



1) Academic Description

This online program forms English for Specific Academic Purposes courses for students of 1st year Social Sciences programme at the University of Biskra. ESS is a preparatory appropriate course for students to be majoring in one of the social sciences –in Biskra – including: philosophy, psychology, sociology, sciences of education and anthropology. ESS provides opportunities to carry out in a supported environment academic tasks typically required across master's programmes in social science fields: evaluating, selecting and using English academic sources in the student's specialist field.

2) Outline Content

ESS selected texts offering a preparatory material through which students gain relevant vocabulary, essential concepts and are encouraged to break into English texts for their study fields.



Introduction:

English, simply, has become the true world language of science, technology, media and business. It is now a language that allows reaching each and every one who counts in the field of the natural sciences, advanced technology, mass entertainment and corporate affairs. Its supremacy is both in natural and social sciences. When it comes to English as a language of science, its advantages for global communication are even more striking than in other domains. Practically the entire scholarly community in the natural sciences reads English, and the vast majority publishes articles in that language.

In this respect, especially for natural sciences, scientists and engineers may find it harder to explain concepts and provide instructions to collaborators who have not learned English, thus perpetuating their exclusion from the realm of science and technology, relegating them to practical, routine tasks. However, this risk is much less in those countries where well-nigh everybody has learned some English in schools.

English as the language of the social sciences

"Things, however, are much more problematical when it comes to English as the language of the social sciences and the humanities. First of all, these disciplines are much more strongly bound to language. The exactitude that prevails in the natural sciences through the use of formal and quantitative terms and the availability of precise measurements must be achieved in the social sciences and the humanities through meticulous precision in the use of the natural language. In these fields, technical terms are often very close to terms in everyday usage (e. g. role, class, civilization) and it is the continual rubbing together of these different spheres of meaning that conveys to social science writing at once its ambiguity and its richness of meaning." (Abram de Swaan, English in the Social Sciences, 2019)

"In the natural sciences, most of what can be said in English can also be phrased in mathematics and in formal schemes. But what the social sciences have to say about the social world can only rarely be rendered in mathematical symbols or in diagrams. As a matter of fact, even the translation from one natural language to another presents many difficulties in the social sciences. These translation problems arise at different levels. When moreover, as happens more and more in countries where English is not the first language, the findings are next published in English, an additional layer of linguistic transformation is introduced, with all the problems that go with it." (Abram de Swaan, English in the Social Sciences, 2019).

"The social sciences, the human sciences in general, are so closely and intensely tied to language because human beings are their subjects. But for the social sciences (and quite often the humanities, too) language problems manifest themselves in still another respect, as a central preoccupation. In contrast with most natural sciences, the social sciences are not experimental."(ibid)

This analysis has its consequences for the teaching of the social sciences and even more so for the professional training of social scientists. Students must be sensitized to problems of interpretation and translation, as essential constituents of the crafts of their trade: observation and comparison. It implies also that students cannot effectively be taught the social sciences in one language only, whether it be their mother tongue or a foreign, world language, e. g. English. If they are to become adequate observers and interpreters of human interaction in its context, they must be intimately familiar with the language used in each particular setting. (ibid)

"Thus the quasi totality of social science knowledge is contained in the English-language corpus of professional literature. A considerable part is also embedded in French, or German, Spanish or Italian texts, but the literature in these other languages is not nearly as complete as that in English. Hence, English has become the medium of choice for all transcultural and transtemporal comparison and classification in the social sciences."(ibid)



Social Sciences:

Social sciences are a group of academic disciplines dedicated to examining society. This branch of science studies how people interact with each other, behave, develop as a culture, and influence the world. Social sciences focus on how individuals behave within society. Some social science majors include anthropology, psychology, political science, and economics. Social scientists examine institutions like the government, the economy, and family; they also study how individuals and groups interact with one another and what drives human behavior.

Social science as a field of study is separate from the natural sciences, which cover topics such as physics, biology, and chemistry. Social science examines the relationships between individuals and societies, as well as the development and operation of societies, rather than studying the physical world. These academic disciplines rely more heavily on interpretation and qualitative research methodologies and quantitative data analysis, to study society.

Social science differs from natural science in that it examines the human, constructed world rather than the physical world. Fields like biology, chemistry, and physics use the scientific method to propose hypotheses and theories.

The social sciences also share some of the same methodological approaches as those used in the humanities, like qualitative research. Both the humanities and social sciences use analytical and interpretive approaches to learn more about the human world.

Despite these differences, many question whether certain fields — including psychology, economics, history, sociology, political science, and philosophy — fall under the umbrella of the humanities or social sciences.

The origins of social sciences can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. The lives they led, and their early studies into human nature, the state, and mortality, helped to shape Western civilization.

The social sciences are important because they help people understand how to not only analyze their own behavior, but also the behavior and motivations of their peers. The social sciences also give us a better understanding of how to create more inclusive, and effective institutions.

What Are Social Science Subjects?

Nowadays, colleges and universities offer numerous social sciences programs, including: Anthropology, Archaeology, Economics, Geography, History, Law, Linguistics, Politics, Psychology, and Sociology are some of the most common subjects in the social sciences.

Note

In this course, our main focus will be on the sum of social sciences that are available to be majoring in for the coming undergraduation levels, which will be discussed for the next online sessions in this order; philosophy, psychology, sociology, sciences of education and anthropology.



Subject N°01: Philosophy

Definition & Meaning:

The word Philosophy is derived from two Greek words; "Philo" meaning love and "Sophia" meaning wisdom. In general, it means love of knowledge or wisdom. Philosophy is a broad field of knowledge in which the definition of knowledge itself is one of the subjects investigated. It spans the nature of the universe, the mind, and the body; the relationships between all three, and between people. Philosophy is a field of inquiry – the pursuit of wisdom; the predecessor and complement of science, developing the issues which underlie science and pondering those questions which are beyond the scope of science.

Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental questions, such as those about existence, reason, knowledge, values, mind, and language. Such questions are often posed as problems to be studied or resolved. Philosophical methods include questioning, critical discussion, rational argument, and systematic presentation.

Philosophy is the study of the most general and abstract features of the world and categories with which we think: mind, matter, reason, proof, truth, etc. In philosophy, the concepts with which we approach the world themselves become the topic of enquiry. A philosophy of a discipline such as history, physics, or law seeks not so much to solve historical, physical, or legal questions, as to study the concepts that structure such thinking, and to reveal their foundations and presuppositions. In this sense philosophy is what happens when a practice becomes self-conscious. The borderline between such 'second-order' reflection, and ways of practicing the first-order discipline itself, is not always clear: philosophical problems may be tamed by the advance of a discipline, and the conduct of a discipline may be swayed by philosophical reflection. At different times there has been more or less optimism about the possibility of a pure or 'first' philosophy, taking an a priori standpoint from which other intellectual practices can be impartially assessed and subjected to logical evaluation and correction. The contemporary spirit of the subject is hostile to any such possibility, and prefers to see philosophical reflection as continuous with the best practice of any field of intellectual enquiry. (The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy).

Historical overview

Historically, philosophy encompassed all bodies of knowledge and a practitioner was known as a philosopher. From the time of Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle to the 19th century, "natural philosophy" encompassed astronomy, medicine, and physics. For example, Newton's 1687 Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy later became classified as a book of physics.

In the 19th century, the growth of modern research universities led academic philosophy and other disciplines to professionalize and specialize. Since then, various areas of investigation that were traditionally part of philosophy have become separate academic disciplines, and namely the social sciences such as psychology, sociology, linguistics, and economics.

Today, major subfields of academic philosophy include metaphysics, which is concerned with the fundamental nature of existence and reality, epistemology, which studies the nature of knowledge and belief, ethics, which is concerned with moral value, and logic, which studies the rules of inference that allow one to derive conclusions from true premises. Other notable subfields include philosophy of science, political philosophy, aesthetics, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind.



Branches of philosophy

Epistemology (Greek, episteme, knowledge): the theory of knowledge. Its central questions include the origin of knowledge; the place of experience in generating knowledge, and the place of reason in doing so; the relationship between knowledge and certainty, and between knowledge and the impossibility of error; and the changing forms of knowledge that arise from new conceptualizations of the world. All of these issues link with other central concerns of philosophy, such as the nature of truth and the nature of experience and meaning.

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge. Epistemologists examine putative sources of knowledge, including perceptual experience, reason, memory, and testimony. They also investigate questions about the nature of truth, belief, justification, and rationality.

The philosophy of science

The philosophy of science explores the foundations, methods, history, implications and purpose of science. Many of its subdivisions correspond to specific branches of science. For example, philosophy of biology deals specifically with the metaphysical, epistemological and ethical issues in the biomedical and life sciences.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics: the study of beauty: the branch of philosophy dealing with the study of aesthetic values. It is the "critical reflection on art, culture and nature." It addresses the nature of art, beauty and taste, enjoyment, emotional values, perception and with the creation and appreciation of beauty. It is more precisely defined as the study of sensory or sensori-emotional values, sometimes called judgments of sentiment and taste. Its major divisions are art theory, literary theory, film theory and music theory.

Ethics

Ethics, also known as moral philosophy, studies what constitutes good and bad conduct, right and wrong values, and good and evil. Its primary investigations include how to live a good life and identifying standards of morality. It also includes investigating whether or not there is a best way to live or a universal moral standard, and if so, how we come to learn about it. The main branches of ethics are normative ethics, meta-ethics and applied ethics.

Metaphysics

Metaphysics is the study of the most general features of reality, such as existence, time, objects and their properties, wholes and their parts, events, processes and causation and the relationship between mind and body. Metaphysics includes cosmology, the study of the world in its entirety and ontology, the study of being.

Logic

Logic is the study of reasoning and argument.

Deductive reasoning is when, given certain premises, conclusions are unavoidably implied. Rules of inference are used to infer conclusions such as, modus ponens, where given "A" and "If A then B", then "B" must be concluded.

Because comprehensive reasoning is an essential element of all sciences, social sciences and humanities disciplines, logic became a formal science. Sub-fields include mathematical logic, philosophical logic, Modal logic, computational logic and non-classical logics. A major question in the philosophy of mathematics is whether mathematical entities are objective and discovered, called mathematical realism, or invented, called mathematical antirealism.



Philosophy of language and philosophy of mind

Philosophy of language explores the nature, origins, and use of language. Philosophy of mind explores the nature of the mind and its relationship to the body, as typified by disputes between materialism and dualism. In recent years, this branch has become related to cognitive science.

Philosophy of religion

Philosophy of religion deals with questions that involve religion and religious ideas from a philosophically neutral perspective (as opposed to theology which begins from religious convictions). Traditionally, religious questions were not seen as a separate field from philosophy proper, the idea of a separate field only arose in the 19th century.

History of Philosophy

References:

- 1- <https://www.philosophicalsociety.com/archives/history%20of%20philosophy.htm>
- 2- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy>
- 3- Simon Blackburn, the Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy, Oxford University Press, 2005, Oxford.



Subject N°02: Psychology

Psychology is the study of the mind and behavior, according to the American Psychological Association. It is the study of the mind, how it works, and how it affects behavior. Psychology is the scientific study of mind and behavior. Psychology includes the study of conscious and unconscious phenomena, including feelings and thoughts. It is an academic discipline of immense scope, crossing the boundaries between the natural and social sciences. Psychologists seek an understanding of the emergent properties of brains, linking the discipline to neuroscience. As a social science, psychologists aim to understand the behavior of individuals and groups.

Psychologists are involved in research on perception, cognition, attention, emotion, intelligence, subjective experiences, motivation, brain functioning, and personality. Psychologists' interests extend to interpersonal relationships, psychological resilience, family resilience, and other areas within social psychology. They also consider the unconscious mind. Research psychologists employ empirical methods to infer causal and correlational relationships between psychosocial variables.

While psychological knowledge is often applied to the assessment and treatment of mental health problems, it is also directed towards understanding and solving problems in several spheres of human activity. By many accounts, psychology ultimately aims to benefit society. Many psychologists are involved in some kind of therapeutic role, practicing in clinical, counseling, or school settings. Other psychologists conduct scientific research on a wide range of topics related to mental processes and behavior. Typically the latter group of psychologists work in academic settings (e.g., universities, medical schools, hospitals). Another group of psychologists is employed in industrial and organizational settings. Yet others are involved in work on human development, aging, sports, health, forensics, and the media.

Major Schools of Thought in Psychology

When psychology first emerged as a science separate from biology and philosophy, the debate over how to describe and explain the human mind and behavior began. The different schools of psychology represent the major theories within psychology. The first school of thought, structuralism, was advocated by the founder of the first psychology lab, Wilhelm Wundt. Almost immediately, other theories began to emerge and vie for dominance in psychology.

Structuralism and Functionalism: Early Schools of Thought

Structuralism

Structuralism is widely regarded as the first school of thought in psychology. This outlook focused on breaking down mental processes into the most basic components. Major thinkers associated with structuralism include Wilhelm Wundt and Edward Titchener. The focus of structuralism was on reducing mental processes down into their most basic elements. The structuralists used techniques such as introspection to analyze the inner processes of the human mind.

Functionalism formed as a reaction to the theories of the structuralist school of thought and was heavily influenced by the work of William James. It functioned on the mind's functions and adaptations. Unlike some of the other well-known schools of thought in psychology, functionalism is not associated with a single dominant theorist. Instead, there are some different functionalist thinkers associated with this outlook including John Dewey, James Rowland Angell, and Harvey Carr.

Instead of focusing on the mental processes themselves, functionalist thinkers were instead interested in the role that these processes play.

Gestalt Psychology

Gestalt psychology is a school of psychology based upon the idea that we experience things as unified wholes. This approach to psychology began in Germany and Austria during the late 19th century in response to the molecular approach of structuralism.



Instead of breaking down thoughts and behavior to their smallest elements, the gestalt psychologists believed that you must look at the whole of experience. According to the Gestalt thinkers, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

The Behaviorist School of Thought in Psychology

Behaviorism became a dominant school of thought during the 1950s. It was based upon the work of thinkers such as:

John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov, B. F. Skinner

Behaviorism suggests that all behavior can be explained by environmental causes rather than by internal forces. Behaviorism is focused on observable behavior. Theories of learning including classical conditioning and operant conditioning were the focus of a great deal of research.

The behavioral school of psychology had a significant influence on the course of psychology, and many of the ideas and techniques that emerged from this school of thought are still widely used today. Behavioral training, token economies, aversion therapy, and other techniques are frequently used in psychotherapy and behavior modification programs.

The Psychoanalytic School of Thought

Psychoanalysis is a school of psychology founded by Sigmund Freud. This school of thought emphasized the influence of the unconscious mind on behavior.

Freud believed that the human mind was composed of three elements: the id, ego, and superego. The id consists of primal urges while the ego is the component of personality charged with dealing with reality. The superego is the part of the personality that holds all of the ideals and values we internalize from our parents and culture. Freud believed that the interaction of these three elements was what led to all of the complex human behaviors.

The Humanistic School of Thought

Humanistic psychology developed as a response to psychoanalysis and behaviorism. Humanistic psychology instead focused on individual free will, personal growth and the concept of self-actualization. While early schools of thought were primarily centered on abnormal human behavior, humanistic psychology differed considerably in its emphasis on helping people achieve and fulfill their potential.

Major humanist thinkers include: Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers

Humanistic psychology remains quite popular today and has had a significant influence on other areas of psychology including positive psychology. This particular branch of psychology is centered on helping people living happier, more fulfilling lives.

Cognitive School of Psychology

Cognitive psychology is the school of psychology that studies mental processes including how people think, perceive, remember and learn. As part of the larger field of cognitive science, this branch of psychology is related to other disciplines including neuroscience, philosophy, and linguistics.

Cognitive psychology began to emerge during the 1950s, partly as a response to behaviorism. Critics of behaviorism noted that it failed to account for how internal processes impacted behavior. This period is sometimes referred to as the "cognitive revolution" as a wealth of research on topics such as information processing, language, memory, and perception that began to emerge.

One of the most influential theories of this school of thought was the stages of cognitive development theory proposed by Jean Piaget.



Branches of psychology

There are different types of psychology that serve different purposes. There is no fixed way of classifying them, but here are some common types.

Clinical psychology

Clinical psychology integrates science, theory, and practice in order to understand, predict and relieve problems with adjustment, disability, and discomfort. It promotes adaptation, adjustment, and personal development. Clinical psychology can help us to understand, prevent, and alleviate psychologically-caused distress or dysfunction, and promote an individual's well-being and personal development.

Cognitive psychology

Cognitive psychology investigates internal mental processes, such as problem solving, memory, learning, and language. It looks at how people think, perceive, communicate, remember, and learn. It is closely related to neuroscience, philosophy, and linguistics.

Occupational psychology

Occupational or organizational psychologists are involved in assessing and making recommendations about the performance of people at work and in training. They help companies to find more effective ways to function, and to understand how people and groups behave at work. This information can help improve effectiveness, efficiency, job satisfaction, and employee retention.

Developmental psychology

This is the scientific study of systematic psychological changes that a person experiences over the life span, often referred to as human development. It focuses not only on infants and young children but also teenagers, adults, and older people. Factors include motor skills, problem solving, moral understanding, acquiring language, emotions, personality, self-concept, and identity formation. It also looks at innate mental structures against learning through experience, or how a person's characteristics interact with environmental factors and how this impacts development.

Forensic psychology

Forensic psychology involves applying psychology to criminal investigation and the law. A forensic psychologist practices psychology as a science within the criminal justice system and civil courts. It involves assessing the psychological factors that might influence a case or behavior and presenting the findings in court.

Neuropsychology

Neuropsychology looks at the structure and function of the brain in relation to behaviors and psychological processes. A neuropsychology may be involved if a condition involves lesions in the brain, and assessments that involve recording electrical activity in the brain. A neuropsychological evaluation is used to determine whether a person is likely to experience behavioral problems following suspected or diagnosed brain injury, such as a stroke. The results can enable a doctor to provide treatment that may help the individual achieve possible improvements in cognitive damage that has occurred.

Social psychology

Social psychology uses scientific methods to understand how social influences impact human behavior. It seeks to explain how feelings, behavior, and thoughts are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of other people. A social psychologist looks at group behavior, social perception, non-verbal behavior, conformity, aggression, prejudice, and leadership. Social perception and social interaction are seen as key to understanding social behavior.

Other branches include military, consumer, educational, cross-cultural, and environmental psychology. The number of branches continues to grow.



Subject N°03: Sociology

Sociology is a social science that focuses on society, human social behaviour, patterns of social relationships, social interaction, and aspects of culture associated with everyday life. It uses various methods of empirical investigation and critical analysis to develop a body of knowledge about social order and social change. While some sociologists conduct research that may be applied directly to social policy and welfare, others focus primarily on refining the theoretical understanding of social processes. Subject matter can range from micro-level analyses of society (i.e. of individual interaction and agency) to macro-level analyses (i.e. of systems and the social structure).

Traditional focuses of sociology include social stratification, social class, social mobility, religion, secularization, law, sexuality, gender, and deviance. As all spheres of human activity are affected by the interplay between social structure and individual agency, sociology has gradually expanded its focus to other subjects and institutions, such as health and the institution of medicine; economy; military; punishment and systems of control; the Internet; education; social capital; and the role of social activity in the development of scientific knowledge.

The range of social scientific methods has also expanded, as social researchers draw upon a variety of qualitative and quantitative techniques. The linguistic and cultural turns of the mid-20th century, especially, have led to increasingly interpretative, hermeneutic, and philosophical approaches towards the analysis of society. Conversely, the turn of the 21st century has seen the rise of new analytically, mathematically, and computationally rigorous techniques, such as agent-based modelling and social network analysis.

sociology, a social science that studies human societies, their interactions, and the processes that preserve and change them. It does this by examining the dynamics of constituent parts of societies such as institutions, communities, populations, and gender, racial, or age groups. Sociology also studies social status or stratification, social movements, and social change, as well as societal disorder in the form of crime, deviance, and revolution.

Historical development of sociology

Sociological reasoning predates the foundation of the discipline itself. Social analysis has origins in the common stock of Western knowledge and philosophy, having been carried out from as far back as the time of Old comic poetry which features social and political criticism,[9] and ancient Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, if not earlier. For instance, the origin of the survey (i.e. the collection of information from a sample of individuals) can be traced back to at least the Domesday Book in 1086, while ancient philosophers such as Confucius wrote about the importance of social roles.

There is evidence of early sociology in medieval Arabic writings as well. Some sources consider Ibn Khaldun, a 14th-century Arab-Islamic scholar from Tunisia, to have been the father of sociology although there is no reference to his work in the work of major founders of modern sociology. Khaldun's Muqaddimah was perhaps the first work to advance social-scientific reasoning on social cohesion and social conflict.

Sociology was later defined independently by French philosopher of science Auguste Comte in 1838 as a new way of looking at society. Comte had earlier used the term "social physics". Writing shortly after the malaise of the French Revolution, he proposed that social ills could be remedied through sociological positivism, an epistemological approach outlined in the Course in Positive Philosophy (1830–1842), later included in A General View of Positivism (1848). Comte believed a positivist stage would mark the final era, after conjectural theological and metaphysical phases, in the progression of human understanding.

Both Comte and Karl Marx set out to develop scientifically justified systems in the wake of European industrialization and secularization, informed by various key movements in the philosophies of history and science. Marx rejected Comtean positivism but in attempting to develop a "science of society" nevertheless came to be recognized as a founder of sociology as the word gained wider meaning.



Positivism and antipositivism

Positivism

The overarching methodological principle of positivism is to conduct sociology in broadly the same manner as natural science. An emphasis on empiricism and the scientific method is sought to provide a tested foundation for sociological research based on the assumption that the only authentic knowledge is scientific knowledge, and that such knowledge can only arrive by positive affirmation through scientific methodology.

Anti-positivism

Reactions against social empiricism began when German philosopher Hegel voiced opposition to both empiricism, which he rejected as uncritical, and determinism, which he viewed as overly mechanistic. Karl Marx's methodology borrowed from Hegelian dialecticism but also a rejection of positivism in favour of critical analysis, seeking to supplement the empirical acquisition of "facts" with the elimination of illusions. He maintained that appearances need to be critiqued rather than simply documented. Early hermeneuticians such as Wilhelm Dilthey pioneered the distinction between natural and social science ('Geisteswissenschaft'). Various neo-Kantian philosophers, phenomenologists and human scientists further theorized how the analysis of the social world differs to that of the natural world due to the irreducibly complex aspects of human society, culture, and being.

Foundations of the academic discipline

The institutionalization of sociology as an academic discipline, however, was chiefly led by Émile Durkheim, who developed positivism as a foundation for practical social research. While Durkheim rejected much of the detail of Comte's philosophy, he retained and refined its method, maintaining that the social sciences are a logical continuation of the natural ones into the realm of human activity, and insisting that they may retain the same objectivity, rationalism, and approach to causality. Durkheim set up the first European department of sociology at the University of Bordeaux in 1895, publishing his *Rules of the Sociological Method* (1895). For Durkheim, sociology could be described as the "science of institutions, their genesis and their functioning." Durkheim, Marx, and the German theorist Max Weber are typically cited as the three principal architects of sociology.