
Formulating a Research Problem in English Language Studies

A practical Guide

Selecting a Broad Topic

Objective: by the end of this lesson, learners will be able to identify a broad topic of interest in their field of study.

It may seem difficult for undergraduate students to form a clear idea about their interests. They may find it confusing to select a topic they would like to work on. Together, we are going to analyse different aspects pertaining to English language studies and devise a workable and researchable problem.

Task1: Reflect on these areas. Answer the following questions.

Your university studies

Consider the subjects that are part of your course, what subjects do you find interesting? enjoyable? difficult? boring? Do you have any learning difficulties with any of them? Which of the subjects can be relevant to your future career?

Your school years

What aspects of teaching, learning and communication in schools did you like, dislike, find difficult? What did you notice about teachers and the teaching process, fellow students, learning materials, the curriculum or the involvement of parents?

Your work experience

Have you ever had a job related to language teaching or translation whether full time or part time? What language related issues can you identify within your work experience?

English in the world around you

What issues can you identify with using English in business, advertising and media in your environment? How do people around you use this language and perceive it?

The university library

Browsing books in your university or faculty library can give insights to different topics dealt with in your field, Has any book caught your attention and made you want to know more about the topic? Has any book left you with questions that you want to investigate?

Task2: Complete the following sentence.

I think I am interested in investigatingbecause I am interested in