is clear and specific, leaving no room for ambiguity; it should be easily understandable and precisely articulated. Ensuring specificity in the problem ensures that it is focused, addresses a distinct aspect of the broader topic and is not vague.

e. Rooted in evidence: A good research problem leans on trustworthy evidence and data, while dismissing unverifiable information. It must also consider ethical guidelines, ensuring the well-being and rights of any individuals or groups involved in the study.

Exercise

- ✓ Define the importance of a research problem.
- ✓ List at least four sources for identifying research problems in the area of education.
- ✓ Mention the main characteristics of good research problem.

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Formulation and Evaluation of Research Problem

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Determine the process of research problem formulation
- ✓ Evaluate a research problem

Introduction

Formulation of a research problem is the most crucial part of the research journey as the quality and relevance of a research project entirely depend upon it. Every step that constitutes the 'How' part of the research journey depends upon the way the researcher formulated the research problem.

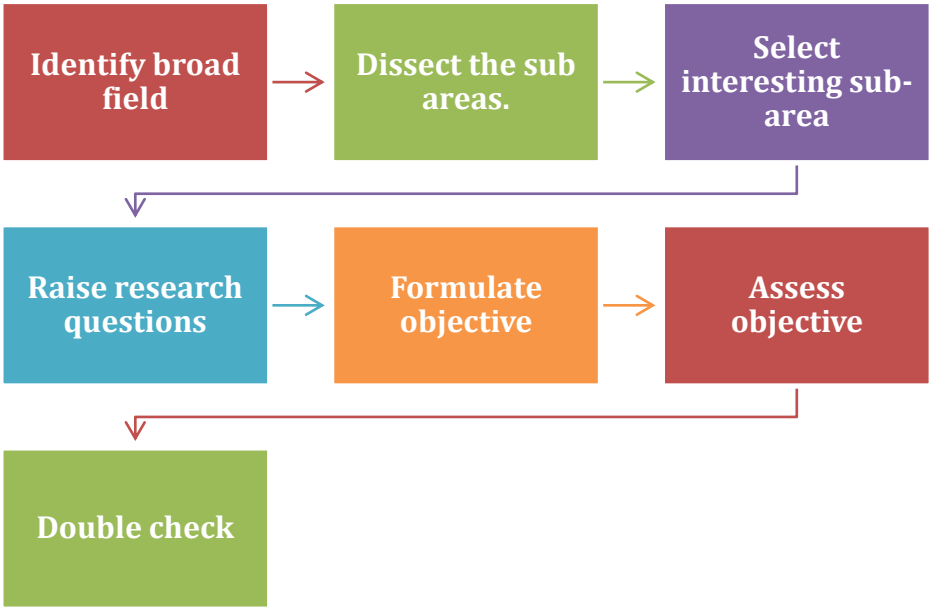
1. Identification and Formulation of the Research Problem

After a problem has been selected, the next task for you is to define it in a form amenable to research. The definition of a problem amounts to specifying it in detail and narrowing it down to workable size. Each question and subordinate questions to be answered are specified at this stage and the scope and limits of investigation are

determined. Usually, it is necessary to review previous studies in order to determine just what is to be done.

2. Steps in Formulating a Research Problem

The process of formulating a research problem consists of a number of steps. Working through these steps presupposes a reasonable level of knowledge of the broad subject area within which the study is to be undertaken and the research methodology itself. A brief review of the relevant literature helps in broadening this knowledge base. Without such knowledge, it is difficult to 'dissect' a subject area clearly and adequately. If you do not know what specific research topics, ideas, questions, or issues you want to research, first go through the following steps:



Step 1: Identify a broad field or subject area of interest. Ask yourself, 'What is it that really interests you as a professional?' This will help you to find an interesting topic and one which may be of use to you in the future. For example, if you are a social work student, inclined to work in the area of youth welfare, refugees, or domestic violence after graduation, you might take to research in one of these areas. Or if you are studying marketing you might be interested in researching consumer behavior.

Step 2: Dissecting the broad area into subareas. At the onset, you should realize that all the broad areas– youth welfare, refugees, domestic violence, consumer behaviour, etc have many aspects. For example, there are many aspects and issues in the area of domestic violence. In preparing the list of subareas, you should also consult others who have knowledge of the area and the literature in the subject area. Once you have developed an exhaustive list of the subareas from various sources, you proceed to the next stage where you select what will become the basis of an inquiry.

Step 3: Select what is of most interest to you. It is neither advisable nor feasible to study all subareas. Select the issues with which you are passionate. Because your interest should be the most important determinant for selection, one way to decide what interests you most is to start with the process of elimination. Go through the list and delete all those subareas in which you are not very interested. Towards the end of this process, it will become very difficult for you to delete anything further. You need to continue until you are left with something that is manageable considering the time available, your level of expertise, and other resources needed to undertake the study. Once you are confident that you have selected an issue you are passionate about and can manage, you are ready to go to the next step.

Step 4: Raise Research Questions. At this step ask yourself, 'What is it that I want to find out about in this subarea?' Make a list of whatever questions come to your mind relating to your chosen subarea and if you think there are too many to be manageable, go through the process of elimination, as you did in Step 3.

Step 5: Formulate Objectives. Both your main objectives and your sub-objectives now need to be formulated, which grow out of your research questions. The main difference between objectives and research questions is the way in which they are written. Research questions are obviously that – questions. Objectives transform these questions into behavioral aims by using action-oriented words such as 'to find out', 'to determine', 'to ascertain', or 'to examine' etc. Some researchers prefer to reverse the process; that is, they start from objectives and formulate research questions from them. Some researchers are satisfied only with research questions and do not formulate objectives at all. If you

prefer to have only research questions or only objectives, this is fine, but keep in mind the requirements of your institution for research proposals.

Step 6: Assess Your Objectives. Now examine your objectives to ascertain the feasibility of achieving them through your research endeavor. Consider them in light of the time, resources (financial and human), and technical expertise you have.

Step 7: Double-check. Go back and give final consideration to review whether or not you are sufficiently interested in the study, and have adequate resources to undertake it. Ask yourself, 'Am I really enthusiastic about this study?' and 'Do I really have enough resources to undertake it?' Answer these questions thoughtfully and realistically. If your answer to one of them is 'No', reassess your objectives.

2. Evaluation of the Problem

It is worthwhile for you to ask yourself a series of questions before you undertake the research. The questions should be helpful in the evaluation of the problem on various criteria. All such questions must be answered affirmatively before the study is undertaken. What are the questions that we should ask?

i) Is the problem researchable? There are certain problems that cannot be effectively solved through the process of research. A researchable problem is always concerned with the relationship existing between two or more variables that can be defined and measured. The problem should be capable of being stated in the form of workable research questions that can be answered empirically.

ii) Is the problem new? There is no use in studying a problem which has already been adequately investigated by other researchers. To avoid such duplication, it is essential to examine very carefully the literature available in the field concerned. The problem should be selected only when you are convinced that it is really a new problem which has never before been investigated successfully. However, it must be noted that a researcher may repeat a study when he/she wants to verify its conclusions or to extend the validity of its findings in a situation entirely different from the previous one.

iii) Is the problem significant? The problem should be such that it is likely to fill in the gaps in the existing knowledge, to help to solve some of the inconsistencies in the previous research, or to help in the interpretation of the known facts. The results or findings of a study should either become a basis for a theory, generalisations or principles. Besides, they should lead to new problems for further research or have some useful practical applications.

iv) Is the problem feasible for the particular researcher? A research problem may be researchable, new or significant, and yet not feasible because of the following considerations:

a. Research competencies: The problem should be in an area in which the researcher is qualified and competent. He/she must possess the necessary skills and competencies that may be needed to develop and administer the data gathering tools, and interpret the data available for analysis. The researcher should also have the necessary knowledge of research design, qualitative and quantitative techniques of data analysis etc. that may be required to carry out the research to its completion.

b. Interest and enthusiasm: The researcher should be genuinely interested in and enthusiastic about the problem he/she wants to undertake for research.

c. Financial considerations and feasibility: The problem should be financially feasible. The researcher should ascertain whether he/she has the necessary financial and temporal resources to carry on the study. The cost is an important element in feasibility. It is important to estimate the cost of the project and assess the availability of funds. This will determine whether the project can be actually executed.

d. Administrative considerations: In addition to personal limitations, financial and time constraints, the researcher should also consider the nature of data, equipment, specialised personnel, and administrative facilities that are needed to complete the study successfully. He/she should check whether he/she is able to get the cooperation from various administrative authorities for collecting various types of data.

e. Time: Projects are a time bound exercise. Most of you, if not all, are already engaged in more than one activity in office, at home and at social organizations. It is important to assess the time required to complete a study.

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Statement of the Problem

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Highlight the importance of a well-written problem statement
- ✓ Identify the main elements in the statement of the problem
- ✓ Ascertain how to systematically write the 'statement of the problem'.

Introduction

A research problem statement has to be adequate as different people may interpret it in many ways and draw inferences that the researcher has not even thought of. It has to be established that this statement leads only in a single direction and leads only to where one wants to reach. This would also avoid new generalized issues arising out of the work.

1. Statement of the Problem

When you have identified a research problem, determined that it meets the criteria of a good research problem, and designated that it suits either the quantitative or the qualitative approach, you can proceed to write it down in the 'statement of the problem' that build the introduction section. Besides the research problem, however, the statement

of the problem also includes four other aspects. These five elements are presented in the following sequence: (1) topic; (2) research problem; (3) a rationale (or justification of the importance) of the problem as found in the past research and practice; (4) deficiencies in existing knowledge about the problem; and (5) the audiences that will benefit from a study of the problem (Creswell, 2014). If these five elements are properly pointed out, you will be able to write good introductions for your research proposal (and report later).

a. The Topic

As stated earlier, the research topic is a broad subject or issue addressed by a study. According to Creswell (2014), the topic is stated at the beginning of the "statement of the problem" to reach three goals: motivating readers to keep on reading, generating their interest in the study, and providing an initial frame of reference for understanding the entire research topic. By starting with a broad topic that can be easily understood, the readers are gradually brought into the study and are encouraged to read beyond the first page.

To ensure that your research topic statement generates the readers' interest and offers an initial frame of reference for the topic, you need to place a cogent narrative hook in the first sentence of the first paragraph of your introduction section. The following four types of information are effective alternatives you can use.

- ✓ First, start with a provocative question or statement, such as

  "Why do Algerian students achieve a minimum reading proficiency?" and "Despite its crucial role to enable students to speak in English, good English pronunciation skills have been the most frequently neglected in EFL classrooms."

- ✓ Second, start with statistical data, for example,

  "More than 50% of Algerian students have been learning online using smartphones."

- ✓ Third, state the purpose or intent of the study, e.g.,

  "The purpose of this study is to explore the perception of EFL teachers of blended learning."

- ✓ Fourth, start with a clear need for research, such as

"The unsatisfactory critical thinking development through language learning has been drawing increased attention among ELT scholars."

b. The Research Problem

After stating the broad topic, you should then narrow it to a particular research problem. It is frequently presented in a single sentence or as a couple of short sentences in various forms. The first form of the research problem is obtained from personal or practitioner experiences. It is called practical research problems. For example, can you identify the practical issue in the following research problem concerning the use of ICT in EFL learning?

Since Information and Communication Technology offers big opportunities for teachers to create a more attractive and informative learning environment and enables students to access learning activities and materials anytime and anywhere, more and more English teachers have tried to use it to advance students' learning achievement. However, the use of ICT in many EFL classrooms in Algeria tends to reduce the students' reading proficiency.

The research problem can also be stated as a deficiency in the literature. Such problems are based on a need for further research due to the existence of a gap in the literature, or there is conflicting evidence in the literature, or there is a need to extend the research into other areas. This type of problem is called a research-based research problem. Both of the following examples are based on a research need for more information.

Most previous studies investigating students' perception of ICT integration in EFL learning were conducted at the tertiary education level. Similar studies conducted at the secondary school level are still meagre.

A research problem statement can also blend a practical and a research-based problem. Look how both problem types are stated in the following:

There is a need to explain why the use of ICT in many EFL classrooms in Algeria reduces the students' reading proficiency (the practical approach) and to make up for a lack of research about appropriate and effective practices of using ICT tools to develop reading skills (the research-based approach).

c. Rationale *(or Justification of the Importance)* ***of the Research Problem***

Stating the problem is not enough. You should also justify or provide the rationale (or reasons) why the problem is important to study. This justification is presented in several paragraphs of the introduction section in which you provide proof of the need to study the problem. The evidence for the justification can be provided by citing from three sources: scholarly justification (i.e., the ideas or findings of experts and researchers as reported in the literature); the professional experiences that practitioners have had in the workplace; and your (as the researcher) personal experience. The first two sources are usually used in both quantitative and qualitative research while the third is used in qualitative research only. It is worth noting that personal experience should not be used solely but in combination with one or more scholarly justification and professional experience.

Scholarly justification is the most common form of rationale. It could be obtained from researchers' recommendations for future research usually provided in the concluding paragraph of a research article. For example, note the following suggestion for further study written in the concluding paragraph of a research article titled" The Effect of Using Short Stories on Secondary School Students' Critical Reading".

You might cite Nazara (2019) to justify a research problem focusing on "the effect of short stories reading on male and female primary school students' critical reading".

> Based on the findings and discussion provided in the previous sections, it can be concluded that short stories can be used as an alternative instructional material to improve students' critical reading skills. … the participants of this study were students of the same grade at a single school. To get more valid results, further study is needed to investigate the effect of using short stories to develop critical reading skills at different levels of language proficiency, comparing gender, comparing children and adults, and comparing learners with different learning styles (Nazara, 2019)

Professional experiences could also be used to justify the importance of a research problem. In the following example, the researcher used some English teachers' experiences in teaching writing to justify his research problem.

> In August 2019, I got an opportunity to facilitate an essay writing workshop for 25 English teachers at Biskra University. Through an interview administered at the beginning of the workshop, many of the workshop participants pointed out that their students encountered various problems in writing, and the top three were related to lexical difficulties, grammar, and paraphrasing sources to avoid plagiarism.

> Therefore, there is a need to find out effective teaching methods for developing students' writing vocabulary, grammar, and paraphrasing skills.

In the following example, the researcher used his personal experience to justify the need to develop students' critical reading skills.

> Some years ago while I was trying to provide the students who attend my reading classes in the Department of English at Biskra University with up-to-date reading materials by selecting some texts from English newspapers and magazines, I realized that some of the materials attempt to influence the reader's thinking and behavior.

d. Deficiencies in Existing Knowledge

Deficiencies in existing knowledge refer to the inadequacy of the present state of knowledge available in the past literature or from practical experiences to address the research problem. Deficiencies in the past literature may be stated as the need to lengthen a study, replicate a study, explore a phenomenon, collect information from participants with heterogeneous demography, lift marginalized people's voices, etc. Deficiencies from practical experiences may be in the form of the unavailability of workable solutions for difficulties encountered by students or teachers. While reviewing these deficiencies, state two or three reasons why existing literature and practice are deficient in addressing the research problem toward the end of the introduction section of your study.

e. The Audiences

To show the significance of studying your research problem, you need to identify the audiences in your "statement of the problem" section. The audiences include individuals and groups who will read and potentially benefit from the information provided in your research. They can vary depending on the nature of your study. ELT research audiences generally cover researchers, policymakers, educators, practitioners, and individuals participating in the studies.

Writing the Statement of the Problem

Writing the introduction or "statement of the problem" that builds the introduction section of your research proposal or report sets the stage for readers to understand your project and appreciate its strong study orientation. As indicated from the discussion above, your statement of the problem should include five aspects: research topic, research problem, justification for the problem, deficiencies in the evidence, and beneficial audiences. Do not forget to cite and reference every source of information you include.

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Let's Practice

Read carefully and do the assignment

Narrowing your topic

The topic you initially choose may be very broad. It is quite normal to start with a general topic and then go through a process of narrowing or refining it to arrive at a research question (or questions) or topic with a specific focus. Typically this will involve narrowing it to a particular group of people, level and location or context. For example, you won't investigate 'English language learners', but rather learners (male or female) in a particular year of study on a particular degree programme in a particular department (or school).

If you are thinking about investigating learners' understanding or use of a particular aspect of English (whether a syntactic structure or vocabulary) or skill, you will likely focus on a particular context of use, such as a specific text type or communicative context.

If majoring in literature, you can narrow your topic by limiting your study to a particular theme, period, author or work. You might examine the characters, the depiction of places or people, or perhaps metaphors that appear in the work(s) you select.

Alternatively, you could compare the works by two authors, or novels from different periods. In addition to studying the content of the literary work, you might consider investigating issues related to the production, reception and translation of the work. For instance, you might investigate how the author's personal beliefs, whether religious, philosophical or political, are represented in his/her work, how the work of another author influenced the style of writing of your chosen author, or the sociopolitical reasons why a particular author or work was popular at a given time. Sometimes a particular novel becomes successful long after the author is dead; alternatively, the novel is more popular in translation in a foreign country than it ever was in the original in the author's own country – you might ask yourself why. For this type of project, you will do library work; that is, the information you need for your project will be found in reference texts in the library and online.

If your project is in the area of translation, you might compare language use in a particular text type (for example, advertising texts, product descriptions or medical texts) in each of the two languages you study. As terminology in particular specialized fields, such as law, may lack a one-to-one correspondence in the source and target language, you might choose to investigate this lack of congruence and enquire into how translators have approached the translation of specialized texts. Alternatively, you might examine how students in a particular year of study translate certain linguistic features into the target language. Translation majors with an interest in literature might investigate how particular cultural concepts have been conveyed in the translated work of a particular author.

An additional consideration when formulating a research topic concerns access to the information or data needed to help you answer your research questions. A research topic that seeks to prove or disprove an idea or claim may be based on a hypothesis. This is a narrowly focused claim, something you believe to be true based, for example, on observations of your environment combined with insights acquired from academic literature. To test your hypothesis, that is, to determine whether convincing evidence exists to support your claim, you will probably collect and analyse data. Thus, before deciding to undertake this type of study, you need to ensure you are able to compile (and analyse) the required data.

Zareen noticed that female and male university students in her country seemed to approach their studies differently; she also noticed that within her English education degree programme, girls usually achieved higher grades than boys. She looked at the statistics on education and literacy provided by UNESCO on the Internet. These showed that in her country more girls completed primary, secondary and tertiary education than boys. This led to her interest in exploring the general topic of gender and achievement in language studies at university. After talking to people and reading introductory literature on gender and educational achievement, she decided that students' grades were related to their attitude towards their studies. This prompted her to formulate a more specific topic: What attitudes do male and female students in their third and fourth years in the Department of Foreign Languages have towards their studies?

As 'attitudes' was still a very fairly general concept, she talked to teachers and the parents of her friends about the reasons why girls were more successful and sought information on motivation and achievement in introductory textbooks in the library. As a result, she identified two main factors linked to motivation and achievement that she considered likely to be most relevant to her cultural context: social pressure and job prospects.

Following this, Zareen's main hypothesis was that female students on her study programme were more successful than male students because they invested more effort in their studies than male students, as evidenced by their behaviour. Her second, related, hypothesis was that girls felt more social pressure to achieve than boys (i.e. their families had higher expectations of them).

To test her hypotheses, Zareen looked at students' behaviour (class attendance, completion of homework, hours of study a week), their results (their level of achievement), and their beliefs and their family's beliefs about the importance of success at university. She used a questionnaire to collect data on these related topics. These data provided her with evidence that could be used to test her claim.

As her general topic, Zakia wanted to examine differences in the depiction of women in literary works from a particular period in two different cultural contexts. Her preliminary idea was that the particular social roles assigned to women in novels produced in different cultural contexts reflect different notions of what is socially acceptable for each gender in the respective contemporary sociocultural context. After consulting academic literature on how gender is performed in different social and cultural contexts, she narrowed her focus to a specific topic. She decided to compare the depiction of the social roles of middle-class women in an early twentieth-century novel by a British author with a novel by an Egyptian author from the same period.

4. Write down your topic in general terms.

5. Start narrowing your topic by adding more precise information. This could be information about the group of people or author you intend to study, the place (or institution) where your informants are located, a particular approach to teaching, a particular text type or subject area, or a concept or theory from literary studies. Don't limit yourself to only one specific focus, but consider alternatives.

Noting these down can help you keep an open mind about different possibilities at this early stage.

6. Compare the different ways you have found to focus on your topic with your classmate.

7. Focusing on one example, discuss how you could develop it into a specific research question.

Group work

Read the four examples of problem statement provided and evaluate them based on what have been seen earlier.

Examples of "Statement of the Problem"

The Influence of EFL Learners' Standard Arabic Interference on their Written Production: An Error Analysis Study on the Use of Articles (a, an, the)

A Case study of third year LMD English students at Biskra University

Statement of the Problem

Writing skill is one of the productive skills in language learning it is less spontaneous but more permanent since it takes much time and concentrated practice. Making students produce a neat, organized and error free piece of writing is the desire of EFL teachers who face numerous problems committed by learners that interrupt their EFL learning. . One of these problems is "Interference" which is regarded as the most common error committed by learners. It refers to the speakers or writers applying knowledge from their mother tongue to a second language or a foreign language. It occurs when the rules of L2 and L1 of the learner are conflicted with each other. Therefore, the difference between the two languages leads learners to encounter significant difficulties in learning and applying foreign languages rules; especially when it comes to the writing process.

The Role of Oral Presentations in Reducing EFL Learner' Speech Anxiety

The Case Study of Second Year EFL Students at Mohamed Khieder University of Biskra

Statement of the Problem

The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately is the main aim of learning a foreign language. Speaking is considered as the most difficult among the four skills. English as a foreign language (EFL) learners encounter some speaking difficulties which are caused by fear of negative evaluation, fear of facing audience, fear of public speaking and other negative factorsThe fear of public speaking is called speech anxiety. This factor is believed to have a serious negative impact on students' performance. It is observed that EFL students show poor achievement in oral expression especially in using and communicating in the foreign language.

Many students of English at the University of Biskra are not able to speak English adequately due mainly to the lack of practice. We have focused on second year students of English because they have learnt the basic rules of this language and it is time to develop their speaking skill effectively. These students display some levels of speech anxiety despite their awareness of the language grammatical rudiments. In most cases, it was speech anxiety which prevents learners to communicate successfully. It is important to consider that EFL learners have limited opportunities to practice the foreign language outside the classroom. In this respect, the present study suggests the use oral presentations as an activity to reduce learners' speech anxiety and to improve their speaking performance.

Investigating the Role of Using Small Group Discussion in Enhancing EFL Learners' Speaking Fluency

Case Study of Second Year EFL Students at Biskra University

Statement of the Problem

Learning foreign languages has many goals to be achieved but the main goal is to be able to communicate effectively in that language. We observed that learners of English as a foreign language (EFL learners) have problems communicating in English, among which, is the inability to speak fluently. The latter is highly remarked as a problem in oral classes.

The reasons behind the learner's inability to speak fluently are numerous and varied. To start with, learners are taught the language with the idea that they are only receptive to grammar. In fact, most of the teachers tend to use the maximum of class time talking without involving the learners in the process of communication; as a result, the learners will become less involved and by time the communicative purpose will not be achieved. Furthermore, the ability to speak freely is not given by nature to all learners; so, this remark is for shy learners. In fact, shy learners must be taken into account as special cases. Since the classroom is the primary context, in which learners have the opportunity to use the target language, the teachers' methods are believed to influence greatly learners' language use.

Developing learners speaking skills, precisely speaking fluency, requires teachers to overcome many obstacles. Teachers could give learners more time to learn and communicate in English in class. They could also organize the class into small group discussion so that all learners would have an opportunity to speak and express themselves. This study is expected to permit the learners to assume more responsibility for their own learning through developing social skills and becoming involved in class practices

Investigating the Role of Reading Comprehension Strategies in Enhancing EFL Learner's Critical Thinking

The Case of First Year Master EFL Students at Mohamed kheider University of Biskra

Statement of the Problem

Being a critical thinker is an essential quality in learning languages in general and in learning English as a foreign language in particular. The main feature of critical thinking is that it encourages active learning by teaching students how to think rather than what to think. However, most EFL (English Foreign Language) students seem to be incapable to think critically. They accept any information they receive from the teacher without questioning or analyzing to draw conclusions based on critical judgments to achieve higher-order of thinking. This can be due to many reasons, such as the lack of background knowledge, the absence of good instruction, and both teachers and students seem to give less importance to developing critical thinking skills. The present study mainly focuses on the importance of critical thinking as a key to better achievement and the importance of reading comprehension strategies in enhancing learner's critical thinking.

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Literature Review

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Define the research literature and its importance
- ✓ Identify and describe the different sources of literature review
- ✓ Evaluate the reliability of different sources
- ✓ Develop the skills needed for doing a critical literature review

Introduction

Research studies call for advanced critical thinking, argumentation, writing and research skills. For a research to be successful, one should go through the different steps that require patience and cautiousness. An important step that is considered as the backbone of research is review of the literature. The latter provides the researcher with the basic knowledge that may provide him with energy and guidance throughout the work. It is one of the most challenging and time-consuming stages of any research project. It involves gaining a deeper understanding of the topic through locating and reading a wide variety of relevant books and articles. While you may have consulted academic literature for previous university assignments, your research project will involve a more systematic review of literature related to your topic. This part of doing research is usually an ongoing task in the sense that you will

reread selected works during the writing stage and search for related items when you notice a gap in your review of the literature.

1. What is a Literature Review?

Paltridge and starfield (2007) define review of the literature as a description, synthesis and analysis of major studies related to the topic of the research. Anderson (2005) states that review of the literature is a summary, analysis, and interpretation of the theoretical and research literature related to a topic. In other words, the literature review situates a given topic in relation to previous research. It is not only a summary but a discussion of previous and current research in regard to its relevance and usefulness to your work.

One of the essential preliminary tasks when you undertake a research study is to go through the existing literature in order to acquaint yourself with the available body of knowledge in your area of interest. Reviewing the literature can be time consuming, daunting and frustrating, but it is also rewarding.

2. Functions of the Literature Review

The literature review is an integral part of the research process and makes a valuable contribution to almost every operational step. In its comprehensive form, literature review aims at analysing, examining, recording, and critically evaluating of related body of knowledge.

It has value even before the first step; that is, when you are merely thinking about a research question that you may want to find answers to through your research journey. In the initial stages of research it helps you to establish the theoretical roots of your study, clarify your ideas and develop your research methodology. Later in the process, the literature review serves to enhance and consolidate your own knowledge base and helps you to integrate your findings with the existing body of knowledge. Since an important responsibility in research is to compare your findings with those of others, it is here that the literature review plays an extremely important role. During the write-up of your report it helps you to integrate your findings with existing knowledge – that is, to either support or contradict earlier research. The

higher the academic level of your research, the more important a thorough integration of your findings with existing literature becomes.

In relation to your own study, the literature review can help in four ways. It can:

a. Bring clarity and focus to your research problem

When reviewing the literature you learn what aspects of your subject area have been examined by others, what they have found out about these aspects, what gaps they have identified and what suggestions they have made for further research. All these will help you gain a greater insight into your own research questions and provide you with clarity and focus which are central to a relevant and valid study. In addition, it will help you to focus your study on areas where there are gaps in the existing body of knowledge, thereby enhancing its relevance.

b. **Improve your research methodology**

Going through the literature acquaints you with the methodologies that have been used by others to find answers to research questions similar to the one you are investigating. By becoming aware of any problems and pitfalls, you will be better positioned to select a methodology that is capable of providing valid answers to your research question. This will increase your confidence in the methodology you plan to use and will equip you to defend its use.

c. Broaden your knowledge base in your research area

The most important function of the literature review is to ensure you read widely around the subject area in which you intend to conduct your research study. It is important that you know what other researchers have found in regard to the same or similar questions, what theories have been put forward and what gaps exist in the relevant body of knowledge.

d. Contextualize your findings

Obtaining answers to your research questions is comparatively easy: the difficult part is examining how your findings fit into the existing body of knowledge. How do answers to your research questions compare with what others have found? What contribution have you been able to make to the existing body of knowledge? How are your findings different from those of others? Undertaking a literature review will enable you to compare your findings with those of others and answer these questions. It is important to place your findings in the context of what is already known in your field of enquiry.

3. The Relationship between Literature Review and Research Project

Since a literature review is an evaluative report of studies related to your selected area, it should describe, summarize, evaluate and clarify this literature. It should give a theoretical basis for the research and help you determine the nature of your own research. The literature review is an essential part in research projects. As a researcher, you must indicate that you know where your topic is positioned within your field of study.

✓ A research project is undertaken in response to a literature review. Doing a literature review for a topic often reveals areas requiring further research. In this way, writing the literature review helps to formulate the research question.

✓ A literature review helps to establish the validity of a research project by revealing gaps in the existing literature on a topic.

Identifying literature for your research project is not finding and copying information from books or personal websites, Wikipedia, blogs or any other of the thousands of non-academic websites that exist on the Internet.

Exercise

According to your own background knowledge, what are the sources that you can use in the literature review? Name them and provide examples for each type.

6. Recording Bibliographic Information

As you begin to find academic sources for your work, make a habit of noting down the relevant bibliographic information. Don't wait until you start to write up your list of references; by that time you will have forgotten where you found material and you most likely won't have all the details you need to include for each item. While it is usually possible to check incomplete bibliographic references by searching for the item on the Internet, it is still advisable to record the complete reference at the start. This is the information you will need to record:

Author or editor: Some articles or books may have more than one author; you need to record all names. Some books may be edited volumes. This means that the book contains chapters by different authors; the editor is the person responsible for assembling and revising the whole work, but he/she may also have authored one (or more) of the chapters. If you use a chapter from such a book, you must note both the name of the editor and the author. If you are using a document from the Internet, it may not necessarily be clear who the author is. Look for the name of the institution. Use this in place of the author's name. If the document has no author and there is no name of an institution, this is probably a sign that it is not an appropriate bibliographic reference for your research.

Title: Some articles or books may have a long title. Note down the complete title. If it is an edited work, you need the title of the book and the title of the chapter(s) you use. Most documents you use from the Internet will also have a title. Again, if there is none, this is probably a sign that it is not an appropriate bibliographic reference for your research.

Year, publishing company, page numbers; volume and issue number: The year of publication is provided on almost all published material. If it is a book, convention requires that you also record the city where it was published; this is usually printed on one of the first pages of the book (ask your supervisor or a librarian if you can't find it). For chapters from an edited volume, the page numbers of the chapter are needed. For a journal article, record the page numbers of the complete article, together with the journal's volume number and issue number (if they exist).

7. Analysing the Literature

Literature review is written to highlight the specific arguments and ideas in a specific field. By highlighting these arguments, the writer attempts to show what has been studied in the field. While analysing the literature, the researcher should do the following:

1. It is important to show that you know what authors have written on a given topic, but it is worthy to explain what the information quoted means in relation to the topic.(Aim to keep voice central by using evidence).
2. The researcher should state his plan to expand existing knowledge after providing commentary on the literature in his field (Say why and how the study will contribute to existing knowledge).
3. It is important to provide enough background information to previous research so that the context of the proposed research is clear (Describe, summarize, clarify and evaluate).

While attempting to summarize the previous researches, the researcher should consider the following questions: *what*, *when*, *where*, *who* and *how* it was done.

- What has already been undertaken in the field and the result achieved?
- When was the research conducted? (To know whether the research contemplated is in vogue at the moment or not).
- Where was the research conducted? (The geographic base of the study)
- Who were the subjects of research?(This helps the reader to avoid extending previous works to new populations)
- How was the research conducted? (To inform the reader about the different methods employed by previous researchers so he can identify methodological weaknesses.

Following the analysis of literature in a systematic way, the researcher will obtain general conclusions that may help him give structure to the literature review and thus start writing. To analyse literature, carefully designed table including the author, date, subjects, methodology and conclusions can be exceedingly helpful in cutting through a great mass of literature.

8. Presenting the Review

A literature review can be written in different forms: it may be combined with the introduction of the thesis, or written in essay format. It may also form part of a larger research project such as chapters within a thesis, or it may be an independent written work.

The way a review of literature is presented differs in a journal article or short research proposal from that found in a dissertation or thesis. In the former case, the audience is generally other researchers who are knowledgeable in the field and consequently they do not require extensive narrative. It normally has an introduction, which lays the basis for the review. Another section should outline the major methods and procedures used, including data sources and limitations. The review normally concludes with a summary that brings together the discoveries.

⚐ **In the introduction, the researcher should:**

- Define or identify the general topic, issue, or area of concern, thus providing an appropriate context for reviewing the literature.
- Point out overall trends in what has been published about the topic; or conflicts in theory, methodology, evidence, and conclusions; or gaps in research and scholarship; or a single problem or new perspective of immediate interest.
- Establish the writer's reason (point of view) for reviewing the literature; explain the criteria to be used in analyzing and comparing literature and the organization of the review (sequence); and, when necessary, state why certain literature is or is not included.

⚐ **In the body, s/he should:**

- Group research studies and other types of literature (reviews, theoretical articles, case studies, etc.) according to common denominators such as alphabetical order, conclusions of authors, chronological order… etc.
- Summarize individual studies or articles with as much or as little detail as each merits according to its comparative importance in the literature, remembering that space (length) denotes significance.

- Provide the reader with strong "umbrella" sentences at beginnings of paragraphs, throughout, and brief "so what" summary sentences at intermediate points in the review to aid in understanding comparisons and analyses.

In the conclusion, s/he should:

- Summarize major contributions of significant studies and articles to the body of knowledge under review, maintaining the focus established in the introduction.
- Evaluate the current "state of the art" for the body of knowledge reviewed, pointing out major methodological flaws or gaps in research, inconsistencies in theory and findings, and areas or issues pertinent to future study.
- Conclude by providing some insight into the relationship between the central topic of the literature review and a larger area of study such as a discipline, a scientific endeavor, or a profession.

9. Questions a Literature Review Should Answer

Asking questions such as the following will help the researcher sift through his/her sources and organize the literature review. Remember, the literature review organizes the previous research in the light of what you are planning to do in your own project.

- What are the major and recent works done in the field? What are the significant discoveries, key concepts, arguments, and/or theories that scholars have put forward?
- On which particular areas of the topic has previous research concentrated? Have there been developments over time? What methodologies have been used?
- Are there any gaps in the research? Are there areas that haven't been looked at closely? Are there new ways of looking at the topic?
- What future directions should research in this subject take?
- How will your research build on or depart from current and previous research on the topic? What contribution will your research make to the field.

10. Mistakes Commonly Made in Reviewing Research Literature

In order to help the reviewer avoid mistakes in conducting a literature review, some of the most common mistakes are listed below. The researcher:

1. does not clearly relate the findings of the literature review to the researcher's own study;
2. relies on secondary sources rather than on primary sources in reviewing the literature;
3. uncritically accepts another researcher's findings and interpretations as valid, rather than examining critically all aspects of the research design and analysis;
4. does not report the search procedures that were used in the literature review.

Conclusion

Review of the literature is an important part of a research. It is often the most time consuming part of research. If done well, literature review reflects the quality of research. It is worth to note that it is an ongoing process that requires critical thinking and reading. If the researcher gets deeper into the process of literature review, he will establish the validity and credibility of his work. As stated by Abraham Lincoln "A capacity and taste for reading gives access to whatever has already been discovered by others".

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Instructor: Dr. Messaouda BENDAHMANE **Academic year:** 2023/2024

Literature Review: Sources of Information

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Identify and describe the different sources of literature review
- ✓ Determine the criteria of sources selection
- ✓ Evaluate the reliability of different sources used in the literature review

Introduction

Starting research often means finding an overview of a topic, checking facts and data, checking dates of significant events, or looking up definitions of specialized terms. Researchers need to have background information, including the scope of the topic area, noteworthy people, and statistics to help jumpstart their research.

1. Evaluation Criteria

When you chose a topic and determined your research questions, you conducted preliminary research to stimulate your thinking. Reviewing the research literature means finding, reading, and summarizing the published research relevant to your question. It is very important to review the literature early in the research process for several reasons:

- It can help you turn a research idea into an interesting research question.

- It can tell you if a research question has already been answered.
- It can help you evaluate the interestingness of a research question.
- It can give you ideas for how to conduct your own study.
- It can tell you how your study fits into the research literature.

Before deciding whether or not to incorporate what you have found into your literature review, you need to evaluate the resources to make sure that they contain information which is valuable and pertinent. This is especially true when the resources you retrieved are not collected by an academic library, but conveniently accessible through Internet search. Web resources need more careful thought to ensure their quality.

Accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency and coverage are the five basic criteria for evaluating information from any sources.

	Questions to ask:
Accuracy	• Is the information reliable? • Is the information error-free? • Is the information based on proven facts? • Can the information be verified against other reliable sources?
Authority	• Who is the author? • Does he or she have the qualifications to speak/write on that topic? • Is the author affiliated with a reputable university or organization in this subject field?
Objectivity	• What is the intended purpose of the information? • Is the information facts or opinions? • Is the information biased?
Currency	• When was the information published? • Is the information current or out-dated? • Does currency matter in this topic?
Coverage	• Does the information covered meet your information needs? • Does it provide basic or in depth coverage?

2. Finding Academic Sources

For your research project, you must as far as possible use authoritative sources. These will usually be academic, meaning that they are articles published in journals or books whose authors are usually affiliated to a university. When we say the author is an authority, this means that the work produced by this person has been critically reviewed by peers also knowledgeable about the field of study, and these have endorsed the work. The author may have published a number of pieces on the same general topic area, demonstrating a depth and breadth of knowledge about the field, and a development in his/her grasp of the issues.

At this stage, researchers are ready to conduct a more focused, systematic search for informative primary and secondary sources which include a wide range of types, among which:

i. **The internet**: it is a great source for preliminary research and can help you to learn more about any topic. While the Internet represents a tremendous resource, it is important to remember that there is no quality control of the information you find. Therefore, you need to be careful when using the Internet to avoid any problems.

☞ **Use keywords:** To find relevant information from books, journals, electronic databases or the Internet, you need to think of keywords that will guide your search. However, you should be careful and selective when using keywords for your search. To find literature for your research project using keywords, do not write a sentence (or a question) in the search field. To search using keywords, identify the most important terms that are used to talk about your topic (e.g. 'colonialism', 'motivation', 'simultaneous interpretation'...) together with words that are important to describe a particular aspect of your topic (e.g. type of institution, the level of students, gender, nationality, language . . .).

Example: To find literature on students' attitudes towards their studies and levels of achievement, Zareen used the following keywords: 'gender', resources 'student achievement', 'university grades', 'attitudes' and 'study habits'. She usually combined two of these terms – for example, she typed in 'gender' and 'student achievement' – or even three terms: 'gender', 'attitudes' and 'student achievement'. Between each keyword she typed 'and'.

Practice

1. An effective search usually means combining a keyword 'term' with a keyword descriptor. Try the following two searches using **www.scholar.google.com**. Replace the word 'Arabic' with your L1. Compare the results from each search. Which search produced more useful results?

a. simultaneous interpretation AND university students AND English AND Arabic;

b. simultaneous interpretation AND Arabic.

2. Write down five or six different keywords for your research topic. Which ones do you think would be good combinations for your bibliographic searches? Compare your list and your combinations with those of your classmate. Now do a search with your keywords using **www.scholar.google.com**. Which combination gave you more results? Which combination gave you the most useful results?

☞ **Use reliable sources:** the internet is a very important source of information. However, websites are not always credible sources as many of them do not provide the author's name, so it can be hard to tell if they are made by experts. Websites often do not cite their sources, and they typically do not subject their content to peer review. For these reasons, you should carefully consider whether any web sources you use are appropriate to cite or not.

Some websites are more credible than others. For more reliable sources look for DOIs (Digital Object Identifier), and URLs (Uniform Resource Locator, e.g. URLs that end with **.edu** are specifically educational resources; URLs that end with **.gov** are government-related). Both of these are typically considered trustworthy.

When you download a document from the Internet, note down the site (the URL) where you found it (i.e. copy the site information from your browser and paste this into a Word document). This information should appear in your list of references, usually accompanied by the date when the site was accessed (e.g. 'Accessed on 7 November 2023'). This is included because some documents may disappear from the site or they may be altered in some way (information may be added or deleted). Including the date when the

document was accessed informs your reader that at that particular time (e.g. 7 November 2023'), the information you refer to was accessible on that site.

As mentioned earlier, a useful Internet site to find previous research on your topic is Google Scholar (**www.scholar.google.com**). Insert your keywords (or keyword combinations) into the search field to find bibliographic material relevant to your topic. Not all information in the search results will be useful; you need to skim read the short description of each result. As you may have hundreds (or even thousands) of results, it would probably be sufficient to skim through the first two or three pages of results. Google Scholar contains academic-type documents (such as articles and conference papers), but the quality can vary enormously. If the publisher is a quality academic journal or an official organization (national or international), the document may well be useful for your research project.

Exercise: Go to the following Internet sites. Can they be used as authoritative sources for your research project? Give reasons for your answer.

a www.mingoville.com
b www.tefl-tips.com
c www.readingmatrix.com
d http://llt.msu.edu
e http://iteslj.org
f www.awej.org

Evaluating the appropriateness of websites

How can you tell if an Internet site would be considered an authoritative source of information for your project?

1 Look at the URL. You should be able to tell whether it is an institution or a private website.

2 Is the site that of a private institution? If so, the information on the site is probably for promotional purposes and not suitable for academic work.

3 Is this site a private website? The information on private websites cannot usually be considered to be objective or 'academic'. They are not usually suitable as background reading on your topic and should not be used for your Literature Review.

4 Is the site that of a national (or international) institution? Websites of national institutions often have useful documents available. These may be studies that were done in the country by researchers working for the institution or academics based at a university. If the studies were funded by an institution or by the government, the information they present may not be impartial, but on occasion they may be the only source available for some information.

5 Is the site that of a university? Sometimes universities have documents (or links to documents) that are accessible from their website. These are usually authored by an academic who is an authority on the topic. Sometimes these documents have been published in a journal with open access. Such documents may be useful for your work and can be considered suitable for your background reading and Literature Review.

6 Is the site that of a journal? Some journals are open access, others are not. If it is open access, this means that you can read and download the articles from the website without having to pay. You will find many journals have an open-access policy. While the quality of some open-access journals can be quite high, this is not always the case. If you are not sure, check with your supervisor whether it would be appropriate to use a particular article downloaded from an open-access journal. Articles in subscription journals can only be downloaded if the university provides access or by paying

ii. **The library**: Familiarize yourself with the selection of books in the relevant section of your university library, whether this is applied linguistics, translation, literature or education. Using the catalogue will help you discover what the library holds. You might find it most useful to search the catalogue using keywords in the 'subject' field (just one keyword – not combinations), or you can search using the author's surname or the title of the book if you know them. The librarians are trained to help you search for material and they can show you how to use the catalogue.

Browsing the library shelves can be very rewarding and will likely lead to the discovery of items that your catalogue searches did not reveal. Check the contents page and the index of promising-looking books for terms pertinent to your study. Frequently, a book may contain relevant information about your topic even if the book title did not signal this. Try to browse the shelves at least once a week while you are planning your study. To find print resources efficiently, first identify the major concepts and terms, i.e. *key terms*, that you will use to conduct your search. Remember that, it will be easy to locate relevant sources using:

- ☞ Using the library's online catalogue
- ☞ Using periodicals indexes and databases
- ☞ Consulting a reference librarian

iii. **Encyclopedias**: Encyclopaedias are reference works that contain summaries or overviews of topics rather than original insights. These overviews are presented in alphabetical order. Although they are often written by experts, Encyclopaedia entries are not typically attributed to a single author and do not provide the specialized knowledge expected of scholarly sources. As a result, they are best used as sources of background information at the beginning of your research. You can then expand your knowledge by consulting more academic sources. Encyclopaedias can be general or subject-specific:

- **General encyclopaedias** contain entries on diverse topics.
- **Subject encyclopaedias** focus on a particular field and contain entries specific to that field (e.g., Western philosophy or molecular biology).

iv. **Scholarly publications (Journals) :** A scholarly publication is one type of periodicals. It contains articles written by experts in a particular field. The primary audience of these articles is other experts. These articles generally report on original research or case studies. Many of these publications are "peer reviewed" or "refereed". This means that scholars in the same field review the research and findings before the article is published. Articles in scholarly publications, in most cases:

- ☞ are written by and for faculty, researchers, or other experts in a field
- ☞ use scholarly or technical language
- ☞ include a full bibliography of sources cited in the article
- ☞ are often peer reviewed (refereed)

v. **Popular sources (News and Magazines):** There are many occasions on which reading articles from popular sources can help to introduce you to a topic and introduce you to how that topic is being discussed in society. Articles in popular sources, in most cases:

- ☞ are written by journalists or professional writers for a general audience
- ☞ written in a language that is easy to understand by the general public
- ☞ rarely have a bibliography - rather, they are fact-checked through the editorial process of the publication they appear in
- ☞ don't assume prior knowledge of a subject area - for this reason, they are often very helpful to read if you don't know a lot about your subject area yet
- ☞ may contain an argument, opinion, or analysis of an issue

vi. **Books / Book Chapters:** Many academic books will be edited by an expert or group of experts. Often, books are a good source for a thorough investigation of a topic. Unlike a scholarly article, which will usually focus on the results of one research project, a book is likely to include an overview of research or issues related to its topic.

vii. **Conference proceedings:** Conference proceedings are compilations of papers, research, and information presented at conferences. Proceedings are sometimes peer-reviewed and are often the first publication of research that later appears in a scholarly

publication (see above!). Proceedings are more commonly encountered (via databases and other searching) in science and engineering fields that in the arts and humanities.

viii. **Government Documents:** The Government Printing Office disseminates information issued by all three branches of the government to federal depository libraries (including NMSU). Additionally, the many departments of the government publish reports, data, statistics, white papers, consumer information, transcripts of hearings, and more. Some of the information published by government offices is technical and scientific. Other information is meant for the general public.

ix. **Theses and Dissertations:** Theses and dissertations are the result of an individual student's research while in a graduate program. They are written under the guidance and review of an academic committee but are not considered "peer-reviewed" or "refereed" publications

Exercise

A. Evaluating Wikipedia

1.What do you know about Wikipedia? If you have used this resource during your studies, what sort of information did you search for? How did you use this information from Wikipedia for your course or assignment?

2. Look at the list of references of some articles or books you located for your topic. Did any of these authors cite Wikipedia in their references?

3. For academic work, when might Wikipedia be useful? When should we not use Wikipedia?

B. Define the following terms and explain how they can be used as source of information:

Google scholar; researchgate.net; academia.edu; search engines; academic databases; textbooks; trade books; webpage, primary sources, secondary sources

Homework

1-Choose one topic and use keywords to look for 3 or 4 articles that seem to be relevant an name the journal (s) where you fine these articles.

2-Find the journal TESOL Quarterly. What sort of topics can you read about in this journal?

3-Find the journal Language and Society. You can guess the topics you can read abut in thi journal from the title, but does this journal have an article that talks about your country o region? Do a search to see what results.

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Instructor: Dr. Messaouda BENDAHMANE **Academic year:** 2023/2024

Reading the Literature on a Topic

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Read strategically
- ✓ establish familiarity with current research in a particular field,
- ✓ Provide a foundation of knowledge on a topic
- ✓ identify gaps in the literature
- ✓ assess the relevance of findings to the research project at hand.

Introduction

In research, reading should not be done haphazardly but strategically. One should not read everything you locate about your topic; rather, you need to recognize the more important authors or texts. Browsing the bookshelves in the library and the electronic resources can help you recognize 'central works' and 'central authors'. Select the most important works and the most recent ones. After selecting what to read, identify the sections that relate to your topic within the book or the article. Being selective in one's reading and prioritizing reading tasks help prevent the reading load from becoming overwhelming.

Task 1: Explain how Reading academic material is very different from reading other text types such as fiction, newspaper texts or Internet sites.

1. Reading a Book

It is important to develop effective reading strategies for approaching an academic book

1 . Try to gain an overall view of what the book is about; what question or questions the author is trying to answer; how the book is structured; and whether, in fact, the questions tackled and the answers put forward are relevant to your needs. You can do this by scanning the cover or jacket, the preface (if any), the list of contents, and the index.

2 . If the book is relevant to your research subject, then you must decide on the question or questions that you anticipate will be answered in the book.

3 . Review the book to look for answers for your questions. This involves locating the parts of the book where your questions are dealt with.

4 . Most chapters will have a title (some chapters begin with a chapter summary or *Abstract*) and section headings may be used within the chapter. If so, leaf through the chapter identifying the headings and skim read the first few sentences of each subsection. After obtaining a general idea of what the chapter covers, it will be easier to locate relevant sections.

5 . Try to identify the general idea that the author wants to express, any important *terms* and their *definitions* that are used and useful examples that help you follow the discussion. You must then look for the answers or conclusions that the author has drawn, and also at how the author arrived at them. You will also look at arguments and evidence put forward to support the views expressed and you will make an attempt to assess the validity of the evidence and the structure of the argument which utilizes such evidence.

There are, however, cases where conclusions are unsupported, arguments or evidence are non-existent, or sometimes there is no conclusion at all.

6 . Supposing that you have extracted the relevant information from the written report, you must now record your data in note form, so that later you can retrieve it.

2. Reading a Journal Article

The organization of information in a journal article is very structured. It is common to find section headings throughout the article; these may also be numbered. As these section headings signal where particular information is located, reading the entire article from beginning to end may not be necessary in the first instance. It may be enough to read several sections in detail, before using the reading strategies of skimming and scanning to identify pertinent information from the other sections.

Even when reading the entire article, it is not necessary to read each section in the given order in which it appears. Approaches to reading vary depending on the text and individual preferences.

1. The ***Abstract*** (if one exists) is the logical starting point. This is a selective, focused overview of what the study was about and the methods and type of data used, and may include a brief indication of the results. As such, it allows the reader to quickly pinpoint information such as where the study was done, who the participants were, how data were collected and what theoretical approach was used. Its purpose is to allow readers to evaluate whether the topic of the article is relevant to their needs and whether they should read further.

If the article appears useful, two other important sections to look at early on are the *Introduction* and the *Conclusion*.

2. The ***Introduction*** will tell you how the author has contextualized or framed the study, and how it relates to other published work; it will likely also include the research question(s).

3. The ***Conclusion,*** of course, will usually tell you more about what the author actually did in the study and how the results were interpreted, but it might also provide suggestions for new research questions.

Some Conclusions may be very short and they may not contain useful information about the main findings; in this case, you may have to look at the previous section, the ***Discussion*** (if there is one), or the last few paragraphs of the Results section where the author may summarize the main findings. In their attempt to interpret the findings, authors will endeavour to address questions such as the following:

• How should we understand these results?
• How do these results relate to the findings of previous studies?
• How can we apply this new understanding?
• Do these findings leave any questions unanswered?
• Do the findings lead to more questions?

After reading these previous sections, turn to the *Methods* and *Results* sections to learn more about how the study was conducted and details of the results:

• Where was the study done?
• What sorts of data were used in the study?
• If data were collected from people (participants), who were they?
• If texts were used, how were they chosen? What type of text? How many?
• What did the participants have to do?
• How was their performance evaluated?
• If texts were analysed, how was this analysis done?
• What were the results?
• Did these results provide a clear answer to the research question(s)?

The ***Literature Review*** (this section may have an alternative title such as *Background*) contains a description of what previous studies have found and, perhaps, how the studies were conducted. By reading the overview of previous research, you will likely learn about other articles or books relevant to your research project. Indeed, examining author citations in the literature we read is an important way to identify additional bibliographic resources.

Task2: Do you think that reading the different sections of a journal article in the previously mentioned order is effective and strategic? Discuss**.**

Task 3: How are these sections ordered in a journal article?

Task 4: The following abstract is taken from a published article. Read it and identify the following information.

- the research question(s) or topic;
- reference to a theory or an approach used in the study;
- motivation for the study;
- background information relevant to the study;
- information about how the author did the study;
- an indication of the findings;
- an indication of how the results were analysed;
- an indication of how the findings could be interpreted (i.e. do they confirm or disconfirm previous findings?);
- an indication of the study's implications and recommendations.

1 Chik, A. (2014). Digital gaming and language learning: Autonomy and community. *Language Learning & Technology*, *18*(2), 85–100.

Abstract

The relationship between digital game play and second language (L2) learning is a particularly tricky issue in East Asia. Though there is an emerging presence of Chinese online games, many more young people are playing the English- or Japanese-language versions of the most popular commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) video games. In other words, most Chinese gamers are playing L2 digital games in their leisure time. Informed by research on out-of-class L2 learning, this paper discusses findings from an exploratory study investigating L2 gaming and learning practices in young people's everyday lives. Drawing on rich data from gaming sessions, stimulated recall, focus group discussion, individual interviews and online discussion forums, this paper argues that gamers exercise autonomy by managing their gameplay both as leisure and learning practices in different dimensions (location, formality, locus of control, pedagogy and trajectory). At the same time, gameplay-as-learning practices are supported by wider communities of digital gamers who take on roles as language teachers and advisers. The paper discusses the research and pedagogical implications for L2 gaming and learning.

Keywords: Learner Autonomy, Second Language Acquisition, Computer-Assisted Language Learning.

Task 5: Find a free-access journal article on the internet relevant to the domain of teaching English language and complete the following reading worksheet.

1) Form

Article Reading Worksheet

1-Bibliographical Information

Title of the article:
……...
Author(s):
……
Year:
……
Publishing Journal:
……
Page numbers:
……
Volume:
……
Issue:
……

2) Content

a- What type of information is mentioned in the abstract?
b- Are there keywords? Mention them.
c- How many sections are there? What are they? What does each section discuss.

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Course: Research Methodology **Level:** Second year LMD
Instructor: Dr. Messaouda BENDAHMANE **Academic year:** 2023/2024

Taking Notes

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Developing note taking skills
- ✓ Organize information into an understandable format

Introduction

Note taking is an indispensable part of writing a documented essay or research paper. Your notes record information from the sources that you will use in writing. If you take notes efficiently, you can read with more understanding and also save time and frustration when you come to write your paper

Note taking constitutes of making records from written reports, lectures, conferences, interviews and so on. Reasons for taking notes include:

• ***To help you remember something*** You can't hope to retain a whole lecture, book or discussion permanently in your memory, so instead you make notes of the most important items and use the notes for revision and reference.

• ***To keep a permanent record of something*** If you attend a lecture or visit somewhere as part of your course, your notes may be your own record of what took place.

• ***To help in your planning*** Notes can be a good way of starting off a project or a piece of writing; you can note down the main things you need to do, the books you need to read, and so on.

• ***To reorder material*** Making notes, which can be reshuffled, provides one of the most useful opportunities for rearranging material in whichever form is most convenient to you.

• ***To help you understand what you are learning*** Writing things down yourself forces you to think them through properly and is one of the best ways of remembering them.

• ***To help you to concentrate*** If you are listening to someone talking, your mind may easily wander; making notes helps to keep you active and involved.

1. What to note down?

When making notes, you will have to make judgements all the time about what information will, or might, be of use to you. These judgements will depend on your own knowledge of your subject, the nature of your research problem and the objective of your reading. You may want to copy facts from references, such as dates, places, names, statistics, formulas and definitions; or summarize arguments, questions, explanations, illustrations or descriptions. In addition, you may find it useful to write comments about your reactions to the reference materials and state relationships, conclusions or interpretations that come to mind during the contemplative phases of your work. You may also want jot down items that require further checking.

2. Note-taking Language

It is generally agreed that, except for quotations, when you take notes you should use your own active vocabulary and not the author's. It is important to use your active vocabulary in note-taking, because it helps to ensure that you have a reasonably full grasp of the meaning

of the information concerned; it might assist in laying down a better memory trace in the brain; and finally, when you come to reread and synthesize the notes, your personal active vocabulary is more easily comprehensible and recognizable.

3. What to do with notes?

When writing a report you may want to draw upon your notes for a variety of reasons, for example, to support a particular position or to illustrate a point of view. You may want to make comparisons, weave a web of logical evidence, or support arguments by passages from recognized authorities. A body of notes, collected with discrimination, could provide the building blocks for all of these, assuming that the range of your notes is sufficiently wide. However, a haphazard collection of notes will leave you with an impoverished resource, and may cause your investigation to collapse.

4. Note-taking techniques

Smith and Smith (1994, pp. 93–103) put forward what they call ‘golden rules’ to help you take successful notes. These golden rules include:

1 Clarify your purpose.

2 Write all your notes on the same sized paper or cards.

3 When you begin, set out your notes properly. In making a full bibliographic record of the source of the notes you are writing, include author (or speaker); date of publishing or of event (e.g. lecture, interview); title of book, article, conference, lecture etc.; where published or held; detailed page numbers referring to the individual points, opinions and data which are noted; and usefully, the library catalogue number or other information to enable you to locate the book, article etc. quickly at a later date.

4 Use the title of the chapter or lecture to help you anticipate the main ideas of the text.

5 Keep your own ideas, comments and criticisms separate from those in the text.

6 When you finish, sum up what you have written.

Do not forget that you take notes to help in your writing at a later stage of your research project. To assist this, your notes should be brief and clear; if they are too long, you will

find it tedious to go through them, either to search for a specific point, or to refresh your memory. For the same reason they should be easy to read and understand; if you cannot read through them to refresh your memory, they will fail in their purpose.

5. Collecting and ordering your notes

You will need to think of the manner in which you want to order to accumulate your notes. Many different formats are suggested, but you can design your own setup which might be more suitable for you than another. However, the most important feature is that each card, piece of paper or other form of record must include only *one* idea or *one* fact or *one* item or *one* question. That i because at this stage you do not yet know in which part of the structure of your research project this *one* piece of information will fit, or if it will be used at all. An effective note-taking system preserves the most significant ideas in a form that facilitates shifting, comparing, grouping and ordering items.

Finally, do not forget that *you* should decide which form of note-taking you should adopt and which suits your research project best. Notes are a means to an end, not an end in themselves. No matter how they are recorded and stored, the essential thing is that they are useful and contain the necessary information, and can be traced when required.

Task 1: Use a personalised note format to record information from the journal article you used in the previous task.

Mention what type of information you have included (statistics, formulas and definitions; or summarize arguments, questions, explanations, illustrations or descriptions).

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Using Sources

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Read and paraphrase effectively
- ✓ Read and summarise effectively
- ✓ Incorporate sources into the research paper adequately

Introduction

Generally speaking, there are three ways to integrate sources into a research paper – summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting. You will want to summarize and paraphrase most often in your research paper, using direct quotes sparingly.

During the literature search, researchers need to understand the main issues discussed in key studies relevant to the target topic, form an idea of how the materials relate to the research question(s) and mention the results of their explorations and reading as well as their response to them.

Instead of treating others' voices, data, findings, claims, and evidence as untouchable exhibits to be presented, a researcher needs to *think through* them and engage with them critically. Nonetheless, what may causes a problem is to preserve the integrity of what a

source says -making sure that its findings or arguments are not distorted- and also clearly give credit to the source of information. Paraphrases, summaries and quotations are techniques that help guard against mischaracterizing what a source mentions.

1. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is saying one's own words—and with about the same length as the author said it—what one understands the author to mean. This is hard, at first, because instead of just mindlessly quoting; one has to *think thoroughly* about the ideas and views of the author. Paraphrasing demands making a sense of something. To put it most simply: *Good writers find their own ways of saying things.*

2. Summarizing

Summarizing is a reduction of a longer material into a brief statement that captures a basic idea, argument, or theme from the original source. Like paraphrasing, summarizing often requires careful thought. Although a summary can never be purely objective, it needs to be fair. After all, each of us will understand a text differently, but at the same time, we have to do our best to represent what a source is actually saying without prejudice.

3. Quoting

In order to quote certain words, the researcher has to pay attention to *how* authors (and those quoted by authors) say things. Is the prose unusual, surprising, or memorable? Does the writer make a point in an interesting way?

There are several other reasons to quote:

• To bring in the voice, not just the ideas, of a notable expert on your topic.

• To quote someone who says something effectively that supports a key point the researcher is trying to make.

• When writing an essay that uses primary sources—a literary text, a transcript, and so on—quoted material is essential.

As a rule, however, the college research paper should contain no more than 10 or 20 percent quoted material. Therefore, the researcher has to *quote selectively*. Sometimes, they do not need to use all of the passage. Mine phrases or sentences that are particularly distinctive, and can be embedded in one's prose. They also have to *provide a context***.** The worst way to use a quote is to just drop it into a paragraph without attribution or comment. Bringing someone else's voice into one's work, requires mentioning the source and indicating why what this person says is particularly relevant. In addition to establishing a context for a quotation, the quote needs to be to analysed, argued with, amplified, explained, or highlighted.

4. Mentioning where the information comes from

In order to give credit to the source of information, the following elements have to be used:

- **Attribution tags:** *According to …,* _____ *argues that …,* _____ *reported that …,* and so on. In the case of summarizing and paraphrasing.
- **Quotation marks:** they clearly signal when we are borrowing the words of others.
- **Citation:** In academic writing, references to the source are integrated into the texts so readers can see where the information comes from. Of course, one of the reasons of signal that is to avoid plagiarism, something that many of us do—if we do it at all—unintentionally.

5. Engaging critically with the literature

A strong Literature Review shows an awareness of the disagreements or controversies that exist, in recognition of the fact that authors don't always agree with each other. This awareness of the various perspectives discussed will help the researcher develop their own views. Disagreeing with a specific view means that they may have limitations; for example, they do not seem applicable to the context of the researcher's country or L1. Building awareness of alternative viewpoints and interpretations and considering one's own position in relation to these is part of 'critically engaging with the literature'. Such engagement will help the researcher situate their work within the existing literature and body of knowledge about the topic. Of course, the researcher will need to provide support or evidence for their ideas. Citing an authoritative source that supports their view or that provides counterevidence to the claim adds credibility and authority to

their position. In the absence of a suitable reference to support one's view, the counterview may sound like a personal opinion.

6. Phrases to help formulate a critical stance

✓ ***Introducing questions, problems or limitations***

'A weakness with this argument, however, is that . . .'

'One of the limitations with this explanation is that it does not account for . . .'

'One problem with this explanation is that . . .'

'However, this method of analysis has a number of limitations.'

'Another problem with this approach is that it fails to take X into account.'

✓ ***Referring to previous work***

'Researchers have not treated X in much detail.'

'Previous studies of X have not dealt with . . .'

'Most studies in the field of X have only focused on . . .'

'The research to date has tended to focus on X rather than Y.'

✓ ***Incorporating criticisms from other writers***

'Many scholars now argue that this approach has had only limited success.'

'Jones (2003), for example, argues that . . .'

'Jones (2003) has also questioned why . . .'

'However, Jones (2003) points out that . . .'

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Citig Sources

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Integrate and cite sources correctly.
- ✓ Use APA style in a research paper

Introduction

Citing a source means that you show, within the body of your text, that you took words, ideas, figures, images, etc. from another place. Citations are a short way to uniquely identify a published work (e.g. book, article, chapter, web site). They are found in bibliographies and reference lists and are also collected in article and book databases.

1. In-Text Citations Using APA Style

When you cite an author in your text, you:

1 cite the last name only;
2 give the year of publication in brackets;
3 for a quote (and sometimes also for a paraphrase), give the page number (use ‘p.’ or ‘pp.’); if you put the page number after the date, sometimes you will see a colon ‘:’ instead of ‘p.’.

Look at how Chen (2006, pp. 36, 37) has cited the source for ideas and information she has incorporated into her work from other authors. The cited author may appear at the beginning of the sentence with a reporting verb, or at the end of the passage in brackets. In the former case, focus is on the author and the choice of verb; in the latter case, the primary focus is on the idea:

> Biesenbach-Lucas and Weasenforth (2000) found that L2 students used fewer modal constructions and hedged expressions in their e-mails than did U.S. students; instead, their e-mails often contained inappropriate pleading for help from the professor.
>
> A number of studies compared how L2 learners' e-mail discourse differed from L2 oral discourse (Chapman, 1997; Warschauer, 1996) or differed from L2 offline written texts (Biesenbach-Lucas & Weasenforth, 2001).

2. Citing a Block of Material

If your quote is long (according to APA guidelines, more than 40 words), you need to begin the passage on a separate line, indented from your own text. In this case, you do not have to use quotation marks but you must still cite the source. The citation in brackets should follow the quoted passage, and is often positioned on a separate line to the right.

3. Citing More than One Author

If you need to cite more than one author, arrange the names in alphabetical order and use a semi-colon to separate them. If the work has more than one author, use '&' or 'and' between the two surnames ('&' is only used when the citation appears within brackets). In the following example from Chen (2006, p. 37), two authors have multiple publications; the years are arranged chronologically and, in the case of Zhang, letters ('a' and 'b') are used to distinguish works published the same year:

> These findings are consistent with studies on Chinese speakers' oral and written requests (Kirkpatrick, 1991, 1993; Nash, 1983; Zhang, 1995a, 1995b), which indicates that Chinese speaking students probably transfer the request strategies that they normally use in Chinese to the English request e-mails written to professors.

4. Citing Indirect Sources

Often you will learn about a useful idea or an example that the author of your article (or book) attributes to someone else. For example, if you read Chen's (2006) article, you will learn about certain ideas attributed to N.S. Baron, who published some relatively early work on the use of e-mail communication. Namely, Chen (2006, p. 35) writes:

> research has shown that people in the workplace tend to feel uneasy writing e-mails to those perceived as higher in status when initiating communication, suggesting new ideas, making requests, and expressing disagreement or criticism (Baron, 1998, . . .).

Chances are you don't have access to Baron's work. If you want to attribute this idea to Baron, should you acknowledge that you didn't actually read the original text? The correct approach is to signal that you learnt about an idea (or research findings) attributed to Baron in Chen's work by using the following formulation:

> Previous findings (for instance, Baron, 1998, in Chen, 2006, p. 35) have indicated that . . .

5. Citing Texts with No Author

If the text you wish to cite has no author, use the name of the organization or institution in place of the author's name. The first time you use the name of the organization, provide an acronym e.g 'the Ministry of Education (MoE)'; you can then continue to cite this institution using the acronym.

6. Citing Internet Sources in Your Text

Information taken from Internet can be difficult to cite in your text. Often there is no obvious author, no year and no page. If there is no author, use the name of the institution (if this information is not taken from an institution, it may well not be an appropriate academic source). If there is no year of publication, you can put 'n.d.' in place of the year; this means 'no date'. Some PDF documents you download may have page number, but with other documents there will be none.

7. Citing Personal Communications

If you talked to or emailed someone you consider to be an authority who gave you important information for your project that you cannot find in a published text (either because this is an idea or a view of this person, or because only this person has this information), you need to cite this person. You do this by writing '(personal communication)' after the person's name or position title (in case the person prefers to remain anonymous). You do not put this name in your list of references as this is not something that readers will be able to search for:

> The principal of the school, Mr Said AlBadri (personal communication, 12 December 2012) maintains that. . . .

8. Compiling Your List of References

At the end of your project, you need to write a list of all the works you cite in your project (do not include anything you do not cite). The list should be arranged alphabetically (according to the authors' surnames); do not number the list. How to cite a journal article, book and Internet site is quite different

Exercise: Compiling references

Look at the following examples (a–g) and answer the questions (1–7) below:

a Piller, I. (2002). Passing for a native speaker: Identity and success in second language learning. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 6(2), 179–206.

b Derwing, T. & Rossiter, M. (2003). The effect of pronunciation instruction on the accuracy, fluency and complexity of L2 accented speech. *Applied Language Learning* 13(1), 1–17.

c Roberts, C., Davies, E. & Jupp, T. (1992). *Language and discrimination*. London: Longman.

d Chik, A. (2012). Digital gameplay for autonomous foreign language learning: Gamers' and language teachers' perspectives. In H. Reinders (Ed.), *Digital games in language learning and teaching* (pp. 95–114). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

e Republic of Turkey Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *National Education Statistics 2012–2013.* Retrieved 12 January 2014, from www.meb.gov.tr/english/minister.html.

f Morley, J. (n.d.). *Academic Phrasebank*. Retrieved 11 June 2011, from www. phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk.

g Brown, P. & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1 Which examples are journal articles?

2 Which one is a journal article with two authors?

3 Which are books?

4 Which one is a chapter in a book?

5 In which order do you write the following: the place of publication and the name of the publishing company?

6 How is citing a website different from a published work?

7 If this were your List of References, in which order would you put these seven publications?

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Plagiarism

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Recognize the importance of acknowledging sources
- ✓ Distinguish between the different types of plagiarism
- ✓ Determine a number of tips to avoid plagiarism

I) Definition

Plagiarism is the practice of taking credit (copying/ borrowing) for someone else's words or ideas. It is also representing someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. It is an act of intellectual dishonesty. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means:

- ➢ To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- ➢ To use (another's production) without crediting the source
- ➢ To commit literary theft
- ➢ To present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.
- ➢ Plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

II) Types of Plagiarism

With respect to the gravity and frequency of plagiarism, a survey of scientific researchers has produced a ranking of plagiarism types. While complete plagiarism represents the most serious offense, paraphrasing is the one that is the most common. It is, thus, very important to consider and understand all the various types of plagiarism and how they occur.

1. Complete Plagiarism

Complete plagiarism is the most severe form of plagiarism where a researcher takes a manuscript or study that someone else created, and submits it under his or her name. It is equivalent to intellectual theft and stealing.

2. Verbatim Plagiarism

Verbatim or direct plagiarism occurs when an author copies the text of another author, word for word, without the use of quotation marks or attribution, thus passing it as his or her own. In that way, it is like complete plagiarism, but it refers to sections (rather than all) of another paper.

3. Paraphrasing Plagiarism

This type is regarded as the most common type of plagiarism. It involves the use of someone else's writing with some minor changes in the sentences and using it as one's own. Even if the words differ, the original idea remains the same and plagiarism occurs.

4. Source-based Plagiarism

Plagiarism may occur because of the different types of sources. For example:

- When a researcher references a source that is incorrect or does not exist, it is a misleading citation.
- Plagiarism also occurs when a researcher uses a secondary source of data or information, but only cites the primary source of information. Both these types lead to an

increase in the number of references sources. This, in turn, increases the citation number of the references.

- Finally, data fabrication and falsification are also forms of plagiarism. Data fabrication is the making up of data and research findings, while data falsification involves changing or omitting data to give a false impression. The consequences of this type of plagiarism can be grave, particularly when it comes to medical research, because it can adversely affect clinical decisions.

5. Self or Auto Plagiarism

Also known also known as duplication, happens when an author reuses significant portions of his or her previously published work without attribution. Thus, this type of plagiarism is most likely to involve published researchers, rather than university students. The severity of this kind of infraction is under debate, depending on the copied content. Many academic journals, however, have strict criteria on the percentage of author's work that is reusable. Many journals run manuscripts through a plagiarism-detection software before considering them for review.

6. Inaccurate Authorship

Inaccurate authorship or misleading attribution can happen in two ways:

- In one form, when an individual contributes to a manuscript but does not get credit for it.
- The second form is the opposite: when an individual gets credit without contributing to the work.

This type of plagiarism, whichever way it occurs, is a violation of the code of conduct in research. It is also possible to commit this form of plagiarism when someone else edits a manuscript, leading to substantive changes. In this case, the recommendation is to acknowledge the contributors at the time of publication, even if they are not listed as authors.

7. Mosaic Plagiarism

Mosaic plagiarism may be more difficult to detect because it interlays someone else's phrases or text within its own research. It is also known as patchwork plagiarism and it is intentional and dishonest.

8. Accidental Plagiarism

Whether intended or unintended, there is no excuse for plagiarism and the consequences are often the same. However, plagiarism may be accidental if it occurred because of neglect, mistake, or unintentional paraphrasing. Students are likely to commit accidental plagiarism, so universities should stress on the importance of education about this form of plagiarism.

These are some of the different types of plagiarism that are common in the research community.

III) Causes/ Reasons of Plagiarism

1. Lack of confidence: one of the most common reasons that lead students commit plagiarism. Students may fear failure or fear taking risks in their own work.

2. Lack of Time: Students may have poor time-management skills or they may plan poorly for the time and effort required for research-based writing, and believe they have no choice but to plagiarize. This can be a singular problem with two causes:

- First, it might be the author's fault. Through poor time management or lack of focus, they might find themselves in a situation where they do not have enough time to finish a task.
- Second, it could be the fault of the person who assigned the writing. Overloading authors or students to the point that, even with perfect time management, there is little to no way they can complete the task ethically.

3. Don't Care / Laziness : this one is a difficult one for educators and editors alike but some writers simply do not care about the task at hand or are otherwise not motivated to complete it. Whether they think it's pointless or merely beneath them personally, when an authors doesn't take an assignment seriously, the odds that they will simply submit the works of another as their own increases. Simply put, when authors see the value in a work, their work ethic improves and they're much less likely to plagiarize.

4. Lack of Adequate Knowledge: students may make a mistake that would result in committing plagiarism unintentionally. Lack of awareness of the rules of conducting scientific research is, by far, the least common, but it does happen whether through poor paraphrasing, lost citations or some other means. To be clear, plagiarism that results from an error does not look like malicious plagiarism. It usually deals more with inadequate attribution than no attribution and is generally smaller in nature. Among these mistakes:

- Students may not know how to integrate the ideas of others and document the sources of those ideas appropriately in their texts.
- Students may make mistakes as they learn how to integrate others' words or ideas into their own work because error is a natural part of learning.
- Students may not know how to take careful and fully documented notes during their research.

IV) Consequences of Plagiarism

Plagiarism can have serious consequences. Depending on the nature of the plagiarism and the university or instructor's policy, here are some possible consequences:

- Academic probation
- Failure of the assignment
- Failure of the course
- Suspension
- Dismissal from the program or the institution

Additionally, you can seriously damage your academic and/or professional reputation.

Plagiarism is not limited to academic writing. It is also possible to plagiarize creative writing and online content.

V) How to Avoid Plagiarism

Not everyone who plagiarizes starts out with the goal of stealing someone else's work. Sometimes, plagiarism is simply the result of poor planning and a few bad, panicked decisions. In order not to fall victim to the plagiarism trap, you need to follow these tips to produce successful, original academic writing.

1 **Begin the research process as early as possible**, preferably as soon as you receive a new assignment. Read each source carefully. Take breaks between reading sessions to absorb the information. Explain each source's key ideas out loud, without referencing the original text. Then, write down each source's main arguments in your own words. This process will ensure you have plenty of time to both absorb your sources' ideas and formulate your own.

2 **Write a thorough outline.** After you've spent time researching and brainstorming, write a detailed outline of your paper. Focus on pinpointing your own original argument. As you outline, imagine yourself in conversation with your sources. Instead of restating your source's ideas, examine them and consider how they relate to your own.

3 **Paraphrase "blind."** If you plan to explain an author's ideas in your paper, write the explanation without looking at the original text. If you find this process tricky, try writing out the ideas in a conversational tone, as though you're explaining the idea to a friend. Then rewrite the information in a more appropriate tone for your paper.

4 **Keep track of your sources.** Make a list of every source you read, even the ones you don't expect to refer to in your paper. As you write, create a running bibliography using a free bibliography generator tool. Anytime you quote or paraphrase an author's ideas in your draft, include the source information right next to the relevant sentence.

5 **Use an online plagiarism checker.** Although online tools are not foolproof, it's a good idea to run your paper through a plagiarism checker before submitting it. You may discover that you've unintentionally composed a sentence that closely resembles something written by one of your sources or failed to include a citation for one of your direct quotes. Free resources such as Quetext compare your work to millions of documents and search for close matches. Your professor probably uses these tools, and you should too.

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Ethical Issues in Research

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lecture, learners will be able to:

- ✓ Discover the ethical considerations of research
- ✓ Highlight the importance of respecting research' rules of conduct

Introduction

Ethics are broadly the set of rules, written and unwritten, that govern our expectations of our own and others' behaviour. Effectively, they set out how we expect others to behave, and why. While there is broad agreement on some ethical values (for example, that murder is bad), there is also wide variation on how exactly these values should be interpreted in practice.

1. Definition

Research ethics are the set of ethics that govern how scientific and other research is performed at research institutions such as universities, and how it is disseminated.

2. The Importance of Research Ethics

Research ethics are important for a number of reasons.

- They promote the aims of research, such as expanding knowledge.
- They support the values required for collaborative work, such as mutual respect and fairness. This is essential because scientific research depends on collaboration between researchers and groups.
- They mean that researchers can be held accountable for their actions. Many researchers are supported by public money, and regulations on conflicts of interest, misconduct, and research involving humans or animals are necessary to ensure that money is spent appropriately.
- They ensure that the public can trust research. For people to support and fund research, they have to be confident in it.
- They support important social and moral values, such as the principle of doing no harm to others.

3. Codes of Ethics

Government agencies who fund or commission research often publish codes of conduct for researchers, or codes of ethics. For example, the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) both publish ethical codes. Some ethical codes may have the force of law behind them, while others may simply be advisable.

Be aware that even if you do nothing illegal, doing something unethical may end your research career.

Many or even most ethical codes cover the following areas**:**

- **Honesty and Integrity**

This means that you need to report your research honestly, and that this applies to your methods (what you did), your data, your results, and whether you have previously published any of it. You should not make up any data, including extrapolating unreasonably from some of your results, or do anything which could be construed as trying to mislead anyone. It is better to undersell than over-exaggerate your findings.

When working with others, you should always keep to any agreements, and act sincerely.

- **Objectivity**

You should aim to avoid bias in any aspect of your research, including design, data analysis, interpretation, and peer review. For example, you should never recommend as a peer reviewer someone you know, or who you have worked with, and you should try to ensure that no groups are inadvertently excluded from your research. This also means that you need to disclose any personal or financial interests that may affect your research.

- **Carefulness**

Take care in carrying out your research to avoid careless mistakes. You should also review your work carefully and critically to ensure that your results are credible. It is also important to keep full records of your research. If you are asked to act as a peer reviewer, you should take the time to do the job effectively and fully.

- **Openness**

You should always be prepared to share your data and results, along with any new tools that you have developed, when you publish your findings, as this helps to further knowledge and advance science. You should also be open to criticism and new ideas.

- **Respect for Intellectual Property**

You should never plagiarise, or copy, other people's work and try to pass it off as your own. You should always ask for permission before using other people's tools or methods, unpublished data or results. **Not doing so is plagiarism.** Obviously, you need to respect copyrights and patents, together with other forms of intellectual property, and always

acknowledge contributions to your research. If in doubt, acknowledge, to avoid any risk of plagiarism.

- **Confidentiality**

You should respect anything that has been provided in confidence. You should also follow guidelines on protection of sensitive information such as patient records.

- **Responsible Publication**

You should publish to advance to state of research and knowledge, and not just to advance your career. This means, in essence, that you should not publish anything that is not new, or that duplicates someone else's work.

- **Legality**

You should always be aware of laws and regulations that govern your work, and be sure that you conform to them.

- **Animal Care**

If you are using animals in your research, you should always be sure that your experiments are both necessary and well-designed. You should also show respect for the animals you are using, and make sure that they are properly cared for.

- **Human Subjects Protection**

If your research involves people, you should make sure that you reduce any possible harm to the minimum, and maximise the benefits both to participants and other people.

This means, for example, that you should not expose people to more tests than are strictly necessary to fulfil your research aims. You should always respect human rights, including the right to privacy and autonomy. You may need to take particular care with vulnerable groups, which include, but are not limited to, children, older people, and those with learning difficulties.

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https://healthsciences.nova.edu/studentaffairs/success/forms/apa-what-is-plagiarism.pdf

https://leverageedu.com/blog/research-design/

https://opentextbc.ca/researchmethods/chapter/reviewing-the-research-literature/

https://opentextbc.ca/writingforsuccess/chapter/chapter-7-sources-choosing-the-right-ones/

https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/getting-started

https://research-methodology.net/research-methodology/literature-review-sources/
https://www.grammarly.com/blog/types-of-plagiarism/

https://www.itcilo.org/process-constructing-knowledge

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarize

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Messaouda BENDAHMANE

Mohammed Khider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of English Language

Course: Research Methodology **Level:** Second year LMD
Instructor: Dr. Messaouda BENDAHMANE **Academic year:** 2023/2024

Appendices

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra
Level: L2
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Course: Methodology
Department of Letters and Languages – ENGLISH
Timing: 1h

Full Name:……. Group:……..
Mark:……/20

First Semester Exam

Important Remarks:

- **Do not use the correction pen.**
- **All grammatical and spelling mistakes will be taken into consideration.**
- **Do not copy-paste from lectures. Use your own language.**

Activity 1: Briefly answer the following questions. (6pts)

1- What is research?

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2- What is research methodology?

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<u>Activity 2</u>: Tick (√) the right answer (8pts)

1- Which of the following does not correspond to characteristics of research?

a. Research is not passive.
b. Research is systematic.
c. Research is not problem-oriented.
d. Research is not a process.

2- Which of the following options represents the main objective(s) of research?

a. To learn new things
b. To keep pace with the advancement in knowledge
c. To systematically examine and critically analyze the investigations/sources with the objective
d. All of the above

3- Who can successfully conduct Research?

a. Someone who is a hard worker
b. Possesses a university degree
c. Has enough knowledge in research methodology
d. Possesses general thinking and reasoning ability

4- Which of the following statements applies to exploratory research?

a. It investigates new problem area.
b. The findings may not be conclusive.
c. It lays the foundation for more conclusive research.
d. All of the above

<u>Activity 3:</u> Discuss ONE of the suggested topics below in a paragraph of 5 to 8 lines. (6pts).

1- Research types can be viewed from different perspectives. Explain four types and give an example for each.
2- Engaging in a research activity requires certain qualities and competencies.

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Good Luck

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra **Level: L2**
Faculty of Letters and Languages **Course: Methodology**
Department of English **Timing: 1h**

Full Name:…… Group: … Mark:……/20

First Semester Exam

Important Remarks

- ✓ **Do not use the correction pen.**
- ✓ **All grammatical and spelling mistakes will be taken into consideration.**
- ✓ **Do not copy-paste from lectures. Use your own language.**

Activity1: Fill in the gaps with the correct terms. (5 pts)

a- ……is the systematic investigation of a phenomenon to establish facts and draw new conclusions.
b- ……*is the type of research which* aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation or phenomenon.
c- ……is the scientific way to solve a research problem.
d- ……....is a non statistical method which helps create in-depth understanding of problems and issues.
e- ……is the main focus of your research paper and the main reason you engage in it.

Activity 2: Complete the figure with the missing information. (4 pts)

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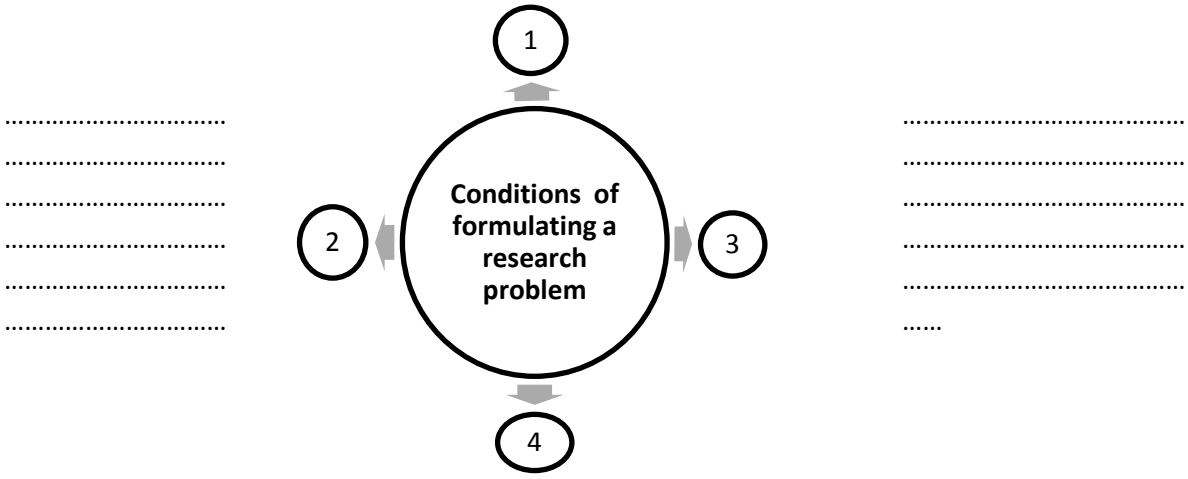

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<u>Activity3:</u> Are these statements true or false? Tick (√) the correct box. (5pts)

Statement	True	False
1-Research is a collection of information found in books and on the internet about a specific topic.		
2- Limiting the scope of the study allows the researcher to generate as many ideas as possible to find a suitable topic for research.		
3- Results obtained from research in a specific domain can improve its professional practices.		
4- A research problem can be a difficulty to be eliminated or a question to be answered.		
5-In qualitative research, information is collected in the form of descriptions and narrations.		

<u>Activity 4:</u> Discuss <u>ONLY ONE</u> of the suggested topics below in a paragraph of 5 to 8 lines. (6pts)

1- **The scientific method is the most reliable and valid method to generate knowledge in different fields.**
2- **Scientific research is conducted to serve a variety of purposes.**

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Good Luck

Research Methodology

Messaouda BENDAHMANE

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra **Level: L2**
Faculty of Letters and Languages **Course: Methodology**
Department of English **Timing: 1h**

Full Name:…… Group: … Mark:……/20

Second Semester Exam

Important Remark

✓ **PAY ATTENTION TO WHOM ACTIVITIES 3 AND 4 ARE ADDRESSED.**

Activity 1: Fill in the gaps with the appropriate terms. (4pts)

1- .....is a reduction of a longer material into a brief statement that captures a basic idea, argument, or theme from the original source.

2- …… are academic periodical publications related to specific discipline.

3-……. is a string of words from a text or speech attributed to another person.

4- ……. is the unethical behavior of intellectual dishonesty.

Activity2: Are these statements true or false? Tick (√) the correct box. (4 pts)

The statement	True	False
1) A quote containing 40 words or more should be written separately from the rest of the written material.		
2) Paraphrasing other researchers' words is not considered to be plagiarism.		
3) A quotation is a reduction of a longer material into a brief statement that captures a basic idea, argument, or theme from the original source.		
4) Using one's own previous work in a new one without attribution is not considered as plagiarism.		

Activity 3: What does each part of the following reference indicate? (Groups 1/2/3 are NOT concerned with this activity). (06pts)

Dornyei, Z. (1998). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 31 (03), 117-135

1- Dornyei, Z ……...

2-(1998): ...……...

3- Motivation in second and foreign language learning**.....**

4- *Language Teaching:* ……

5- *31*(03):……..

6-117-135:…….

<u>Activity 4</u>: answer the following question: (<u>ONLY</u> for Groups 1/2/3) (6pts)

1) What are the reasons that lead people to quote other researchers' works?

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2) What are the reasons behind people plagiarism?

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<u>Activity 5</u>: BREIFLY discuss <u>one</u> of the suggested topics below in a paragraph of 5 to 8 lines. (6pts)

1- Internet websites can be used as reliable sources of information after careful evaluation.
2- There are certain techniques that could be employed by writers to avoid plagiarism.

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Good Luck

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra **Level: L2**
Faculty of Letters and Languages **Course: Methodology**
Department of Letters and Languages – ENGLISH **Timing: 1h**

Full Name:……. Group:……..
Mark:……/20

First Semester Resit Exam

Important Remarks:

- **Do not use the correction pen.**
- **All grammatical and spelling mistakes will be taken into consideration.**
- **Do not copy-paste from lectures. Use your own language.**

Activity1: Briefly define the following terms: (9pts)

a. Scientific Research.

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b. Research Methodology.

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c. The Research Problem.

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Activity 2: Are these statements true or false? Tick (√) the correct box.
(5pts)

Statement	True	False
1-Research is a personal essay about your opinions and ideas.		

2-Research is the process of copying long quotes and paragraphs from different sources.		
3-Explanatory research is conducted to explore a group of questions.		
4- All research materials and sources are written.		
5- Research process is characterized by its flexibility.		

<u>Activity 3:</u> Discuss ONE of the suggested topics below in a paragraph of 5 to 8 lines. (6pts).

3- Research can be viewed from different perspectives and distinguished into various types. Explain three types.
4- Precision is one of the most important characteristics of a workable research problem.

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