



Research Methodology Course

1. Enseignant :

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2. Identification du Cours :

Intitulé du cours	Research Methodology: Semester 2: 2023-2024				
Matière	Research Methodology (<i>Technique du travail universitaire</i>)				
Niveau	<input type="checkbox"/> L1	<input type="checkbox"/> L2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L3	<input type="checkbox"/> M1	<input type="checkbox"/> M2
Domaine	FL - English				
Spécialité	/				

3. Thèmes du Cours :

Theme (III) : Defining the research problem	1/ What is a research problem? 2/ Selecting a research problem 3/ Considerations in selecting a research problem 4/ Techniques involved in defining a research problem
Theme (IV): Citation styles	1/ The APA writing style 2/ The MLA writing style 3/ The Chicago writing style
Theme (V): Academic writing and plagiarism	1/ Focus in writing 2/ Voice, person and tense 3/ How to avoid plagiarism?
Theme (VI): Writing a research proposal	1/ Components 2/ Format 3/ Structure

NB: The themes suggested above do not comprise an exhaustive list of items; i.e. omissions or additions may take place, depending on the students' needs and course development.



Theme 3: Defining the research problem

Duration: 4 sessions (06 hours)

Contents

- 3.1 Defining the research problem
- 3.2 Major characteristics of a good (researchable) research problem
- 3.3 Identifying and formulating a research problem
- 3.4 Considerations in selecting a research problem
- 3.5 Conclusion
- 3.6 References

3.1 Defining the research problem

In fact, different definitions of the term problem have been given by scholars and researchers. Examples of these definitions are listed below :

“Problem is the obstacle in the path of satisfying our needs.” John Geoffery

“Problem is a question which is to be solved.” John. G. Tornsand

“To define a problem means to put a fence around it, to separate it by careful distinctions from like questions found in related situations of need.” Whitney

“A problem is a question proposed for a solution generally speaking a problem exists when there is a no available answer to same question.” J.C. Townsend

“A problem is an interrogative sentence or statement that asks: What relation exists between two or more variables?” F.N. Kerlinger

“To define a problem means to specify it in detail and with precision each question and subordinate question to be answered is to be specified, the limits of the investigation must be determined. Frequently, it is necessary to review previous studies in order to determine just what is to be done. Sometimes it is necessary to formulate the point of view or educational theory on which the investigation is to be based. If certain assumptions are made, they must be explicitly noted.” Monero and Engelhart

(Pandey and Pandey, 2015, p. 24)

Based on the above definitions, it is obvious that research seeks to answer a question or solve a problem. It is also clear that different types of research require different approaches. The approaches, the methods, and the techniques employed in research are selected based on the nature of research, the aims of reasearch, the capacities of the rersarcher, and sometimes the needs of the community where the research takes place.



3.2 Major characteristics of a good (researchable) research problem

Not all problems deserve to be tackled even if they all seem to be big questions, unresolved controversies, or gaps in knowledge. This gives the idea that what is required is an awareness of the major current issues and an inquisitive and questioning mind on the part of the researcher (Walliman, 2001, pp. 20-21). That is, there must be features which help the researcher to select a suitable research problem. Below is a list of the most important ones:

- The problem should be of great interest to the researcher (It requires him months to investigating it). *
- The problem should be significant (investigating a trivial problem is not advisable).
- It should be delineated (time and efforts, which will help in restricting the scope of research, must be highly considered. The more the field is restricted, the more detailed the study can be).
- The researcher should obtain the information required (The relevant information are the key to tackle the problem).
- The researcher should draw conclusions related to the problem (Finding an answer or solution to the problem Is the ultimate goal of research).
- The researcher should state the problem clearly and concisely (People need to understand what the problem is) (ibid, p.21).

3.3 Identifying and formulating a research problem

As it was mentioned earlier, identifying the problem is a step of great importance in research work, and thus the researcher should know how to recognize and define the problem. This knowledge should proceed step by step as shown below:

Step 1 : Determining the field of research in which a researcher is interested.

Step 2 : The researcher should develop a mastery on the area of his specialization.

Step 3 : He should review the researches conducted in the area to know the recent trend and studies.

Step 4: On the basis of the review, he should consider the priority field of the study.

Step 5: He should employ his personal experience of the field in locating the problem and/ take help of a supervisor or expert in the field.

Step 6 : He should pin-point the specific aspect of the problem which is to be investigated.

(Singh, 2006, p. 23)



3.4 Considerations in selecting a research problem

In selecting a research problem, there are internal criteria (the researcher's training, interest...) and external criteria (novelty and importance of the problem...). Most of these criteria or considerations were classified by Singh (2006) as follows:

1. Novelty and avoidance of unnecessary duplications.
2. Importance for the field represented.
3. Interest, intellectual curiosity, and drive.
4. Training and personal qualifications.
5. Availability of data and method.
6. Special equipment and working conditions.
7. Sponsorship and administrative cooperation.
8. Time factor (pp. 24-25)

3.5 Conclusion

One may conclude the present lecture by saying that a research problem is a specific question, difficulty, or gap in knowledge that a researcher aims to address in his research. Moreover, there are practical problems which lead to change, and theoretical problems which lead expanding an existing body of knowledge. The selection of a research problem depends heavily on the researcher's interest, training, personal qualifications, special equipment and working conditions. The identification and formulation of the problem, on the other hand, is a task that may take time and is often influenced by personal values and social conditions which differ from one society to another.

3.6 References

- Akhidime, A. E. (2017). THE IMPORTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM: A DIDACTIC DISCUSS. International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management. Vol. V, Issue 8. ISSN 2348 0386
- Kothari, C.R, (2004). Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques. 2nd Ed. New Delhi. New Age International Limited Publishers
- Pandey, P. and Pandey, M. M. (2015). RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES. Buzau, Al. Marghiloman : Romania, Bridge Center
- Singh, Y. K. (2006). Fundamentals of research methodology and statistics. New Delhi: New Age International (P) Ltd.
- Walliman, N. & Baiche, B. (2001). Your research project: A step-by-step guide for the first-time researcher. London: SAGE Publications.



Theme 4: Citation Styles (APA & MLA)

Duration: 3 sessions (4.5 hours)

Contents

- 4.1 What is a citation and citation style
- 4.2 How do I choose a citation style?
- 4.3 How to reference (Few APA examples)
 - 4.3.1 In text citations
 - 4.3.2 Similar information referred to by more than one author
- 4.4 Major Differences between MLA and APA
- 4.5 Conclusion
- 4.6 References

4.1 What is a citation and citation style

A citation is a way of acknowledging or giving credit to authors for their works which we have utilized to support our research. It can also be used to locate sources and avoid being accused of plagiarism. In APA citation style, for instance, a citation can include the author's name, date, location of the publishing company, and journal title. A citation style dictates the information necessary for a citation and how the information is ordered, together with punctuation and other formatting instructions.

4.2 How to do I choose a citation style?

Authors have, in hand, many ways of citing resources. The citation style sometimes depends on the academic discipline involved as shown in the examples below:

- APA (American Psychological Association) is used by Education, Psychology, and Sciences
- MLA (Modern Language Association) style is used by the Humanities
- Chicago/Turabian style is generally used by Business, History, and the Fine Arts

NB: Students will need to confirm with their professors what is required as style.

(<https://pitt.libguides.com/citationhelp>)

4.3 How to reference (Few APA examples)

4.3.1 In-text citations

Even though you have put someone else's ideas or information in your own words (i.e. paraphrased), you still need to show where the original idea or information came from. This is all part of the academic writing process.

When citing in text with in an assignment, use the author/s (or editor/s) last name followed by the year of publication.



Example:

Water is a necessary part of every person's diet and of all the nutrients a body needs to function, it requires more water each day than any other nutrient (Whitney & Rolfes, 2011).

or Whitney and Rolfes (2011) state the body requires many nutrients to function but highlight that water is of greater importance than any other nutrient.

or Water is an essential element of anyone's diet and Whitney and Rolfes (2011) emphasise it is more important than any other nutrient.

Reference list entry:

Whitney, E., & Rolfes, S. (2011). Understanding nutrition (12th ed.). Australia: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Note: this book did not have a city for place of publication, just a country.

(<https://www.ukm.my/geniuspintar/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/APA-Style-Format-6th-Edition.pdf>)

4.3.2 Similar information referred to by more than one author

There may be occasion to refer to more than one source in relation to similar information. In this case, list the sources in alphabetical order within the brackets, separated by a semi-colon.

Example: Resilience is seen as the ability to overcome adversary, combat stress and bounce back from hardship (Dawson, 2006; Overton, 2005).

Reference list entry:

Dawson, L. (2006). Wise up!: How to be fearless and fulfilled in midlife. Auckland, New Zealand: Random House New Zealand.

Overton, A. (2005). Stress less: Make stress work for you not against you. Auckland, New Zealand: Random House New Zealand.

(<https://oldi.lipi.go.id/public/APA-References.pdf>)



4.4 Major Differences between MLA and APA

Required Elements for In Text Citations	APA Documentation	MLA Documentation
<p>Definition An in-text citation is an indication in your document of where you are borrowing information from another source (written source, electronic source, or personal communication source). APA and MLA systems require different details in their in-text citations. These details are described in this section.</p>	<p>APA citations include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Author(s) last name(s). If no author is provided, give the first two or three words of the document title instead. * Year of publication * Page or paragraph numbers only for directly quoted sources (not summarized or paraphrased sources). <p>One author: Gulick (2005) states, “.....” (p. 22). Two authors: Miller and Hostager (2004) write, “.....” (p. 24). Three to five authors: List all authors’ last names the first time source is cited. In subsequent citations, provide the first listed author’s last name followed by et al. which means “and others.” Wagner et al. (2001) comment, “.....” (p. 38). Six or more authors: Provide the first listed author’s last name followed by et al. Eisenhower et al. (2005) argue “...” (p. 43).</p>	<p>MLA citations include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Author(s) complete name(s) the first time source is cited. After first citation, use just author’s last name. * Title of text the first time source is mentioned. Title is then omitted. * Page numbers or paragraph numbers for online sources for all summarized, paraphrased, and quoted sources. <p>One author: Angela Gulick, author of “Poodles Are People Too,” states (22). Two or three authors: Yvonne Miller and Jon Hostager, authors of “Hurricane Gumbo,” write (24). More than three authors: Provide the first listed author’s last name followed by et al. which means “and others.” Jill Wagner et al., authors of “An Iowa Winter,” comment (43). You only need to include full names and titles the first time you cite your source. In subsequent citations, just provide last name and page number: Gulick also states states....(25).</p>
Page Numbers and In-Text Citations	APA Documentation	MLA Documentation
	* If citing a direct quote, the letter “p.” is provided for a single cited page. The letters	* If citing a direct quote, paraphrase, or summary, the page number alone is presented

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Université Mohamed Khider- Biskra
Faculté : LETTRES ET LANGUES
Département : LANGUE ET LITTÉRATURE ANGLAISE



جامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة
كلية : ادب و لغات
قسم : اللغة و الادب الانجليزي

	<p>“pp.” are provide for more than one cited page.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: (p. 39) • Example: (pp. 84-88) 	<p>for a single cited page. Page numbers are provided for a sequential range of pages. The starting page number and a “+” are provided for a document on nonsequential pages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: (39) • Example: (84-88) - This means the document began on page 84 and continued on every page until it ended on page 88. Example: (10+) – This means the document began on page 10 and continued onto other pages in a non-sequential order (such as page 10, 11, 15, 17, and 19).
Reference Pages and Works Cited Pages	APA Documentation	MLA Documentation
	<p>The alphabetical listing of all sources directly mentioned in a paper is called References. This list appears immediately following the end of the document. The alphabetical listing of all sources consulted but not directly mentioned in a paper is called a Bibliography.</p> <p>The References list provides only “recoverable data,” not personal communications (letters, memos, e-mails, personal/telephone interviews). Personal communications are cited in text only. Here is an example: B. D. Doud studied the longterm effects of carpet fiber digestion in rats, claiming that female rats chose fibers from shag carpeting and male rats chose fibers from Astrotrurf</p>	<p>The alphabetical listing of all sources directly mentioned in a paper is called Works Cited. This list appears immediately following the end of the document. The alphabetical listing of all sources consulted but not directly mentioned in a paper is called Works Consulted.</p> <p>The Works Cited page lists all sources direction mentioned in the paper including print, electronic, and personal communication sources.</p>



	(personal communication, April 15, 2002).	
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NB: For more information, consult the sources blow (References).

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, students are required to provide the reader with the information necessary to identify and find the sources they used in their documents. This is done through citing in the text and referencing which must be accurate, complete, and consistent allthrough. On the other hand, both referencing and citing in the text imply verbatim application of rules and instructions so as these novice researchers (L3 students) combat plagiarism. By so doing, they can explain to the reader how their study or research fits with previous ones in the same or others fields, and that they are looking at the same or similar problems from a different angle.

4.6 References

Demirdover, C. (2019). Citation Styles and Systems. Turk J Surg ; 27 : 41-43

Perrin, R. (2015). POCKET GUIDE TO APA STYLE. Australia : CENGAGE Learning UCOL
Student Experience Team (SET). (2011). A Guide to APA 6th ed. Referencing. New Zealand
Institute of Skills and Technology.

UCOL Student Success Team (2015). Student Success : A Guide to APA 6th ed. Referencing
Style. New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology.



Theme 5: Academic writing and Plagiarism

Duration: 4 sessions (06 hours)

Contents

- 5.1 Definitions of plagiarism
- 5.2 Types of plagiarism
- 5.3 Techniques involved in combatting plagiarism
- 5.4 Conclusion
- 5.5 References

5.1 Definitions of plagiarism

Shahabuddin (2009) reminds us that ‘‘Plagiarism’’ has been defined by many dictionaries as the theft and use of the ideas, writings, thoughts, and invention of other people; Shahabuddin (ibid) cites Moulton and Robison (2002) when they stated that plagiarism can also be seen as ‘‘depriving authors of profit that is rightfully theirs [, which] is theft. Depriving authors of credit might also be a form of theft.’’ In addition, Webster states plagiarism as:

1. Stealing others themes/ technology/ ideas/ words and report either verbally or in writing as one’s own.
2. Extension of an idea/ product from an established source with credibility.
3. Theft in literature and arts. 4. Without giving required credits/ permission make use of others production (Vinod K.R., et al, 2011, p.2).

Also, Merriam–Webster dictionary defines plagiarism as :

- a) The theft and use of other people's ideas or words as yours;
- b) Use of sources without attribution;
- c) Literary theft and d) presenting some ideas as own and as it is new, while this idea already exists in other source. (Roka, 2017, p.3)

5.2 Types of plagiarism

Plagiarism has been classified into many ways. Below are some examples:

Intentional or Unintentional

Intentional plagiarism takes place when the author deliberately or intentionally copies other people’s entire text, paragraph or data and presents them as his own. Whereas, unintentional plagiarism occurs when the author is not aware of such research, the ethics in writing, or does not know how to cite and thus presents identical articles (Roka, 2017).



Text/words or Ideas/data

The commonest form of this type is known as “copy-cut-paste” or “word-to-word” writing in which complete sentences, paragraphs, tables or even pictures are reproduced without acknowledging or giving credit to its author. With use of computers and the internet this form of plagiarism is very prevalent. On the other hand, the copying of ideas is a common form of plagiarism where someone else’s ideas, presentations, audio or video files, thoughts, etc are used in research and presented as the author’s own work without proper acknowledgement (ibid).

Mosaic/patch writing

This happens when a new researcher uses a previous article text by replacing, reordering or rephrasing the words or sentences to give it new look without acknowledging the original author (ibid).

Self Plagiarism

This happens when the author has added research on a previously published article, book, or chapter, journal, and presents it as a new product without acknowledging the first article or taking permission from the previous publisher. Submission of the same article to multiple journals to increase the chances of publication or making multiple articles from a single article, known as, “salami slicing” is another form of plagiarism (ibid).

5.3 Techniques involved in combating plagiarism

The best way to write and present assignments, reports, theses, etc and avoid plagiarism, the (novice/student) researcher should :

- a. take careful notes of where he gets his ideas or information from;
- b. acknowledge others’ work correctly (phrases, quotations, ideas, graphics, diagrams, charts, tables and figures);
- c. borrow assignments from friends and seniors.

As for his role and responsibility to prevent plagiarism, he should :

- a. Ensure that he has a sound knowledge of what plagiarism is.
- b. Ask questions to clear any doubts that he may have on plagiarism.
- c. Clarify/check what actions of his or his peers could be interpreted as plagiarism.
- d. Participate actively in any workshop or seminar on plagiarism organized by his faculty or the University.
- e. Share his understanding and knowledge of the code of ethics on research conduct.
- f. Explain the consequences of plagiarism to his peers who are not aware that plagiarism is a serious academic offence.

(Azirah, Cheng, Jaafar, Pillai, Lutgen, Yee, Ciaramicoli, Takada, Zawawi, Ruth, and Shoniah, HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM ...,p. 6).



5.4 Conclusion

Studying and conducting research at university requires the use of other people's text and ideas to supports one's points. However, if students fail to acknowledge the sources of what they have used as information indicates that they could not distinguish between their own ideas and those of the sources in question. Therefore, students should be prepared to make efforts to learn how to use sources properly ; i.e. how to use cite and reference by applying the rules and instructions of the chosen style. In other words, students should understand the ethical standards of research to avoid being accused of plagiarism.

5.5 References

- Azirah, H, Cheng, K.K.Y, Jaafar, J.M, Pillai, S.S , Lutgen, Yee, B.M, Ciaramicoli, I, Takada , M, Zawawi, N.A, Ruth, O.L.T, and Shoniah, S.(n.d). How to avoid plagiarism : A handbook for postgraduate students. Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya Kuala Lumpur.
- Roka, Y.B. (2017). Plagiarism: Types, Causes and How to Avoid This Worldwide Problem. Nepal Journal of Neuroscience, 14:2-6
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Lecture 6: Writing a research proposal

Duration: 3 sessions (4.5 hours)

Contents

- 6.1 Definitions of a research proposal
- 6.2 Layout of a research proposal
- 6.3 A sample of a research proposal
- 6.4 Conclusion
- 6.5 References

6.1 Definitions of a research proposal

A research proposal is a document, or rather an outline of research that a researcher writes to provide a detailed description of his proposed study. It gives the reader a summary of the entire project. Preparing the research proposal facilitates the smooth move from one operation to another in the process of research and helps to gain the required amount and quality of information with less effort, time and money. The research proposal, on the other hand, represents the conceptual framework within which research is conducted; it comprises a firm plan for collecting, measuring and analysing data, with much focus on the what (nature), the where (place), the when (time), the how (method), and for which purposes (ultimate objective) the study will be carried (Kabir, 2016, p.469).

Writing the proposal of a research work is not always an easy task to do due to continuous changes in qualitative research designs and methodologies. However, once the proposal has been completed, the research project should flow smoothly (Sudheesh, Duggappa, and Nethra, 2016).

In support of the above ideas, Abdulai and Owusu-Ansah (2014) state that :

As part of the requirements for the award of degrees in higher education institutions, students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels normally carry out research, which they report in the form of dissertations or theses. The research journey commences with the selection of a research topic and the preparation of a proposal on the selected topic. Experience has shown that students tend to encounter difficulties in writing research proposals for their supervisors because they do not fully comprehend what constitutes a research proposal (p.1)

6.2 Layout of a research proposal

According to Eve (2008), all research proposals adhere to a similar format, which includes the following:

- Title
- Introduction/Context of study
- Aims and Objectives
- Literature Review
- Research design/Methods
- Ethical considerations (p. 18)



Whereas, Sudheesh et al. (2016) see that the contents of a research proposal are in general a cover page which

should contain the (i) title of the proposal, (ii) name and affiliation of the researcher (principal investigator) and co-investigators, (iii) institutional affiliation (degree of the investigator and the name of institution where the study will be performed), details of contact such as phone numbers, E-mail id's and lines for signatures of investigators. The main contents of the proposal may be presented under the following headings: (i) introduction, (ii) review of literature, (iii) aims and objectives, (iv) research design and methods, (v) ethical considerations, (vi) budget, (vii) appendices and (viii) citations (p. 632)

6.3 A sample research proposal

Students should bear in mind that a research proposal is meant to convince people that they have a research project that is worth conducting, and that they are competent and have in hand a plan to complete it. By and large, a research proposal should contain the main elements and information necessary for the readers to evaluate the proposed. All research proposal should the questions : What the researcher plans to accomplish, why he wants to do it and how his is going to do it (Sherina, 2015, p.30)

NB: For more examples of a research proposal, consult the links blow:

https://www.ecu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/694156/research-proposal-anexample.pdf
<https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/assets/files/admissions/Research-Proposal-Template.pdf>
<https://static.studyin-uk.com/assets/documents/ResearchProposalExample.pdf>

6.4. Conclusion

Almost all students and new researchers need to understand what a research proposal means, and what it means to prepare one. A research proposal provides the readers with a detailed description of what they have proposed as a study to investigate a given problem in their area of interest. These new researchers also know that they need to convince others that they know what they are doing. That is, they are applying the major principles of the scientific method.

6.6 References

- Abdulai, R.T and Owusu-Ansah, A. (2014). Essential Ingredients of a Good Research Proposal for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students in the Social Sciences. SAGE Open, July- September: 1-15
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