

**ENG 308**  
**RESEARCH METHODS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
**USAGE**

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## Vice-Chancellor's Message

The Distance Learning Centre is building on a solid tradition of over two decades of service in the provision of External Studies Programme and now Distance Learning Education in Nigeria and beyond. The Distance Learning mode to which we are committed is providing access to many deserving Nigerians in having access to higher education especially those who by the nature of their engagement do not have the luxury of full time education. Recently, it is contributing in no small measure to providing places for teeming Nigerian youths who for one reason or the other could not get admission into the conventional universities.

These course materials have been written by writers specially trained in ODL course delivery. The writers have made great efforts to provide up to date information, knowledge and skills in the different disciplines and ensure that the materials are user-friendly.

In addition to provision of course materials in print and e-format, a lot of Information Technology input has also gone into the deployment of course materials. Most of them can be downloaded from the DLC website and are available in audio format which you can also download into your mobile phones, IPod, MP3 among other devices to allow you listen to the audio study sessions. Some of the study session materials have been scripted and are being broadcast on the university's Diamond Radio FM 101.1, while others have been delivered and captured in audio-visual format in a classroom environment for use by our students. Detailed information on availability and access is available on the website. We will continue in our efforts to provide and review course materials for our courses.

However, for you to take advantage of these formats, you will need to improve on your I.T. skills and develop requisite distance learning Culture. It is well known that, for efficient and effective provision of Distance learning education, availability of appropriate and relevant course materials is a *sine qua non*. So also, is the availability of multiple plat form for the convenience of our students. It is in fulfilment of this, that series of course materials are being written to enable our students study at their own pace and convenience.

It is our hope that you will put these course materials to the best use.



Prof. Abel Idowu Olayinka  
Vice-Chancellor

## **Foreword**

As part of its vision of providing education for “Liberty and Development” for Nigerians and the International Community, the University of Ibadan, Distance Learning Centre has recently embarked on a vigorous repositioning agenda which aimed at embracing a holistic and all encompassing approach to the delivery of its Open Distance Learning (ODL) programmes. Thus we are committed to global best practices in distance learning provision. Apart from providing an efficient administrative and academic support for our students, we are committed to providing educational resource materials for the use of our students. We are convinced that, without an up-to-date, learner-friendly and distance learning compliant course materials, there cannot be any basis to lay claim to being a provider of distance learning education. Indeed, availability of appropriate course materials in multiple formats is the hub of any distance learning provision worldwide.

In view of the above, we are vigorously pursuing as a matter of priority, the provision of credible, learner-friendly and interactive course materials for all our courses. We commissioned the authoring of, and review of course materials to teams of experts and their outputs were subjected to rigorous peer review to ensure standard. The approach not only emphasizes cognitive knowledge, but also skills and humane values which are at the core of education, even in an ICT age.

The development of the materials which is on-going also had input from experienced editors and illustrators who have ensured that they are accurate, current and learner-friendly. They are specially written with distance learners in mind. This is very important because, distance learning involves non-residential students who can often feel isolated from the community of learners.

It is important to note that, for a distance learner to excel there is the need to source and read relevant materials apart from this course material. Therefore, adequate supplementary reading materials as well as other information sources are suggested in the course materials.

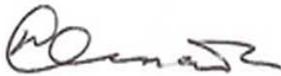
Apart from the responsibility for you to read this course material with others, you are also advised to seek assistance from your course facilitators especially academic advisors during your study even before the interactive session which is by design for revision. Your academic advisors will assist you using convenient technology including Google Hang Out, You Tube, Talk Fusion, etc. but you have to take advantage of these. It is also going to be of immense advantage if you complete assignments as at when due so as to have necessary feedbacks as a guide.

The implication of the above is that, a distance learner has a responsibility to develop requisite distance learning culture which includes diligent and disciplined self-study, seeking available administrative and academic support and acquisition of basic information technology skills. This is why you are encouraged to develop your computer skills by availing yourself the opportunity of training that the Centre’s provide and put these into use.

In conclusion, it is envisaged that the course materials would also be useful for the regular students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria who are faced with a dearth of high quality textbooks. We are therefore, delighted to present these titles to both our distance learning students and the university's regular students. We are confident that the materials will be an invaluable resource to all.

We would like to thank all our authors, reviewers and production staff for the high quality of work.

Best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bayo Okunade', written in a cursive style.

Professor Bayo Okunade  
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## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OBJECTIVES**

In a simple sense, research is a process of investigating a subject of interest systematically, rigorously and objectively with a view to providing answers to some pertinent questions as well as expanding knowledge. Research varies in magnitude, scope and intensity; nevertheless, anything called research is technical, systematic, rigorous and scientific.

The aim of this course is to introduce you to the rudiments of painstakingly studying a subject of interest, particularly in language studies in order to solve some specific problems and to add to people's knowledge in general. The course consists of sixteen different but related lectures, with each having its own specific objectives. Having carefully gone through the course, you should, among other things, be able to:

- define research and state its characteristics;
- generate a good research topic/ title in your area of specialization;
- state clearly the problems your research topic intends to address;
- identify the objectives of the research topic ;
- carry out a robust literature review on the research topic;
- plan and describe a suitable methodology for the research topic, stating the theoretical framework, the instrument(s) and procedure for data collection as well as data analysis;
- analyse and interpret your data carefully and present your findings orderly; and
- produce a well- written research report.

Once you are able to do all these, you're a researcher in your own right! You will discover that you need some knowledge and skills to make you succeed in this enterprise. As much as is practically possible, we have provided in the course the required knowledge and skills. Before you read further, can you guess what skills you think you need as a beginning researcher? You will do well to list the skills and go through the course carefully to discover the extent to which the opportunities to acquire the skills have been provided.

We wish you happy reading.

# THE NATURE OF RESEARCH

## INTRODUCTION

In this study session, you will learn about the nature, definitions, characteristics and purposes of research. Without a proper understanding of the nature of research, you will simply be involved in a confusing and fruitless exercise. It is also important to learn what research means and what characterises an effective research work. This unit will furnish you with these very basic and relevant pieces of information.

### Learning outcomes for study session one

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 1) explain the nature of research
- 2) define research
- 3) itemise and explain the characteristics of research
- 4) itemise some of the purposes a research may aim to fulfil

### 1.1 The Meaning of Research

Research literally means 'to search again'. This implies that a search has been conducted earlier; you are only required to carry out another search on the same/related topic or in the same area of study. As a researcher, your duty is to find out what earlier researches have done, and to explore the possibility of plugging in any missing point and adding to knowledge in the area in which your research is being conducted. Given this dimension, research can be said to be a continuous process. As long as humans live, and as long as society exists, there must be problems to solve, and since no single research can solve a problem or address a research object completely, there will always be need to conduct research.

The fact is that there is never a research undertaken that is not in one way or the other related to an earlier research. In fact, in most cases it is from the limitations of previous studies that new studies are suggested and carried out. Generally, the need for the advancement of knowledge – from what is known to the unknown – for the betterment of mankind necessitates the relevance of research.

Hint: Research establishes links with earlier researches. It starts from the known to the unknown, from the general to the specific.

Research helps in discovering the conditions under which certain events or phenomena may or may not occur, the similarities and the differences between these phenomena and the distinct features of such phenomena. Take for example the use of language in the newspapers or fiction. As a researcher, you may be interested in finding out the kinds of words or expressions that are used in the genres, the types of ideas that are projected through such expressions and how the use of language in the genres relate to or differ from the use of language in other genres.

- ITQ 1 Millions, if not billions, of research have been carried out by humanity. (a) Haven't we discovered all facts there are? (b) If we haven't, will we ever do? (c) If we will not, why?
- ITA 1 (a) We haven't (b) We will never do (c) It is not possible to know everything. The existence, discovery and solution of problems are integral parts of society. Theories that have worked within a situation may not work in another. As some die and others are born, there will always be new problems and facts to be solved and discovered respectively.

### 1.2 Definitions of Research

In everyday parlance, research means a search for knowledge. This general conception of research concurs with its definition in the Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English as a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search of new facts in any branch of knowledge. In the same vein, Redman and Mary (1923:10), cited in Kothari (2004:1) defines it as 'a systematised effort to gain new knowledge'. The underlying

inquisitiveness to probe and attain full understanding of the unknown. Every research possesses ontological and epistemological positions. This translates into the fact that research as an academic activity comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solutions, collecting, organising and evaluating data, making deductions and reaching conclusions.

Research is a veritable tool for the acquisition of knowledge, for conflict resolution and for promotion of peace and progress for effective human society. There are a lot of phenomena in our environment that directly or indirectly affect our lives and the explanations of which will help to enhance our quality of life. It is only through the instrumentality of research that explanations can be provided for these phenomena.

According to Osuala (1987:1), 'a research is simply the process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data.' Fawole *et al* (2006:2) provide us with the following definitions:

- Research is an endeavour to study or obtain knowledge through the use of a systematic approach with the intent of clarifications.
- Research is a systematic investigation including research development, testing and evaluation; designed to develop or to contribute to generalizable knowledge.
- Research is a form of inquiry that involves seeking of evidence to increase knowledge. It involves a systematic process for recognizing a need for information, acquiring and validating that information and deriving conclusions from it.

It is therefore clear that what some people classify as research, in the strict sense of the word is not research. Research is not about fact findings or routine activities that have to do with the application of established guidelines or rules. It is an activity that is designed to break new grounds in order to make knowledge worthwhile.

### 1.3 Characteristics of Research

Research has the following as characteristics.

- i. Research is systematic: this simply means that different types of research have their respective laid-down procedures which a researcher should follow to arrive at an acceptable conclusion. There are well-organised methods of identifying research problems, formulating them into research questions, collecting data, sampling them, testing or experimenting on them, analysing results, before making conclusions and/or recommendations. The idea here is that the preceding stage(s) has to come before the succeeding stage(s). For example, data have to be collected and sampled before they are subjected to the stage of experimentation or analysis.

Hint: You cannot find yourself on the top rung of a ladder without having first climbed the lower rungs. Likewise, research has stages that must be followed one after the other. You cannot analyse data or make a conclusion without having first identified research problems.

- ii. Research is scientific: Science, according to Badmus (2000), is a system of deriving truth through a particular theory or set of theories. Scientific methods constitute the most adequate approach to the discovery of truth. Scientific methods make the research procedure explicit in attempting to minimise errors and guarantee valid results. However, errors are sometimes made by researchers using scientific methods. The scientific method can be delineated into series of steps, some of which are: observing certain phenomena, developing a problem situation from them, identifying the existing relationships, deriving hypotheses from these relationships, developing a design to test the hypotheses, verifying or refuting the hypotheses after testing them, and integrating conclusions from them. For example, in experimental research, the researcher follows a set of explicit methods of experimenting.
- iii. Research is designed to obtain knowledge: one of the aims of research is to push the bounds of knowledge. In the nature of research, it predicts the occurrence of phenomena, postulates and finally discovers phenomena that were hitherto unknown. Research is always carried out to either confirm certain

research was undertaken. It may also provide insight in other disciplines.

- iv. Research relies on theory: a theory, according to Osuala (1987:20), is 'an attempt at synthesising and integrating empirical data for maximum clarification and unification'. A theory is needed at every stage of research; in fact, theory acts as guide to research: it pinpoints crucial aspects to be investigated and crucial questions to be answered. By identifying these areas, it stimulates research in areas that are lagging. Theory and research go hand-in-hand. Just as theories guide research, they also cannot be propounded or developed without experimental facts from research. But at the same time, experimental facts cannot proceed or may not be reliable on the basis of grossly inadequate or incorrect theories. For example, progress in child psychology will continue to be limited if teachers believe that children are not interested in learning.

Hint: A researcher is a producer of knowledge. Research is like a machine that manufactures knowledge. This machine needs theory as fuel and data as raw materials.

- v. Research must be transparent; i.e. clear in structure: research is a continuous thing. There must always be 'problems' or things to investigate in our local communities, which probably affect everybody. Therefore, research or the methods of going about it is not a secret business or personal activity. One reason for this is that even the researcher relies heavily on previous research in his/her area. Research or some vital aspects of it must therefore be structured in a transparent manner so as to be easily understood, and not be confusing or doubtful to the reader. This happens when researchers or analysts employ clear graphic, pictorial, and statistical representations to further make the observations to be seen clearly or easily recognised and appreciated by everyone concerned.
- vi. The results of research must be accessible (open to scrutiny) and therefore verifiable: the systematic and scientific nature of research make any research piece to be open to scrutiny. What this means is that anybody who follows exactly the same procedures and methods employed by a previous researcher will arrive at exactly the same results and conclusions. Through this means the results and conclusions realised in the previous research can be verified.
- vii. Research findings must be transferable: the findings of a particular research must be useful for predicting other related phenomena that may be brought under its purview. One of the basic aims of research is its applicability to human development or better functioning. Unfortunately however, most of the researches that are carried out in the higher institutions in this part of the world rot away on the library shelves. When a new knowledge is obtained in a research endeavour, it is supposed to be applied to whatever field it was targeted. For example, the application of the various researches in mathematics, physics, and electronics into medicine resulted to use of x-rays and scanning techniques, which solved the need problems associated with subjective analyses and reducing damage to human cells.

## **1.4 Purpose and function of Research**

Our discussion of the purpose of research will be undertaken from both broad and specific perspectives. From a broad perspective, we will examine the four basic objectives that inform most research undertakings. From the specific perspective we will trace the purpose of research along the line of the basic types of research. Such types of research have their distinct purposes that may not be clearly represented in a general examination of research objectives.

One main purpose of research is gaining familiarity with a phenomenon or achieving new insights into it. Research submissions with this objective are known as exploratory or formative research studies. An exploratory research introduces new perspectives to a phenomenon by making discoveries that may challenge existing ones or add to the repertoire of knowledge within a field/subfield of knowledge that may already be experiencing a kind of fossilisation. As an example; John Dalton discovered that elements consist of tiny particles called atoms. If any other scientist attempts to find out whether atoms are further divisible, such would be an exploratory research.

situation constitute the main locus of descriptive researchers. If a variationist linguist explores the use of language in newsrooms he/she delves into characterising a speech situation in terms of linguistic choices of participants in the situation. Some other types of research are carried out with the intent to determine the frequency with which a phenomenon occurs or with which it is associated with another phenomenon. We can tag such endeavours diagnostic studies. If a sociologist investigates the rate at which teenagers, within a certain age range, smoke, in a specific city, he/she engages in a diagnostic research. And in an event where he/she finds out the relationship between smoking and skin cancer, he/she has also done a diagnostic research.

Hypothesis testing can also be the objective of a research endeavour. In research process, hypothesis formulation comes after accurate definition of research problem and extensive literature survey. A working hypothesis is a tentative assumption made in order to draw out and test its logical or empirical consequences. They provide the focal points for the research. Any research work that seeks to test a hypothesis of causal relationship between variables is a hypothesis testing study (Cothari 2004:2 and Olayinka et al. 2006)

Beyond having purpose, research has certain functions that are common to all the types of research discussed above. The most fundamental of them all is that research inculcates scientific and inductive thinking, and it promotes the development of logical habits of reasoning. An avid researcher engages in constant mental exercise and does things with reasoning. Also, research findings are used to solve operational problems in different areas of human enterprise. This is especially relevant when one considers the increasingly complex nature of government business and contemporary human existence. In addition, research provides the basis for policies. As an example, a nation's budget rests in part on an analysis of the needs and desires of the people and on the availability of resources to meet these needs.

In the light of the above, we can see that research is scientific in orientation and is theory-driven. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines theory as 'a set of properly argued ideas intended to explain facts or events'. Before a set of ideas can be regarded as a theory, it must have undergone the procedure of observation, formulation of hypothesis, experimentation and formulation of law. A theory, therefore, is a scientific law that is meant to provide explanations for a particular phenomenon. Finally, we will define research as a systematic and scholarly application of scientific methods to provide dependable solutions to human problems in order to improve our quality of life.

## **Study Session Summary**

In this study session, we have looked at the nature, definitions and characteristics of research. We noted that research is a continuous activity of collecting data, analysing the data to obtain 'generalizable' knowledge about a phenomenon. We also indicated that research is systematic, scientific, theory-driven, must be transparent and its findings should be accessible. Finally we revealed the purposes of research.

## **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 1**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

### **SAQ 1.1 (tests Learning Outcome 1.1)**

Why do we research? Why will we never stop researching?

### **SAQ 1.2 (tests Learning Outcome 1.2)**

**SAQ 1.3 (tests Learning Outcome 1.3)**

Research is meant to produce knowledge. It must be systematic. It must be scientific. These are some of the characteristics of research you have learned. What are other characteristics?

**SAQ 1.4 (tests Learning Outcome 1.4)**

What is the purpose of a research that is termed to be (a) exploratory (b) descriptive (c) diagnostic (d) a hypothesis testing study?

**Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 1**

**SAQ 1.1** Research solves problems and produces knowledge. We will never run out of problems and our thirst to know will never be fully quenched.

**SAQ 1.3** Research relies on theory, must be transparent, must be accessible, and must be transferrable.

**SAQ 1.4** (a) to make familiar a hitherto unknown or little-known phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it (b) to reveal the identifying marks or attributes of a particular individual, situation or a group (c) to determine the frequency with which a phenomenon occurs or with which it is associated with another phenomenon (d) to test a hypothesis of causal relationship between variables.

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# TYPES AND ESSENTIAL STAGES OF RESEARCH

## INTRODUCTION

In this study session you will learn about the different types of research. Research exists in many types and in various spectra. We shall attempt to classify it into eight types. You will also learn about the essential parts of a research. Research has a template, which must be mastered if yours is to be graded effective. Therefore, the study session will give a detail description of each of the essential parts of a research.

## Learning Outcomes for Study Session Two

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- (1) list the different types of research
- (2) identify steps in a research

## 2.1 Types of Research

The following are the types of research:

**2.1.1 Pure and Applied Research:** according to Osuala (1987:17), pure research is usually concerned with the theoretical aspect of science and only indirectly interested in the practical application which the findings may have. Applied research, on the other hand, is concerned with the practical application of science as well as its theory. They are both geared toward the discovery of truth which in turn leads to the solution of the problem of man.

**2.1.2 Qualitative Research:** involves the collection of data in a natural setting and over an extensive period of time, with the aim of finding out the way things are. Qualitative research, according to Uwakwe (1990), seeks out the 'why', not the 'how' of its topic through the analysis of unstructured information – such as interview transcripts, open-ended survey responses, e-mails, notes, feedback forms, etc. It does not rely on statistics or numbers, which are the domain of quantitative researchers.

Qualitative research is used to gain insight into people's attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles. It may be used to inform business decisions, policy formation, communication and research. Focus groups, in-depth interviews, content analysis, ethnography, evaluation, and semiotics are among the many formal approaches or instruments that are used for collecting data in qualitative research. This type of research however, may also involve the analysis of unstructured material (such as customer feedback forms, reports, or media clips) although this can be time consuming especially when manual methods are used.

**2.1.3 Quantitative Research:** is an objective method in which information is gathered in large quantity according to the size of the population. It provides sufficient data across the group of respondents that can be used to project or make specific recommendations. It is all about quantifying relationships between variables. Variables are concepts like weight, performance, time, treatment, etc, which are measured on a sample of subjects, which can be tissues, cells, animals, humans, etc. The relationships between variables in quantitative research are expressed using effect statistics such as correlations, relative frequencies, standard deviation, or differences between means.

According to Hopkins (2008), quantitative research aims to determine the relationship between one thing (an independent variable) and another (a dependent variable) in a population. Quantitative research designs are either descriptive (subjects usually measured once) or experimental (subjects measured before and after a treatment). While the descriptive dimension of quantitative research establishes only associations between variables, the experimental establishes causality.

**2.1.4 Survey Research:** studies specific group or population by selecting and studying samples chosen from the population. It goes beyond mere data collection: it interprets, synthesises, and integrates these data, showing the interrelationships and pointing out its implications. It focuses on the determination of the status of a given phenomenon and not on the isolation of causative factors.

A survey is a data collection tool used to gather information about individuals. Surveys are commonly used in psychology research to collect self-report data from study participants. A survey may focus on factual information about individuals, or it might aim to collect opinions of the survey takers.

A survey can be administered in a couple of different ways. In one method known as a structured interview, the researcher asks each participant the questions. In the other method known as a questionnaire, the participant fills out the survey on his/her own. Surveys are generally standardised to ensure that they have reliability and validity. Standardisation is also important so that the results can be generalised to the larger population.

Hint: Survey uses questions to discover general opinions or trends.

**2.1.5 Descriptive Research:** according to Ezeisi (1999:21), is a 'scientific method which involves observing and describing the behaviour of a subject without influencing it in any way'. Descriptive research specifies the nature of a given phenomenon. As the name goes, it describes by telling what the phenomenon is, its nature and characteristics. In descriptive research, variables are described as they naturally occur without any attempt to manipulate them. The relationship among the variables is also described.

Many scientific disciplines, especially the social sciences, use this method to obtain general overview of the subject in that it is useful where it is not possible to test and measure the large number of samples needed for more quantitative types of experimentation. Apart from being used to observe natural behaviours without affecting them in any way, this type of research is also used by market researchers to judge the habit of consumers, or by companies wishing to judge the morale of staff.

The results from descriptive research can in no way be used as a definite answer or to disprove a hypothesis but, if the limitations are understood, they can still be a useful tool in many areas of scientific research. This is why a descriptive design may be incorporated to support other types like survey, case studies, etc.

**2.1.6 Experimental Research:** is an aspect of scientific method. It involves the use of two types of variables (independent and dependent). The independent variables are manipulated and the effects on the dependent are observed. The purpose of experimentation is to identify the conditions underlying the occurrence of a given phenomenon.

An experimental research is also used to establish cause and effect, so this type of study is often used to determine the effect of a treatment. In a simple experiment, study participants are randomly assigned to one of two groups. Generally, one group is the control group and receives no treatment, while the other group is the experimental group and receives the treatment. The control group is made up of the dependent variable while the treatment group is made up of the independent variable.

Experimental researchers use inferential statistics to determine if the results of an experiment are meaningful. Inferential statistics is a branch of science that deals with drawing inferences about a population based upon measures taken from a representative sample of that population. The key to determining if a treatment had an effect is to measure the 'statistical significance', which shows the relationship between the variables in probability.

websites, paintings and laws'. Content analysis is also used in the humanities. It is a way by which texts are studied regarding authorship, authenticity, or meaning. Holste (1969) defines CA as any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages. It involves analysing, evaluating and interpreting written and visual materials. CA can be quantitative or qualitative.

Content analysis, according to Berelson (1952), is a research tool to determine the presence of certain words, phrases, concepts, themes, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to quantify this presence in an objective manner. To conduct a content analysis on text, the text is coded or broken down into manageable categories on a variety of levels – word, word sense, phrase, sentence, theme, etc – and then examined using one of CA's basic methods: Conceptual Analysis or Relational Analysis. The results are then used to make inferences about the message(s) within the text(s), the writer(s), the audience, as well as the culture and time of the message(s). Content analysis can indicate pertinent features such as comprehensiveness of coverage or the intentions, biases, prejudices, and oversights of authors, publishers, as well as other persons responsible for the content of materials.

**2.1.8 Case Study:** Case study involves the collection of data or observations (personal or group), interview and documentary evidence. In a case study, a phenomenon is observed either by a person or group; data from manifestations of the phenomenon is collected and analysed; the findings are then generalised to cover the entire phenomenon.

A case study is an in-depth study of one person. In a case study, nearly every aspect of the subject's (i.e. the person being studied) life and history is analysed to seek patterns and causes for behaviour. The hope is that learning gained from studying one case can be generalised to many others. Unfortunately, case studies tend to be highly subjective and it is difficult to generalise results to larger population.

**Hint:** case study involves beaming the torch of research not on the whole of something but on one of the parts that make up the whole. One, for example, may research on Nigerian education sector with secondary schools in Oyo State as a case study.

## 2.2 Essential Stages of Research

Before a research is undertaken, the first thing a student needs to do is to specifically identify the research problem. This could be developed from a hunch, gap in the literature, limitation of a previous study, or an interesting issue or problem (event, crisis, etc) affecting human being in the society. After the problem has been clearly specified, the research has almost started and has to take the following parts before it is developed into a paper or dissertation:

**2.2.1 Choosing a topic:** a topic has to be chosen not only because every research project should have a topic, but more importantly to capture the research problem or the aspects of the research problem being studied. In choosing a topic, the student should consider the following:

- i. The topic must be researchable. This also relates back to whether the problem is researchable or not. Some problems are philosophical in that they can be discussed but no objective evidence can be provided as solutions. In the same way, topics made out of such problems are likely not researchable. For example, the topic 'Should University Students Work to Support Parents?' is borne out of philosophical issues in a society.
- ii. Apart from being researchable, research into a problem must be feasible. This means that students must make sure that data are available for the research; that there are enough financial resources to carry out the research; that there are enough literature to handle issues and experts to carry out expert analysis on the samples, etc. Therefore, for one to go into a research project, one has to satisfy all these factors.
- iii. Although previous studies are considered in choosing the topic, the topic should be significantly original. In this case, it should be capable of adding new information to the pool of knowledge. One should therefore not adopt the topic of a previous research because nothing new may be added to knowledge, but a reduplication of effort.

with familiarity.

**2.2.2 Introduction:** sometimes labelled 'Background to the Study', introduction is the part where the researcher explains what aroused her/his interest in the problem, and why s/he feels the study is worth pursuing. This is established with regard to little or no scholarly attention hitherto paid to the problem by previous studies. After setting the general background the researcher convincingly establishes the need for the study: why the information likely to result from the study is needed.

**2.2.3 The Statement of the Problem:** this is one of the most important parts of research where the research problem is specified in clear terms. Statement of the problem should be laid down in brief but quite specific terms so that even a layman may get the idea of the nature of the problem which informs the study.

**2.2.4 Purpose of the Study:** this part holds an overview of the study. It is also written in clear and concise manner stating the scope of the study. This helps to highlight the major aspects of the study and enables the reader to appreciate the nature and scope of the study.

**2.2.5 Hypothesis:** hypotheses are optional depending on the nature of a particular research. For example, hypotheses should be incorporated if certain variables are to be tested from a particular set of samples to determine the direction or degree of seriousness of the problem. In this case, statistical tools such as T-test, etc are used for the test. If used, the researcher should state it as null hypotheses – a statement that no significant relationships between the variables exist – to assist her/him in clearly stating the problem, and as a convenient approach to statistical analysis.

**2.2.6 Significance of Study:** this part should spell out the beneficiaries of the findings or value of the study. It should indicate who benefits from the findings, precisely what aspects of the findings they benefit from, and how they will benefit from the findings. Also, the impact of the study on the field of study in terms of scientific knowledge should be stated. The researcher may go further to state whether the study is a baseline research or an original contribution.

**2.2.7 Scope of the Study:** the research must set forth exactly the bounds of the topic in terms of theories to be employed, literature to be reviewed, data to be collected and sampled, and the approach to be used in doing these. These are also known as the delimitations of the study. Delimitations, in Osuala's (1987:36) view, are also concerned with those aspects of the topic or problem that are normally considered to be related to such but which – because of limitations of time, space, physical capacity or other reasons – the researcher cannot or does not wish to include. This may or may not affect the representativeness of the sample of the study or the findings.

**2.2.8 Definition of Terms:** this is an essential part of defining the research problem. Here, the terms which have unique use in the study, which are subject to several interpretations by different readers, are explained. "FOOD security", for example, may mean securing food from hungry criminals to some readers, securing food from being contaminated to others, but has a unique meaning in the field of food technology.

**2.2.9 Review of Related Literature:** this is probably the bulk of the things that will be done in the second chapter of the research writing. This part serves two purposes: to set out the theory or theories and the aspects of theories upon which the study is based, and to examine the current research efforts made in the area in order to establish the area or areas that have not been attended to. The first part is sometimes labelled "theoretical framework" and may be handled more logically with regard to the statement of the problem. The second part will usually survey the research previously done on the problem and evaluates what the existing research has and has not been accomplished in solving the problem under study.

**2.2.10 Research Methods of Procedure and Design:** this part may also be termed "research methodology". It is another crucial aspect of research where a researcher's knowledge of research itself is tested. The procedure section gives a characteristic picture of the study area, describes the population, sample and sampling technique(s), methods of data collection and analysis. It should further state the rationale for choosing any of the methods or techniques. The design section explains the research design adopted (i.e. whether experimental,

**2.2.11 Analysis of Data, Presentation and Discussion of Findings:** in most disciplines, the data gathered are carefully analysed with regard to the research questions and/or hypotheses using specific tools to realise varying results. Some of the tools used in analysing data include tables, frequency counts, charts, mean, standard deviation, T-test, Cronbach Alpha, etc the choice of which depends on the what the study set out to look for. These findings or results realised from such analysis are presented in graphic charts, tables, and figures to make them easier to understand and more appreciable to use. The findings are subsequently discussed with regard to the variables observed in the findings.

**2.2.12 Summary of Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendations:** here, the findings of the study are summarised in the order of the research questions and/or hypotheses guiding the study. They are put in straightforward simple English. It is from these findings that conclusion and recommendations are made. The conclusion highlights aspects of the contribution of the study, limitations of the study, suggestion for further studies, etc. Recommendation features usually in a research that is solution-oriented. The recommendation takes care of the solution or solutions proposed in the study.

**2.2.13 Bibliography:** this is a list of all the works cited in the research, ranging from book, articles in books or journals, dailies and periodical, government publications, unpublished materials, internet materials, lecture notes, interviews, videos, etc. A research writer makes copious use of works done by other scholars in or outside her/his field of study, especially in the literature review part. These cited works are then placed in alphabetical order of the authors' surnames. There are many styles of documentation such as American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Language Association (MLA), University of Ibadan Manual Style (UIMS), the Chicago Style, etc. But the style to be adopted may usually be prescribed by the institution examining the research.

## **SUMMARY**

In this study session, we have discussed the various types of research, some of which include: pure and allied research; quantitative and qualitative research, survey, content analysis, case study etc. We also discussed the essential parts of a research some of which include: the research topic, introduction, statement of the research problem, hypothesis, etc. We indicated that research has a template, which must be mastered for effective research writing

## **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 2**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

### **SAQ 2.1 (tests Learning Outcome 2.1)**

a Types of research include experimental, quantitative, survey. What other types are there?

b A film depicting war and violence is shown to a group of children. Afterward, they are allowed some horseplay, during which you watch out for increase of violence in their play. What type of research are you carrying out?

### **SAQ 2.2 (tests Learning Outcome 2.2)**

Under what parts are the following to be found in a research:

- i. The beneficiary of the finding and how they will benefit
- ii. List of works consulted
- iii. Mode of data collation and analysis

- vi. the gap in knowledge the researcher has identified and wants to fill?

## **Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 2**

**SAQ 2.1**(a) Pure and applied, qualitative, content analysis, case study and descriptive research.

(b) experimental research

### **SAQ 2.2**

- i. significance of study
- ii. bibliography
- iii. Research Methods of Procedure and Design (research methodology)
- iv. Scope of study
- v. significance of study
- vi. The Statement of the Problem

### **References**

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# RESEARCH TOPIC AND STATING RESEARCH PROBLEM

## INTRODUCTION

In this study session, we shall explain to you how you can generate a research topic and state your research problem. A research is usually devoted to a relevant topic or question which is of a great interest. Peil (1982) cited in Olayinka, A.I and Owumi, B.E. (2006: 56) notes that “confused thinking at the beginning of a research can cause flaws in all that follows”. In essence, as a solid foundation is important to a good and lasting building, so is a viable researchable topic in the conduct of a research. A wrong choice of a research topic at the beginning brings faulty conclusions. From the foregoing, can you now see the essence of generating a good research topic at the beginning of a research work? If yes, let us emphasize here that a researcher is expected to consult many research papers in order to discover the extent of achievements in a particular area and the existing gap that needs to be filled. The thrust of this study session is to educate you on how to generate research topic and state your research problems.

## Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

1. identify important factors to be considered in choosing or generating a research topic
2. create at least one sample research topic
3. Distinguish between good and bad research topics
4. create a sample research problem based on the sample research topic earlier created

### 3.1 Important Factors to be Considered in Choosing or Generating a Research Topic

Generating a research topic is no doubt a painstaking task because of its importance to the outcome of the research. Adelowo (2001:5) cites Bamisaye T.O. (2003:24-25) as arguing that generating a research topic is: ‘Not something to be done casually, cursorily and frivolously. It needs a great deal of patience and expertise at the beginning, since one’s decision at this stage, may affect the product at the end.’

Essentially, writers or researchers do not always cook new ideas, rather, majority of one’s thoughts and, certainly, the intellectual thinking that is prompted, shaped, and changed in response to and in the light of what has already been stated by others is reviewed and researched into. In other words, ideas emerge in response to other peoples’ ideas, taking cognizance of happenings in our environment.

The following are the relevant issues in generating a research topic.

1. What is my area of interest in my field of study? Interest is the bedrock of any research; it determines whether a research would be effectively carried out or not. Personal interest which might be psychological or sociological could be tied down to social background of the researcher.
2. Identify a particular problem and work out a topic on the identified problem. Identified problems in the researcher’s environment may create ideas in his mind which can be of interest to him in choosing or generating a research topic. For instance, the incessant religious instability in Nigeria might trigger one to research into societal peace and religious harmony. Can’t you, for example as an individual, research into finding lasting solutions to the recent ravage of flood in some south-western states of Nigeria? Think about this.
3. New discovery. A new discovered area or concept might interest you as a researcher. Discovery, they say, is the father of invention. New discoveries may set us on a serious thinking mood.
4. Researcher’s ability or personal skill is also very important. One’s ability and personal skill as a researcher may drive one’s reasoning.

In the same vein, Olayinka A.I and Owumi (2006:58) give the following as criteria for choosing a research question:

- c. Theoretical background
- d. Value of research
- e. Researcher's skills
- f. Is the question big or small enough?
- g. External requirements
- h. Overall probability of successful completion
- i. Interest to researcher.

Directly or indirectly, the foregoing has implications for generating a research topic.

### 3.2 How To Generate A Research Topic

The following will be useful guides. Be an active reader and a good listener while reading a material or paper; ask yourself these important questions:

- From where did the author seem to draw these ideas?
- What exactly has he accomplished in his piece of work?
- How does it seem to relate to other works in the field?
- What would be the next reasonable aspect to be built upon, having studied this paper critically?

Hint: A good researcher is a good reader.

- Once you have identified a topic that looks feasible, gather all relevant and related literature in the area to broaden your knowledge about the identified topic.
- You also need to seek the assistance of your supervisor or other experienced researcher in relevant and cognate specialties.
- Also worthy of note is the fact that you as a new researcher must always look for a very important gap, in your field of study, to be filled so as to contribute to the existing knowledge. Similarly, originality in research is what will bring a researcher to the limelight, because he will be breaking a new ground rather than reworking other people's works (plagiarism). Therefore, try to be original and creative in the way you generate your research topic.

Hint: A research topic may come to you in form of inspiration or by intuition at any time. If it comes this way, ensure you write it in your jotter and work on it.

- ITQ True or false: a book or research paper may trigger ideas for further research
- ITA True

### 3.3 Qualities of a Good Research Topic

The following are the qualities of a good research topic:

1. A research topic, as we have discussed earlier, must be in the area of your interest. However, your topic must adequately describe what you have in mind to be carried out in the course of conducting the research.
2. It should not be ambiguous or contradictory.
3. It should not be exactly a topic that has earlier been worked upon. It could be reframed or reconstructed, but caution has to be taken not to copy what has been done earlier by another researcher. Every research must contribute to the existing knowledge.
4. It should be concise and specific.
5. A good research topic must not contain sub-divisions.
6. A good research topic should be devoid of repetitive expressions.
7. It must not be too broad; it must be narrowed down significantly to have a clear focus.

problems to be resolved or addressed in the body of the work. It may be problems agitating one's mind; for instance, the mass failure in English language in secondary schools.

The problem that the researcher has identified in his area of interest must be properly highlighted. Research questions could also be used to define the research problems. You should remember that a good research topic should be problem-driven. Your ability in stating the problem that drives your research is very essential. If you state your research problems well enough, the significance of your research will be obvious.

- ITQ Which of the following statements is correct: (a) research problem is the problem a researcher encounters while carrying out the study (b) research problem is the problem that other researchers have not solved and to solve which the research at stake becomes necessary
- ITA Option b is correct. Option a may be a form of limitation of study.

### **Study Session 3 Summary**

In this study session, we have seen that generating a research topic is very fundamental and could be regarded as a rigorous exercise because a good research topic asks a clear and concise question rather than simply stating broad issues. As a result, a researcher must read wide to be able to generate a worthwhile research topic as well as state clearly the problems to be addressed in the research. We learnt also that personal interest is a motivating factor that should be considered in generating a research topic, therefore, a researcher must be genuinely motivated to investigate a subject of interest. Finally, always remember that a good research topic should be problem-driven.

### **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session Three**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

#### **SAQ 3.1 (tests Learning Outcome 3.1)**

True or false: Identifying a research problem aids one in generating a good topic?

#### **SAQ 3.2 (tests Learning Outcome 3.2)**

Create at least one sample research topic.

#### **SAQ 3.3 (tests Learning Outcome 3.3)**

Which of these is a good research topic: (a)The Problems, Shame and injustice Suffered by Barren Women in Africa: The Example of Nollywood Films

(b) Portrayal of Childless Women in Nollywood Films

#### **SAQ 3.4 (tests Learning Outcome 3.4)**

Create a sample research problem based on the sample research topic earlier created.

**SAQ 3.1** True

**SAQ 3.2** For example: The borrowing of Western Musical Tunes and Nigerian Gospel Songs in Fuji Music

**SAQ 3.3(b)** Portrayal of Childless Women in Nollywood Films

The first is awkward and unwieldy. One who formulates something like does not yet know what to do or what to focus on.

**SAQ 3.4** For the sample research topic created above, the research problem may appear in a manner close to the following: Several scholars have researched on the origin of Fuji musical typology. (Bata, 1985; Ọkẹrẹ, 1987; Alulugbomieko, 1989; ) Researches abound on its form and content. (Eniafijofẹ, 1986; Iranniowolo, 1990; Atilogwu, 1995) Use of proverbs and various other Yoruba traditional elements have been focused on. (Igbatiti, 2000; Maiwaka, 2002; Rara, 2005) Portrayal of women too has received prominent attention by womanist scholars. (Nwayinbundu, 2007; Ezinne, 2008; Agboghobia, 2009; Kumolu, 2010) However, the trend, becoming prominent, of borrowing songs or tunes from the West and from Nigerian Gospel Music has received no attention from scholars. The closest research has come to this area has been an identification by Muyirawa (2000) of Western musical instruments in Fuji. The borrowing of actual songs from Nigerian Gospel Music and of musical tunes from the West has not been researched. It is to this task, consequently, that this research is addressed.

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# LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

## INTRODUCTION

In this study session, you will learn about literature review and methodology in a research work. Without these two important aspects of a research, your study will lack the needed validity and credibility. As such, your research work be it long essays or term papers must include sections for literature review and methodology.

### Learning Outcomes for Study Session Four

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 1) recognise the relevance of literature review;
- 2) demonstrate knowledge of what methodology is
- 3) define methodology in a research; and
- 4) explain the relevance of research methodology.

#### 4.1.1 What is Literature Review?

Since research implies an attempt to take a critical look at a subject of investigation, it means there must have been some previous works on such a subject. Therefore, for every research, there is the need to look at what has been done on or said about the subject of investigation. The act of looking at what has been said about a phenomenon for research purposes is called literature review.

Literature review can be seen as a detailed critical examination of some previous works that are relevant to the current study. It is carried out to know what other researchers have (or have not) done, why, how and where. Through the literature review, the researcher will be able to know the gap left by the previous studies. It entails surveying and selecting materials or previous studies on your subject matter, studying them critically to note their relevance to your work or research, comprehending and evaluating the basic findings and arguments of such studies, writing and synthesizing them orderly in the body of your research. Olayinka and Owumi (2006:61) assert that the review of literature performs the following functions in a study:

- provides a conceptual framework for the research;
  - provides an integrated overview of the field of study;
  - helps to establish a need for the research;
  - may help to clarify the research problem; and
  - helps to demonstrate the researcher's familiarity with the area under consideration (e.g subject matter, theory and/or methods).
- ITQ Why should a researcher keep up to date with researches in the field on which s/he purposes to research?
- ITA To avoid duplication of research which in turn would lead to lack of progress

#### 4.1.2 How to Select Materials to Review

The following factors are cardinal to the selection of materials for review in a research.

- 1) **Accessibility of Materials:** The library readily provides researchers with numerous and different kinds of materials for research purposes. These materials include textbooks, journals, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, collected essays, newspapers, theses and dissertations, all of which serve as good sources for eliciting information and knowledge for research purpose. As a researcher, you must be familiar with the library in order to be able to obtain the needed materials for your study.

Today, the internet also serves as a viable means for sourcing materials. The websites of publishing firms give up-to-date information on recent publications. Also, several journals are now being published online. Hence, it is now mandatory for you as a student, to search not only the library, but also the internet for

Hint: As a researcher you must know the way to several libraries and the clicks to several websites.

- 2) **Relevance of the Materials:** Literature review is not meant to just list or summarize any study or research. It should contain only those studies that are relevant or related to your research. The relevance of materials to your study should be judged by, first and foremost, the subject matter, then your research problems and questions, the aim and objectives of your research. When you have identified your research problems, questions, aim and objectives, you will be able to pick out materials that relate to the area you are about delving into.
- 3) **The Currency of the Material:** This is another factor you must consider before selecting any material for review in your research. Try as much as possible to limit your review to materials not older than ten years. Avoid stating obsolete materials. When your study is full of only old materials, what will be deduced is that you are only recycling archaic ideas and you have nothing new to offer. However, old materials can be used when it is essential to do so.

The following questions will aid you in writing literature review:

- 1) What are the available materials that are relevant to your study?
- 2) What are the relevant theories to the research topic?
- 3) What have other scholars or researchers done in the area of the study?
- 4) What are the recent findings of contemporary researcher in the area of study?
- 5) What gap (s) is/are left by the previous researcher?
- 6) What methodology should you adopt for the study?
- 7) What are the research questions that can be generated from the findings of the previous studies?

#### 4.1.3 How to Write Literature Review

In order to review studies in your research, you will have to start by selecting relevant materials to your study. As noted above, their relevance should be based on your research questions, aim and objectives. You will have to examine these selected materials, stating their assertions and noting whether you agree with or oppose such opinions.

Following Olayinka and Owumi (2006:62), in writing a literature review, you will have to do these:

- 1) Indicate the ways in which the materials you are reviewing will be relevant to your research. Their relevance could be in terms of the information provided, the theory and methodology adopted. Undertake an unbiased citation of papers with contrary views;
- 2) Demonstrate that you understand the similarities between these works paradigms and define where they stand in relation to one another as well as indicate your research stands in relation to them.
- 3) The works that you refer to should reflect recent scholarship as well as those considered of seminal importance. If possible cite papers less than ten years old.
- 4) If the study is cross-disciplinary or comparative, you need to describe how the different areas of research can be drawn together in a meaningful way.
- 5) You can cite your own previous work but must show moderation.
- 6) Cite only papers or studies or materials you have actually read.
- 7) As much as possible, avoid citing unpublished, non-peer reviewed materials.

#### 4.2 Methodology

The term methodology in research basically refers to the strategies of data collection and analysis. It is important for you as a researcher to carry out a thorough library reading (s) before collecting data. As a matter of a fact, a field research on which data are usually collected cannot be carried out without a proper library reading. A good field research and data collection begin in the library, with an extensive literature review on the subject at hand, to point the researcher to relevant observations for subsequent analysis and evaluation (Iwara, 1999).

procedure to be adopted.

#### 4.2.1 Data

By data, we mean the information collected for the purpose of research analysis that will lead to an increase in human knowledge. The analysis of data should give us more insight about the phenomenon from which the data are derived. For research purposes, we identify two types of data: qualitative and quantitative.

Quantitative data are information collected in numeric form. The data provide less detail on behaviour, attitudes, motivation, context and are usually gathered using well-structured scientific (statistical and mathematical) instruments. On the other hand, qualitative data deal more with narrative data in a natural setting. They are usually stretches of expressions from subjects. Qualitative data could be extracts from interviews, recorded interaction of language users, texts from newspapers, literature books, etc. In collecting qualitative data, consideration must be given to the participants, cultural, social and historical settings. In sum, quantitative data make more use of statistical and mathematical instruments and calculations while qualitative make less use of such but depend more on subjective materials.

From the foregoing, it should be clear to you that language and literature studies deal more with qualitative data analysis. As such, in your researches as a scholar of language, you may make use of more qualitative than quantitative data. However, it is better to adopt both if need be. For instance, in a stylistic analysis of a text, you may have to count the number of sentences used based on their types (functional or structural). This means that the use of quantitative data is not irrelevant in language studies.

#### 4.2.2 Data Collection Procedure

Before you can proceed to the level of analysis in your research, you must have gathered the necessary data needed for such. The nature of the data and the method for collecting such vary from one research topic to another. In other words, your research topic, aim and objectives will determine the procedure of collecting your data.

For instance, in a contrastive study of English and any Nigerian language, you will have to elicit the Nigerian language forms from the native speakers of such a language before you can compare and contrast them with English. The native speakers from whom you collect language forms are known as informants. If the Nigerian language is your language, you can act as your own informant. If you are carrying out a discourse analysis, you will have to gather data from speech interactions that give rise to a discourse; for example, classroom interaction, doctor-patient interaction, religious sermons, etc.

Data could be collected through observation (participant or non-participant), interview and group discussion. The instruments that could be used for such collection include questionnaire, word-list, voice or video recorder such as a tape recorder, camcorder, etc writing instruments (note and pen), etc. Whatever method you adopt for data collection, you must make efforts to describe such methods and variables involved in the collection of the data. Such variables relate to the subjects i.e. the people from whom data are collected. You will have to give information about their age, sex, language, occupations etc. In the following section, we will explain the methods and some procedures that can be adopted for data collection.

1. **Elicitation:** This entails deducing language forms from people (most of the time bilinguals). It is a process of asking informants to give or translate word list such as the Ibadan 400 word list or Swedish word list, sentences or texts which could be written or oral to the language you are analysing. The translated words are transcribed either simultaneously while collecting them or after recording them. This will demand the researcher to seek for informants of such a language and establish a good rapport with them. However, before collecting such language forms from them, the researcher has to ensure their competence in the language.

interviews of important personalities; news broadcast, etc. It may also involve extracting news stories or adverts from newspapers or magazines, or discourses from literary texts such as drama, novel or poetry.

Elicitation will definitely involve the use of instruments such as a recorder (video or audio) or wordlist. If need be, you may have to carry out an interview or use questionnaire to probe further on the factors that have influenced the language use of the informants or subjects in the communicative situation from which you have collected data.

For a sociolinguistic research, a questionnaire or an interview becomes handy for probing into the language use of the subjects. Such questionnaire or interview must be structured to reflect the research goals and must contain variables that influence language use. Such variables include age, location, the language spoken by the subjects, sex, cultural/religious background, relationship between interlocutors, subject of discourse, setting, participants and several other factors. It should be noted that your research topic will determine the method or instruments you will use.

2. **Observation:** Observation simply means paying attention to something for specific purpose(s). As a researcher, you have to take proper notes of all the sections of your informant and the factors that influence them. You must watch out for both linguistic and non-linguistic cues that will be given by your informants/subjects. You will watch out for social factors, facial expressions, gestures and physical space between interlocutors, as these will point some things out to you about the language use of your subjects.

On observation, Iwara (1999:37) asserts that:

In sociolinguistic interview for instance, the researcher may be looking for the language ordinary people use on the street, arguing with friends at home, or at home blaming their children. Coherence is sometimes an issue in the study of ordinary language...narratives told to insiders may be more fragmentary, and/or less well-formed than those told to outsiders. No serious study of a speech community can take place without involving both types of interlocutors. The interviewees should also include not only family members and friends but also strangers....The performance of individual speakers... has also to be considered.

Observation is categorized into: participant and non-participant. The researcher actively takes part in the speech act from which he/she wants to take linguistic data in participant observation while in non-participant observation, he/she takes no part in such a speech situation. The researcher takes a back seat, observes without interrupting, and takes notes and even records the situation. In instances where, as a researcher, you are making use of published texts such as newspapers, magazines or literary work, you will have to make a choice of such a text based on your research topic and objectives, read through them and take extracts from them.

#### 4.2.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample is simply a small part of your data that is subjected to analysis or a part of the population you studied. Having collected your data, or before you gather your data, you may have to carry out what is technically called sampling. Sampling simply means that you take a thorough look at the data or possible sources of data to see if the data reflect what is needed for your research. It could also mean a part of your data you will use for analysis. For instance, you may take instances of interactions you have recorded in a speech situation that involves a buyer and a seller as samples for a discourse analysis of market interaction. Again, it will not be possible for you to investigate all buyers and sellers, so you need to select a sample that will represent these buyers and sellers.

if the researcher is working on a market discourse. It is then necessary for him or her to break such texts into smaller bits which can be seen as samples. This is done through sampling techniques. The following are the sampling techniques you could adopt as a researcher.

- 1) **Purposive Sampling:** To use this, a researcher deliberately selects his data based on pre-set ideas or reasons. It simply means that the researcher selects data based on the purpose he/she has in mind. Such a purpose may be motivated by research interests, other researches and the relevance or application of such researches.
- 2) **Random Sampling:** Here, the researcher simply and indiscriminately picks his or her data from possible sample units. For instance, in a stylistic analysis of newspaper editorials, a researcher can simply pick any newspaper, say; *The Punch, The Nation, The Tribune etc.*
- 3) **Stratified Random Sampling:** Here, the researcher groups or stratifies the possible sources of data into different classes based on variables such as age, location, sex, first language etc. before making a selection. For instance, in a market discourse analysis research, a researcher may choose to select his/her data from a set of interactions where the interlocutors are of the same sex or of opposite sex.

It should be noted that before adopting a method for data collection, you should consider your research topic, aims and objectives. You must also read through literature to see what methods previous researchers have used, the advantages and disadvantages of such methods and then critically ask, what will be the best method for your research.

- ITQ What sampling technique will suit a project like this: ‘Acceptance of 9ice’s Proverb-Rich Songs among Titled Men in Oyo Town’?
- ITA Purposive Sampling

#### 4.2.4 Theoretical Framework

A research work without a theory cannot be better than a lay man’s speech on the subject matter. A theory is a concept or an abstract expression of something. For a research, theoretical framework is the explanation of a particular phenomenon using relevant existing theory or theories. As a researcher, you will have to use relevant theories to gain a better insight into the subject of study and properly explain it. Normally, in a field of study, there are several theories and, different theories view the same phenomenon differently. For instance, Transformational Generative Grammar may view the sentence from the innate or competence perspective, while Systemic Functional Grammar views it from the contextual/functional perspective. It is then, necessary for you as a researcher to select a theory to which your study will be anchored.

What informs such a selection? This question simply takes us back to your research topic, aim, objectives and level of language analysis where your research is situated. All these factors determine the kind of theories you use. The level of linguistic analysis will primarily demand that you use a theory in the level. For instance, a syntactic analysis will demand using a theory of syntax. In order to select a theory for your research, ask the following questions:

- i. What is my research topic?
- ii. What are my research aims and objectives?
- iii. In which level of linguistic analysis is my research situated?
- iv. What are the theories found in that level of linguistic analysis?
- v. Which theory best suits the analysis of the data of my research?

#### STUDY SESSION SUMMARY

In this study session, we have looked at two basic stages of research: literature review and methodology. We noted that before you can select studies to review, you have to look at your research topic, aim and objectives.

## Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session Four

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

### SAQ 4.1 (tests Learning Outcome 4.1)

Suppose you do a research on an idea like this: ‘A Comparative Analysis of the Performance of Lagos State and Oyo State Secondary School Students in English Language’. You come to the finding that Lagos State secondary school students perform better than their counterparts in Oyo State in English Language, only for your external supervisor to whisk out of her/his shelf a research of seven years earlier which had come to just that finding, and another of ten years earlier with the same finding for Biology, and yet another of eight years earlier with a converse finding for Yoruba.

What step in your research did you jump that led you to the impasse?

**SAQ 4.2** Miss Akukwuobuike plans a research with the title: ‘The Perception of Female Hip-Hop Stars by Muslim Youths in Ilorin, Kwara State’. Mr □ōla plans another with the title: ‘Use of Euphemism in NoViolet Bulawayo’s *We Need New Names*’.

What research method/data will suit Miss Akukwuobuike’s research and which will suit Mr □ōla’s?

## Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 1

**SAQ 4.1** – Literature review.

**SAQ 4.2** Miss Akukwuobuike’s research will use quantitative method while Mr □ōla’s will use qualitative method

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# STUDY SESSION FIVE

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### INTRODUCTION

In the previous study sessions, we have told you that generating research topic, stating research problems, doing literature review and defining the research methodology are some of the essential stages in the conduct of a research. Do you still remember what you are expected to do at each of these stages? Our focus in the present study session is to introduce you to data analysis and discussion of findings as other essential stages in the conduct of research in language studies.

#### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

1. (a) differentiate between data analysis in language studies and other fields of research (b) demonstrate knowledge of content analysis
2. explain how findings are discussed

#### 5.1.1 Types of Data

The idea of data should not be anything strange to you now as it is common place in academic research. The term simply refers to pieces of information gathered by a researcher on the subject of his/her investigation. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), the term data refers to the kinds of information researchers obtain on the subjects of their research.

It is common to identify three main types of data thus:

- (a) Cardinal or numerical data or discrete variables (quantitative): These are those which can only take certain values. An example is the number of nodes in the cowpea plant.
- (b) Nominal or categorical data: They are simply facts that can be sorted into classes and be enumerated.
- (c) Ordinal or continuous variables: These are those that have ordered relationship to one another and can take any value in a certain range.

Also, we can identify data types as either primary or secondary. A researcher collects the primary data himself or through research assistants by studying the subjects of investigation directly in a natural setting. On the other hand, secondary data are those collected by other researchers for some other research endeavours but which another researcher now finds relevant to his/her our study.

**Hint:** primary data is the data you gather yourself for your own research while secondary data is the data another researcher gathered for her/his own research but which you re-use.

#### 5.1.2 Data Analysis

Having told you that data relate to the information you have gathered for investigation, it is important at this point to explain to you what data analysis means. Now, what do we mean when we talk about data analysis?

Data analysis is the arrangement, categorization, ordering, and interpretation of data to obtain answers to research questions (Bandeke, 2004:160). It generally requires that the investigator must systematically examine data in order to understand patterns and in some cases, identify cause and effect relationships between dependent and independent variables. Simply put, data analysis is a process of reducing data to meaningful and interpretable forms.

data from the field, just as it is done in the sciences or social sciences. It is necessary to let you know that, at this level of your education, the kind of data you will often deal with in language studies would be that which will often not require sophisticated statistical tools. If you need to use such tools you can consult statisticians or other experts in the area. Most often, you would require simple percentages, frequencies and simple graphs to analyse and interpret your data. For example, in a stylistic research, you would basically be required to interpret your data, taking cognizance of frequencies of occurrence or tokens of occurrence and regularity of patterns. Data analysis in language studies is often based on content analysis.

### 5.1.3 Content Analysis

It is important to note that much of human activities are not directly observable or measurable. Again, it is not always possible to get information directly from people who might know of such activities. Content analysis, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), therefore, is a technique that enables researchers to study human behaviour in an indirect way, through an analysis of their communications. It is just what its name implies: the analysis of the usually, but not necessarily, written contents of a communication, textbooks, essays, newspapers, novels, magazine articles, cookbooks, songs, political speeches, advertisements, pictures etc. In fact, the contents of virtually any type of communication can be analysed. A person's or group's conscious and unconscious beliefs, attitudes, values, and ideas often are revealed in their communications. These form, largely, the subject of investigation and analysis in language studies.

In today's world, there is a tremendously large number of communications of one sort or another (newspaper/editorials, graffiti, musical compositions, magazine articles, advertisements, films, etc). An analysis of such communications can tell us a great deal about how human beings live. To analyse these messages, an analyst needs to organize a large amount of materials and subject them to a rigorous process of scrutiny in order to identify patterns that may be common to them. It is important to mention therefore, that data analysis, especially in language studies, requires a close study of the data and a rigorous explanation and description of patterns that are common to the materials.

A subject/material is defined and classified and its appearance and function/value described just as its historical background is told during the process of data analysis which entails probing the nature of the subject with a view to determining its effects and how or why it works.

- ITA From what are findings derived in a research, literature review or data analysis?
- ITA From data analysis

## 5.2 Discussion of Findings

Findings are results of an investigation or study that are got from the analysis of research data. The aim of every research is expected to be the discovery of certain facts about a particular subject of investigation. These facts that are to be discovered from an investigation or study are referred to as findings.

Discussion of findings, therefore, involves highlighting, arranging and describing the results that are got from data analysis. Note that at this stage, the researcher needs to organize, present and vigorously argue for the relevance of his findings to scholarship.

The organizing principles for the discussion of findings as enunciated by Olayinka and Oriaku (2006) could be outlined thus:

- (a) **Cause And Effect:** This stresses the relatedness of things, enhances the understanding of a process and the idea of organism or sense of a system.
- (b) **Chronology:** This harps on order (natural order/sequence) with regard to time and is linked with cause and effect.

You must note that the findings arising from your analysis of data would have to be presented and then discussed. In doing this you must use good language that is clear, correct, precise and readable. In terms of tense, the simple present or the simple past could be used e.g. “It is discovered ...” or “It was discovered ...”

## **STUDY SESSION SUMMARY**

Data analysis and discussion of findings are important stages in academic research. The data obtained on a subject of investigation should be carefully studied and analysed in order to arrive at useful findings/discoveries that will provide answers to the research questions. We have explained to you that data relate to the pieces of information obtained on a subject of investigation. Your data should be arranged, classified, described and interpreted in line with the objectives of your research.

## **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 5**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

### **SAQ 5.1 (tests Learning Outcome 5.1)**

- (a) i. While most Social Science data are got from the field, where are most data in language studies got?  
ii. What tool of analysis do language studies often use, as opposed to the sophisticated statistics of social science?

(b) Researcher A works on prevalence of smoking among Lagos State secondary school students while Researcher B works on language use in *The Guardian*'s feature articles.

Which of them will most likely use content analysis?

### **SAQ 5.2 (tests Learning Outcome 5.2)**

Cause and effect is one of the organizing principles for the discussion of findings. What others are there?

## **Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 5**

**SAQ 5.1(a)** i. From spoken or writable texts, either literary or other forms of writing.  
ii. Content analysis

(b) Researcher B.

**SAQ 5.2** Chronology. Logic.

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# THE RELEVANCE OF READING TO RESEARCH 1

## INTRODUCTION

In this study session and the following one, you will learn about the relevance of reading to research. In one way or the other, we are everyday engaged in reading activities. When we are driving or passing by, we come across sign posts and we are either consciously or unconsciously compelled to read those sign posts. In some instances, we read to get information, to relax, to prepare for examinations, to carry out a research, and so on.

## Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 1) create your own definition of reading
- 2) distinguish between intensive and extensive reading
- 3) a) enumerate some reading defects/problems (b) diagnose your own reading defect, if present

## 6.1 What is Reading?

According to Ologhobo (2004), reading describes an art of getting meanings from printed or written words. If we consider the idea that reading is an art, it follows that reading is a complex process of gathering information. It also implies that reading is central to learning. As an important skill of a literate society, reading provides the key that unlocks all kinds of information. It enables us to learn how to build or fix things, to enjoy stories, to discover what other people believe, to exercise and broaden the frontiers of your knowledge and to develop our own ideologies, interests and perception about the world. In a simple sense, reading basically refers to the recognition of printed letters, as representations of meanings. Even when we read on-line materials from the internet, it is important to remember that those materials are printed (written). Essentially, therefore, reading is a matter of processing written materials in order to get information. Reading is one of the basic language skills and it is regarded as a receptive language skill. In reading, one is engaged in decoding what has been encoded in linguistic symbols.

**Reflection:** I have never been to China, but through reading I have learned that Chinese do not call their country China but Zhongguo. Reading also revealed to me that in past centuries, the people now called Yoruba did not refer to themselves as Yoruba but as Oyo, Egba, Ijesa etc. depending on the dialect they spoke. I was not there, but reading also revealed to me that a being called Yahweh created the earth. What astounding things has reading revealed to you?

## 6.2 Types of Reading

There are different types of reading, depending on the purpose(s) and methods of reading. In this study session, we shall talk about two types of reading, namely intensive and extensive reading.

### 6.2.1 Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is study reading and it demands a keen examination of what has been written in order to get the full meaning. In intensive reading, students are trained to respond to the sense of words and sentences and to see their implications, to follow relationships of thought between sentences and paragraphs and to integrate information in the text with their own experience and knowledge.

Obah (1985), though in a slightly different conceptualization of reading, identifies three levels of intensive reading. These levels are:

- a) **Literal or Factual Level:** This refers to comprehending the words and sentences on the page. This is loosely related to extensive reading.

the choice of words, and the writer's ideas.

- c) **Conjectural Level:** This level of reading requires that we use the writer's ideas as a basis for projecting new ideas. This may demand that we continue where the writer stops, exploring possibilities left open, examining problems inherent in the argument and setting ideas we gained from reading into some perspective with our already acquired frame of ideas. This level of analytic reading requires our total involvement in the text we read.

From the foregoing, it is clear that intensive reading demands a systematic, close, methodological reading. A student preparing for an examination, a researcher preparing for a presentation and a lecturer preparing for a lecture will be involved in intensive reading.

### **6.2.2 Extensive Reading**

Extensive reading is simply wide reading and it may be all about reading for pleasure. This involves the ability to read rapidly. This form of rapid reading is also important for assignments which involve reference work, that is, looking for specific information which is required, where the answer does not lie conveniently in one book with a good index and where a person does not have the time to read each line carefully as in intensive reading. It is this level of reading that may be said to relate to Obah's (1985) literal or factual level of intensive reading. However, extensive reading is done only out of interest. For such a purpose, we are not interested in details. So, we would not want to bother ourselves with a complex analysis of the events, and we may not need to write down the points. We are only interested in the general idea of the text. Extensive reading is also good for vocabulary development.

**Reflection:** Without reading, we would learn mainly through what we are able to experience. The longer we lived, the wider would be our volume of experience and consequently our knowledge. Abundant knowledge would thus be the sole prerogative of the old. It is largely thus among pre-literate societies.

## **6.3 Some Reading Defects/Problems**

As noted earlier, reading is a complex art which demands some skills. There are some reading habits that are considered bad because they are not in consonance with effective reading. We shall look at some of these bad reading habits here.

### **6.3.1 Head Movement**

One problem that hinders effective reading is head movement. It is a poor reading habit if we move the head from the left to the right as we follow the words from the left to the right across the page. Most times, we are not aware that we are moving our heads while reading. Such head movement is unnecessary because it slows down our reading. Head movement is energy consuming. The only movement required for effective reading is eye movement.

### **6.3.4 Pointing at Words/Tracing Lines**

Another reading defect is pointing at what we read or tracing lines with fingers or any other object. Besides slowing us down through the mechanical movement of the above-named items, it causes us to pay attention to irrelevant issues. The most important thing to focus on is the idea that the author is trying to pass across to us, but not the location of words on the page. By pointing to individual words, we are prevented from taking in phrases and sentences which promote the understanding or comprehension of thoughts and ideas.

### **6.3.5 Vocalization/Subvocalization**

Vocalization is another common problem in reading. It is not necessary to pronounce aloud each word as we read. Usually, this pronunciation is quite soft such that we are more or less whispering to ourselves. The major

intensive or study reading. Vocalization takes various modified forms. Sometimes, we merely move our lips soundlessly. At other times, we may make tongue or throat movements without lip movement. This reading fault can be stopped by conscious effort on our part as readers.

Sub-vocalization differs from vocalization because we do not actually move any part of the vocal system, but we still pronounce the words to ourselves in our mind. The lips do not move but an inner type of speech persists, clearly pronouncing each word and then listening to ourselves. This is a much more difficult habit to break than vocalizing because we need to understand that written words are symbols which represent two different systems: a sound system and the idea system. It is not necessary to get the idea in a printed text by sub-vocalizing. The cure to sub-vocalization is a mild approach that requires us to focus at the writer's idea rather than the sounds of the symbols.

### **6.3.6 Regression**

Regression refers to going back in error and re-reading words, phrases and sentences that we have already read. Regression is a bad habit which is often a result of lack of concentration or eye defect. It is important to note that, it is not a bad idea when we go back (regress) to confirm a new word or idea that we find as we go further in our reading of a particular text. This type of regression is an effective reading skill because it enables us to connect ideas (to investigate the relationship between the previous idea and the new one). Regression becomes a problem when it is done in error and it slows down comprehension as well as wastes time.

#### **STUDY SESSION SUMMARY**

In this study session, we explained reading as an art that involves eliciting information from written materials. We identified two types of reading as intensive reading and extensive reading. We also discussed some reading defects, namely, head movement, pointing at words for tracing lines, vocalization and sub-vocalization and regression.

### **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session Six**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

#### **SAQ 6.1 (tests Learning Outcome 6.1)**

Create your own definition of reading

#### **SAQ 6.2 (tests Learning Outcome 6.2)**

(a) In what type of reading are you engaged now?

#### **SAQ 6.3 (tests Learning Outcome 6.2)**

- a) Regression is a type of reading defect, what others are there?
- b) What is the difference between vocalization and sub-vocalization?
- c) What type of reading defect plagues you?

- 6.3** (a) Head Movement. Pointing at Words/Tracing Lines. Vocalization/Subvocalization  
(b) vocalization involves pronouncing the words aloud while subvocalization involves pronouncing the words in one's mind

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# THE RELEVANCE OF READING TO RESEARCH 2

## INTRODUCTION

In the previous study session, we introduced you to reading, its types and some reading defects. In this study session, we shall introduce you to the purpose and techniques of reading.

### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

7.1 differentiate between purposes of reading

7.2 identify some techniques of reading

### 7.1 Reading Purposes

Obah (1985) notes that it is important for us to form the habit of establishing at the very beginning of our reading, our purpose in reading any particular material. This is informed by the fact that we deal with many different types of reading materials everyday. We may read textbooks, articles from magazines, journals, extracts from books, fiction or non-fiction, political pamphlets, the newspapers and so on. The nature of written materials varies from text to text and frequently, the purpose in reading changes. One book/material may be searched for specific facts, another may be read out of interest in its ideas which are probably being met for the first time, yet another may be assigned for careful reading and study. It is therefore vital for us to determine why we are reading because it will determine how we read. Some purposes of reading are discussed below.

#### 7.1.1 Recreational Reading

This type of reading is done mainly for enjoyment. When reading for pleasure, most of us read at a relaxed speed. In such instances, we skim through the storyline until we come to a description, or even a phrase that is appealing to us, we then stop to read slowly. We also re-read some phrases or lines to enjoy them.

#### 7.1.2 Educational Reading

Educational reading or academic reading usually requires us to pay close attention to a text. In this case, we look for significant ideas and how details relate to make meanings. Here, reading speed tends to be slow and we may need to re-read certain portions for clarification and thorough understanding.

#### 7.1.3 General Reading

This involves covering a large amount of texts to get a general idea of their contents. Here, we may first 'skim' the materials to understand the main point. If the purpose is to find a particular fact or example, we may scan the text. We may then read some sections carefully to make sure that the desired information has been found.

- ITQ For what purposes do people often read the following: (i) textbook (ii) novel (iii) religious texts?
- ITA (i) educational (ii) recreational (iii) educational and/or general

### 7.2 Techniques of Reading

Our following discussion naturally introduces us to the techniques of reading.

#### 7.2.1 Skimming

Skimming is a method of fast reading. Essentially we allow our eyes to glide over the lines, just keeping hold of key phrases that connect the major argument. When a point seems particularly relevant, we slow down to read that section of the text more carefully, resuming our rapid gliding pace as soon as we are satisfied. Whenever we sense

introduced.

Skimming, therefore, is a useful device when we are more interested in the main ideas than in the details. If we wish to determine whether a book is worth reading, we use the skimming technique.

### **7.2.2 Scanning**

Scanning, on the other hand, is a reading device employed when we are searching for a particular piece of information which we know or presume is somewhere in the text. It is also an extremely useful skill in keeping the student to learn and master technical terms where a number of sources need to be consulted for the meaning and use of certain technical words. Scanning involves moving our eyes quickly across a line or down a page to locate particular information. It is also a method of rapid reading.

- ITQ Which skimming and scanning would be more suited to a book consulted for literature review?
- ITA Scanning

### **7.2.3 SQ3R**

Besides skimming and scanning, there is another technique of reading known as the 'SQ3R' reading/study technique. This technique consists of five steps: Survey, Question, Read, Recall and Review.

#### **(i)Survey**

When we first approach a material to be studied, it is a good thing for us to survey it; that is, we quickly go through the material to get a general idea of what it contains. Survey should not take much time; for instance, we could spend just three minutes to survey a thirty-page chapter of a book. In this sense, we only try to have a general idea of what the material is all about.

#### **(ii)Questions**

Here, we pose some questions in relation to what we are reading. If the author uses subheadings, we could easily turn the subheadings into questions. If the material does not have subheadings, it is left for us to skim through the material to get the main ideas and ask questions based on those ideas. Our survey should have helped us to find the most important areas of the material and skimming should have also helped us to pick out the main ideas in order to put them down in question forms. Questions stimulate our reading curiosity.

#### **(iii)Read**

The first 'R' in the 'SQ3R' technique stands for reading. Reading here simply means going through the material, bearing in mind the questions we posed earlier. When reading, the student should not think that reading once is enough. In most subjects, reading once does not guarantee mastering a subject. For a complete understanding of most text materials we need to read and re-read. Mind you this form of re-reading does not amount to regression.

#### **(iv)Recall**

The second 'R' of the 'SQ3R' technique represents recall. In recalling we try to tell what we have read. It means reciting, from memory, mentally or orally to ourselves or a friend, the information, main points and ideas that we have been able to gather from reading. It may also include the writing down of the major ideas or main points of the text from memory. The relevance of this step is that it enables us to form in our words answers to the questions, each of which involves a major point to the material being studied. It is expected that we do not repeat the exact words of the author. The stage of recall is the right stage for us to test ourselves and discover what we understand and what we do not.

#### **(v)Review**

steps again.

## **STUDY SESSION SUMMARY**

In this study session, we have discussed some purposes of reading. We also mentioned two basic methods of reading, namely, skimming and scanning. We rounded off the lecture by discussing the “SQ3R” technique of reading. The last lecture and this one should have shed some light on the relevance of reading to research. No effective research can be embarked upon without purposeful reading.

## **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 7**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

### **SAQ 7.1 (tests Learning Outcome 7.1)**

- (a) For what purpose are you reading now?
  
- (b) i If you read Ben Okri’s *The Famished Road* at your leisure, what is the purpose of your reading? ii. If you read the same novel as one of the set texts for an examination, for what purpose would you be reading?

### **SAQ 7.2 (tests Learning Outcome 7.2)**

Skimming and scanning are techniques of reading; what is the difference between them?

## **Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session Seven**

- SAQ 7.1**
- (a) For educational purpose
  - (b) i Recreational reading
  - ii most probably both

**SAQ 7.2** In scanning, there is a particular piece of information which we know or presume is somewhere in the text and for which you rush through the text searching. In skimming, we set out to search for no particular information. We simply rush through the text slowing down wherever there is something relevant.

## **REFERENCES**

- Alo, M. and Ogunsiji, A, (Ed) (2004). *English Language Communication Skills for Academic Purposes*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan General Studies Programme Unit.
- Obah, T.Y. (1985). “Reading and comprehension” In Oluikpe, B (Ed) *The Use of English for Higher Education*. Nsukka: Africana-FEP.

# THE RELEVANCE OF NOTE-TAKING AND NOTE-MAKING TO RESEARCH

## INTRODUCTION

In the conduct of a research, exploring relevant books and other written materials for vital information for a robust research report is a necessity. Being possessed by an adventurous spirit, a researcher remains restless until he unravels hidden information needed for a research work. In view of this, the importance of note-taking and note-making in research work cannot be overemphasized. This is because a researcher engages himself in note-taking in the process of collecting data and reviewing related literature which will serve as the basis for the final draft of the research paper.

## Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 8.1 (a) identify the importance of note-taking,  
(b) demonstrate knowledge of outlining of points
- 8.2 Differentiate clearly and establish the link between note-taking and note-making.

## 8.1 Note – taking

Notes are important and relevant ideas taken from a lecture, text or interview. Note-taking, therefore, means summarizing the main or most important points of a text, lecture or an interview, with a view to retaining and remembering such for the purpose of one's research.

Alo (2004:6) opines that:

Note-taking is an academic activity involving a lecturer, guest speaker, presenter of a seminar or conference paper and the listener i.e. (seminar participants, tutorial participants, conference participants, students) in a formal lecture session.

It is not extraneous to say that note-taking is an academic activity. In the process of learning and conducting a research, one tries to understand ideas and the connections of those ideas with the topic of research one also tries to ultimately remember those ideas or points encountered during a lecture or rigorous reading. A very important key to perform this magic is note-taking.

Similarly, Obah (1981:167) says that:

Note-taking is a skill which, when properly applied, reinforces active reading and constructive study. She says further that:

..... notes may be in the form of an outline or a series of connected sentences  
... paraphrased or put in your own words.

There is no gainsaying the fact that note-taking is an important skill which a researcher must possess. It enables one to jot down main ideas briefly in one's own words when reading a text or receiving a lecture or while on the field collecting data. Note-taking serves as a means of preserving ideas and knowledge derived from various learning sources.

**Reflection:** The life of a human consists of many parts, roles and duties; thus, our brain, though highly efficient, cannot store all we would wish it to store or retrieve them just anytime we need them. An effective panacea then is to jot down points we will later need.

Of all the four skills of effective communication: listening, speaking, reading and writing, listening is the most neglected. According to Gamble and Gamble (1996) cited in Oyewo (2004) listening is a deliberate process of seeking to understand and retain information for a future use. If a researcher is on the field to collect data, he has to be an active listener in order to get what his subject would say and understand such perfectly because such an opportunity may not come up again.

## **(ii) Writing Skill**

This is another very important skill which a researcher must possess. The ability to jot down ideas in a skeletal form in the course of a lecture, reading, interview, etc. is important. It will not be out of point to say that both skills i.e. listening and writing may go on simultaneously. Again, Alo (2004:7) says:

for effective note-taking activity, the student has to put into practice the art of listening... at the same time ensure that his pen and hand move intuitively while writing and jotting down the main point ... Because of the limitedness of time during a lecture, an interview or reading, one has to learn how to abbreviate and jot down only the main ideas or to be developed later. Therefore, a researcher must be an active listener and a fast writer.

- ITQ Listening and writing are two of the four language arts/skill humans use, why is one dependent on the other?
- ITA Listening is meant to take in knowledge while writing is meant to express it. If you do not take in knowledge there would be nothing to express.

### **8.1.2 Techniques of Note-Taking**

The following should be noted regarding note-taking:

#### **(i) Stationery**

Writing materials such as note books or papers, ruler, biro and other essential materials should be made ready when preparing to take notes. A researcher can organize his notebook to indicate the date, the names of the authors the title(s) of the book(s) to be read, the topics and so on.

#### **(ii) Defining Your Purpose**

While reading books, listening to lectures or conducting interviews, it is important you define your purpose in order to take cognizance of relevant facts, ideas or points. Only important and relevant points should be noted. The researcher should learn to understand what he has read before jotting down such ideas in order to put them in his own language, except some technical words that must not be changed for some technical purposes. Yet, caution must be taken to avoid useless repetition of the writer's ideas.

#### **(iii) Outlining Points**

You must label your notes intelligently. The main points should be separated from the subordinating ones. A researcher needs some system of notations to organize his notes. Banjo and Bisong (2005) recommend this:

- I, II, III, IV, e.t.c. (large Roman numerals for main ideas)
- A, B, C, D, e.t.c. (capital letters for subdivisions of the main ideas)
- 1,2,3,4, e.t.c. (Arabic numerals for subdivision of A, B, C)
- a), b), c), d) e.t.c.(small letters for subdivisions of 1,2,3)
- i, ii, iii, iv, e.t.c. (small Roman numerals for subdivisions of a, b, c)

Let us exemplify this for clarification:

1. Types of oral communication (subdivision)
  - a. Intra personal communication
    - i) vocalized soliloquy
    - ii) written/non-vocalized soliloquy
  - b. Inter personal communication
  - c. Group communication
2. Forms of oral communication
  - a. Gestures
  - b. Kinesics
  - c. Paralanguage

#### B. Written communication

1. Types of written communication
  - a. Formal
  - b. Informal, etc

You must note that there must be consistency in the form you adopt.

#### (iv) Acknowledging Your Source

Whether paraphrased or verbatim, you must always acknowledge the sources of your notes so as not to be accused of plagiarism. You should note the author, the title of the book, the publishers, the place of publication, the year of publication and page number. Informants or subjects on the field must also be acknowledged except otherwise instructed.

The following could serve as sources of note-taking for research:

- i. Existing research papers: theses / dissertations, etc
- ii. Journals
- iii. Speeches
- iv. Interviews
- v. Field work
- vi. Books

The notes you take from such sources should possess some qualities. For example, a good note should among others, be concise and complete; specific; devoid of ambiguity and or vagueness; intelligently outlined and relevant to the study.

### 8.2 Note-Making

There is need to develop skeletal notes to full flesh notes immediately when the memory is still fresh. In this wise, some materials like dictionaries, maps, texts etc might be needed in the process of note-making, to have a complete note. In this process, notes are used as thinking tools because taking good notes deepens one's understanding and strengthens one's retention of what one has read or listened to. Notes should be well developed in good handwriting and scholarly manner (with ideas well synthesized and sources duly acknowledged).

In the process of note-making, a researcher should develop an outline which will make his note well planned, paragraphs properly developed and knitted to form a coherent and cohesive piece. The foregoing simply implies that note making is a process of developing the jotted down notes into meaningful and cohesive texts.

note-taking and note-making, techniques of note-taking and note-making sources of note-taking in research, and qualities of notes. For the success of your research endeavour you should be able to take useful notes from relevant sources and develop such into coherent and cohesive texts. You should note also that it is important you duly acknowledge the source(s) of your notes. With robust notes, you will be able to enrich your research.

## **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 8**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

### **SAQ 8.1 (tests Learning Outcome 8.1)**

A) Imagine an undergraduate with no note for a whole semester or a researcher in the field with no note, the former trusting his brain to recall all points in the lectures he has received, the latter trusting her brain to recall all points in the interviews she has conducted as well as relying solely on her tape-recorder. What are likely to be their fates?

B.) As researcher, you must label your points so that main points are separated from the subordinate in a neat order. Using the recommendation by Banjo and Bisong (2005), impose order on the following points: Word is one of the units under grammar. It could be classified according to structure and according to function. If it is classified according to structure, it would break down into simple word, compound word and complex word. Compound word would then further break down into solid compound word, hyphenated compound word and open compound word and complex word, past tense forms of irregular verbs and plural forms of irregular nouns.

### **SAQ 8.2 (tests Learning Outcome 8.2)**

Note-taking and note-making are both indispensable in the conduct of a research. Differentiate clearly and then establish the link between the two.

## **Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session Eight**

### **SAQ 8.1 (A)**

The undergraduate may fail his papers and the researcher may go back to the field if the tape recorder fails.

### **SAQ 8.1(B)**

#### **I Word (broad heading)**

##### **A. Types of word according to structure (specific heading)**

##### **1. simple word (subdivision)**

- a. horse
- b. tree

##### **2. compound word**

- a. solid compound word
  - i) headmaster
  - ii) wheelchair
- b. hyphenated compound word
  - i) absent-minded
  - ii) make-believe
- c. open compound word
  - i) alter ego
  - ii) shoulder bag

- i) slept
- ii) cut
- b. plural forms of irregular nouns
  - i) oxen
  - ii) children

**SAQ 8.2** They differ in that note-taking is simply another name for jottings but note-making is real composition. The link between them is that points from notes taken drain into notes eventually made.

## REFERENCES

- Alo, M.A.(2004) “Study skills and methods” In Alo, M and Ogunsiji, A (Eds) *English Language communication skills for Academic Purposes*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan General Studies Programme Unit, pp 1-14.
- Bamisaye .T.O (2003) *Preparing undergraduates for research report in language and linguistics*. Lagos: Crystal Education Publishers.
- Banjo, A.L. and Bisong, J.O. (2005) *Developmental English*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited
- Obah, T.Y. (1981) “Note taking” In Oluikpe, B(Ed) *The use of English for Higher Education*. Onitsha: AFRICANA – FEP PUBLISHERS LIMITED, PP 167-182.
- Oyewo. O. (2004) “Effective listening skill” In Alo, M and Ogunsiji, A (Eds) *English Language Communication Skills for Academic Purposes*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan General Studies Programme Unit. Pp 51-58

# ESSENTIAL FEATURES/QUALITIES OF A GOOD RESEARCH REPORT

## Introduction

In this study session, we shall discuss the salient characteristics of a good research report. As you already know, a research report is a document which presents the report of your investigative efforts as a researcher. The report is what you write either as the research activities are going on, or after you have concluded the research. This indicates that apart from mastering the techniques of doing your research, you should also know how to write the report in the right format. Imagine how fruitless it would be for a person to have researched thoroughly only to be unable to present his/her work correctly in writing! This study session will show you the essential qualities of a well-written research report.

## Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 1) Recognise the importance of outlining
- 2) Recognise the importance of making a draft
- 3) Enumerate the elements in the structure of a report

## 9.1 Making a Plan

As soon as you decide to write your research report, it is always helpful to make a plan of what you intend to write. Whether you want to write the report during or after the research, planning your writing will help you to structure your ideas properly. Your ideas might have been documented in form of notes, jottings or tags. However, preparing an outline is an essential way to organize your thought in order to make them logical, coherent and cohesive.

An outline is a sketch of ideas to be developed in the course of writing. It generally highlights main points and sub-points, as well as sub-sub-points. A typical outline shows points to be developed such as, Introduction, Body and Conclusion. In your own case your research report outline will roughly correspond to your final Table of Contents. Thus, it will show items, such as Background to the study, Literature Review, Research Methodology and other essential parts of a research report.

The ideas or points to be included in an outline will be generated based on the topic and purpose of the research. Although some writers claim that drawing an outline can impede the flow of thought or slow down the writing process, the benefits that come from properly planning writing before plunging headlong into it cannot be denied. Really, planning your report before drafting it will help to make your line of thought coherent (Murray 2010:119); but the plan should not be rigid (Soles, 2010:53).

**Hint:** If you fail to plan, you fail to plan.

## 9.2 Writing a Draft

Now that you have planned what to put in your report, the next essential step is to write a draft of your report. Your writing here is called a draft because whatever you have will unavoidably be revised. Typically, your first complete draft will have all the necessary parts which you have earlier outlined. We shall now discuss these different parts of the research report and show the features expected to be found in each of them.

## 9.3 Following the Right Structure

Some institutions or departments have specifications regarding the report format. However, the structure of a research report is generally similar. The structure has essential elements which are the title page, certification page, dedication page, acknowledgements, content, the abstract, background to the study, aims and purpose(s) of

## 1. Title Page

The title page is the first page of the report. It contains the title of your study, your name, and your institutions, the degree to be awarded and the date of submission, usually, the month and the year. The title should accurately capture the nature of your study. It should be brief and straight to the point. You may provide a subtitle if it clarifies the title or the purpose of the study. The title page is essentially a page; for example, the title page will look like this:

### **An Ethnographic Study Of The Language Of The Kegite Club At The University Of Ibadan, Nigeria**

A research conducted by Alamu, Agbomola Olatide

(Matric No: B0125)

As part of the fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Degree in the Department of English, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

July, 2010

## 2. Certification Page

The certification page bears the comment, name and signature of your supervisor, certifying that you really carried out the research project under his/her supervision. The certification page appears like this:

### **Certification**

I certify that the research was carried out by Alamu, Agbomola Olatide (B0125) of the Department of English, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, under my supervision.

Name of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Dedication

The writer of the research report may want to dedicate his/her effort to somebody or some people. It may be parents, family members, friends or even God. The dedication may appear as

Dedication

To my love,

Adunni

This project is dedicated to the family of Alamu or I dedicate this research report to the Almighty God.

## 4. Acknowledgements

In the course of the research, you might have received help from some people. They may be your school mates, your lecturers, people who helped you to gather some data, or even your typist. It is in this section you will thank them.

## 5. Contents

You will write the table of contents after you have finished typing your final draft. The table of contents is an outline of the entire items in the report and the pages on which they are found. It is similar to the table of contents in the text books.

## 6. The Abstract

It is not in all cases that an abstract will be required, especially for a bachelor's degree project. If you must write one, however, note that it is not very easy to write. Why? The reason is that there are some technical requirements it must fulfil. An abstract is the summary of the study and findings. It gives a good idea of what the report is

accuracy.

## **7. Background to the Study**

The background to the study is usually an introductory comment in chapter one of the report. It spells out the context of the research, the factors which led to the research in a given discipline, and other preliminary information appropriate to the research's focus.

## **8. Aims and Purpose(s) of the Study**

Here, you give an explanation of the reason(s) you are conducting the research. You will also need to state why the research is relevant or necessary in your discipline; i.e., why the people in your field of study, or anybody at all, should be interested in the research.

## **9. Research Problem**

The research problem is also called "statement of research problem". It is the fundamental problem or question which you, as a researcher, hope to address or provide an answer to. It is the reason for the research. Any worthwhile research should be problem-driven. So, here, you should indicate the problem(s) that drive(s) your research.

Therefore, the research problem is different from the problem(s) a researcher contends with in the course of the research. It is not the problem of finance, or difficulty in gathering data, and the like, which a researcher may face, as some mistakenly take it to be.

Research problem is also different from a similar tag, called "Research Limitation". The possible limitations of a research are the factors that tend to limit the veracity or applicability of the research findings. They include limited data, limited time span for research, and so on. You should be honest in stating any of these limitations, as applicable to your research at the appropriate place.

## **10. Review of Literature**

The review of literature is always found in chapter two, which is always labelled 'Literature Review'. This section of your project is where you demonstrate that you have read through materials that are relevant to the problem of your research. In reviewing literature, you confirm or refute some arguments and state the reason(s) for taking a position. You will also need to identify the state of knowledge concerning your area of study.

Also, you need to show the findings of existing research works and how you want to build on or contribute to the existing state of knowledge. You may find it appropriate to write your review first before writing any other part of the report. This will help you to have sufficient understanding of the ground that has been covered, and locate a relevant problem or problems.

## **11. Methods of Data Collection**

An alternative label for this section is "Methodology". In some reports, it is found in chapter three, although it is not uncommon to find it in chapter one in other research reports.

The section explains the method(s) you used in investigating the problem and why particular methods you chose were chosen. The method of selection, choice of variables and controls, and tests of measurement and statistical analysis you adopted will be indicated here. You may need to consult your supervisor on how much detail is required.

nature of the report. All other items different from the text should illuminate the text; otherwise, they are not needed. If tables, charts, and figures are presented, the text accompanying them should not duplicate the information in the tables and figures. Instead, the accompanying text should highlight significant parts of the findings. Note that all tables and figures should be numbered, and given titles.

### **13. Analysis and Discussion**

You are advised to start this section with a restatement of the research problem and then discuss how the problem relates to the existing state of knowledge. If you set certain hypotheses, it is in this section you demonstrate whether they were or were not supported by your findings. The section is always found in chapter four.

### **14. Summary and Conclusion**

This section is found in chapter five or the last chapter of the report. Here, the main findings or conclusions of the study will be restated briefly and simply. You should make only conclusions that can be drawn from findings.

### **15. List of References**

This is the section where you list the materials you consulted in the course of the research. Your list of references should not be drawn to impress the readers. Use relevant materials and document them appropriately. Accurate documentation is required so as not to be guilty of plagiarism.

There are different types of documentation e.g. the APA style, the MLA style, Chicago style, the Harvard method of referencing and so on. Do you know what all these are? We have the University of Ibadan Manual Style (UIMS) also. Consult your supervisor for the appropriate one to use. Also, you need to read well the lecture which deals with this issue in this course.

### **16. Appendices**

You may need to show copies of any data-collecting instrument you used in the research. It may be questionnaire, or interview questions. And you may need to show some excerpts of language texts used as your data. The Appendix is the section where you will show all these.

### **17. Presentation**

Research reports are now generally typed in double line spacing. You should follow this general principle. Type or write on one side of the page only and number the pages. However, each institution or department may have an in-house style.

## **STUDY SESSION SUMMARY**

Your knowledge of how to write an acceptable research report is essential if your entire research activity will prove fruitful. By following the formats presented in this lecture, and by regularly consulting with your supervisor, you will not only be able to present a well-written research report, you will also be able to reach the heart of your readers. As a student of English Language Studies you must pay attention to your language and style in your research report.

## **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session Nine**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

### **SAQ 9.1 (tests Learning Outcome 9.1)**

Without a map, a traveller may get lost; without an outline, what may happen to a research?

### **SAQ 9.3 (tests Learning Outcome 9.3)**

References and acknowledgements are some elements in the structure of a report; what are some other elements?

### **Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session Nine**

**SAQ 9.1** Points may not be arranged in a logical, sequential, coherent (etc.) order. The researcher her/himself may at many points plunge into a quandary, wondering what should follow.

**SAQ 9.2** Writing first a draft is important as it helps you to perfect your report. The draft cannot be submitted as it still contains numerous errors. If in your research, and in fact other types of writing, you do not first form a draft and then rewrite, then you will always submit a draft.

**SAQ 9.3** Title Page, The Abstract, Background to the Study, Aims and Purpose(s) of the Study, Research Problem, Review of Literature, Methods of Data Collection, Analysis and Discussion, Summary and Conclusion

### **REFERENCES**

Bell, J. (2010) *Doing your research project* (5th edition) Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Education, Open University Press.

Murray, R. (2010) *Writing for Academic Journals* (2nd edition) Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Education, Open University Press.

Soles, D. (2010) *The essentials of academic writing* (2nd edition). Boston: Wordsworth Cengage Learning.

# REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

## INTRODUCTION

In this study session, you will learn about references and bibliography in research. It is a very important part of research as it is the means through which we acknowledge information gained from other sources.

### Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 10.1 Demonstrate knowledge of referencing styles.
- 10.2 Differentiate between references and bibliography.

### 10.1 References

References are the listing of materials that have been cited or directly included in the writing of an article or book. These materials may include journal articles, books, chapters in books, play texts, internet sources, films, etc. A reference would include the author(s) of the text, the year of publication, the title, the name of the publisher and the place of publication. An example is given below:

Odebunmi, A. 2006. *Meaning in English: An introduction*. Ogbomosho: Critical Sphere, LAUTECH.

For journal articles, author(s) of the article, the year of publication, the title of the article, the title of the journal, the volume and the pages where the article is located would also be listed. An example is given below:

Tseng, M. 2010. The pragmatic act of fishing for personal details: from choice to performance. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42: 1982-1996.

For internet sources, the web address (URL) and the last date the page was assessed is also included. An example is given below:

Huffaker, D. A., & Calvert, S. L. 2005. Gender, identity, and language use in teenage blogs. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 10(2), article 1. Retrieved July, 15, 2010 from <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue2/huffaker.html>

It is important to reference works that have been included in the writing of a text in order to allow readers identify and trace the texts that have been used. Also, it is important to acknowledge the authors of these texts. Failure to do this will lead to **plagiarism** which is a criminal offence.

There are mainly three types of referencing systems. These include note system, numeric system and parenthetical referencing. The numeric system and note system are slightly similar. In the note system, the authors make use of sequential numbers in the text which refer to either footnotes (notes at the end of the page) or endnotes (a note on a separate page at the end of the paper) which gives the source detail. The note system may or may not require a full reference, depending on whether the writer has used a full note form or a shortened note form. Examples are listed below:

Papa stood by the hibiscuses, giving directions, one hand sunk in the pocket of his tunic while the other pointed from item to car.”<sup>1</sup>

1. Chimamanda Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus* (Lagos: Kachifo Limited, 2003) 53

In a text which contains a full reference list, the shortened note could be written as:

1. Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus* 53

The numeric system also makes use of sequential numbers in the text without the use of footnotes and endnotes. The full reference entry would be written under the section termed 'references'. In the parenthetical referencing, full or partial in-text citations are enclosed within parentheses and embedded in the paragraph. This may be written as: Adichie (2003: 53) or (Adichie, 2003).

Here, the full reference would be written at the end of the text.

**Hint:** You cannot do a research without using ideas or words from other books/researches. You either reference those books/researches or you plagiarise them; there is no neutral ground. Whereas the former is desirable, the latter is a crime: avoid it like a leper.

- ITQ The difference between footnote and endnote is that while footnote has notes at the end of the page, endnote has notes on a separate page at the end of the paper. Spot the difference between the note system and the parenthetical system.
- ITA The note system uses sequential numbers with footnotes and endnotes while the parenthetical system encloses in parentheses the year of publication and probably also the author's name and page number.

## Referencing Styles

There are different types of referencing styles. Examples include: APA (American Psychological Association), MLA (Modern Language Association), ACS (American Chemical Society), MHRA (Modern Humanities Research Association), IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), Harvard, Chicago styles, etc. Each of these styles follows the note system (e.g. MHRA), numeric system (e.g. IEEE) or the parenthetical referencing (e.g. APA). Usually, different fields prefer certain types of referencing styles. For example, the social sciences prefer the APA style; Humanities make use of the Chicago and MLA style; while those in the sciences and engineering prefer the ACS and IEEE. The style used determines both the in-text citation format and the order of the name of author(s), date, title, etc of the publication. Examples will be taken from the APA and MLA styles.

### 10.1.1 APA Style

The APA style refers to the reference entry at the end of the text as 'references'. The APA style follows an in-text citation i.e. (Arema, 2004) and follows the author-date-title-place of publication-publishers format. Examples are listed below:

Book

Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics: an introduction*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers.

Journal article

Opeibi, T. O. (2007). "One message, many tongues: An exploration of media multilingualism in Nigerian political discourse." *Journal of Language and Politics*, 6. (2):223–248.

Chapter in a book

Harrison, C. & Young, L. (2004). "Bureaucratic discourse: writing in the comfort Zone." In L. Young, & C. Harrison (eds) *Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis Studies in Social Change*. Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd, 232-242

Online article

## Movie

Bender, L., Burns, S.Z., & David, L. (Producers), & Guggenheim, D. (Director). (2006). *An inconvenient truth* [Motion picture]. United States: Paramount.

### 10.1.2 MLA style

The MLA style refers to the reference entry at the end of the text as 'works cited'. The MLA style follows the author-page in-text citation i.e. (Adichie, 53) and follows the author-title-place of publication-publishers-year format for the reference entry. Examples are cited below:

#### Book

Uzawa, Hirofumi. *Economic Theory and Global Warming*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. Print

#### Journal article

Gowdy, John. "Avoiding Self-organized Extinction: Toward a Co-evolutionary Economics of Sustainability." *International Journal of Sustainable Development and World Ecology* 14.1 (2007): 27-36.

#### Chapter in a book

Guignon, Charles B. "Existentialism." *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Ed. Edward Craig. 10 vols. London: Routledge, 1998. Print.

#### Online newspaper article

Ebert, Roger. "An Inconvenient Truth." Rev. of *An Inconvenient Truth*, dir. Davis Guggenheim. *Rogerebert.com*. Sun-Times News Group, 2 June 2006. Web. 24 May 2009.

## Movie

*The Usual Suspects*. Dir. Bryan Singer. Perf. Kevin Spacey, Gabriel Byrne, Chazz Palminteri, Stephen Baldwin, and Benecio del Toro. Polygram, 1995. Film.

### 10.1.3 Some Differences between the APA and the MLA

1. The APA uses the initials of the personal names of the author(s) while the MLA writes the personal name(s) in full.
  2. The APA writes URL address for an internet source while the MLA style writes 'web' at the end of the citation
  3. When citing at least two materials by the same author in a text, the APA style uses the alphabet and year to differentiate the text (e.g. Ajayi 2008a, Ajayi, 2008b) while the MLA style uses a shortened form of the title of the texts (e.g. *Purple Hibiscus* 56; *Half a Yellow Sun* 75).
  4. For chapters in books, the abbreviation 'ed' is written before the name of the editor of the book in the APA style while in the MLA style, it is written after the name of the editor.
  5. For movies, the APA style lists the names of the producers and directors (with their titles in full and written after the names) first while the MLA style writes the title of the movie first before the director and the performers (with their title abbreviated and written before their names).
- ITQ Above are five differences between the APA and the MLA referencing styles. Spot two others.
- ITA (i) The APA put the year of publication immediately after the author's name; but in the MLA, it comes at or towards the end. (ii) In the APA, the year of publication is enclosed in parentheses, but in the MLA, that does not have to be.

will include texts that have been cited in the paper and the ones that have been used while preparing for the write up. One may not cite this in the text. In academic works, a bibliography can also refer to a list of recommended texts on a particular topic. Bibliographies may even be required as an additional page of information, after the reference list.

## **STUDY SESSION SUMMARY**

In this study session, we have learnt about references and bibliography in research and how they help us acknowledge other sources of information. We have also learnt how to write in the two referencing styles: APA and MLA and what differentiates one from the other.

### **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 10**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

#### **SAQ 10.1 (tests Learning Outcome 10.1)**

A book authored by Ademola Omobewaji Dasylva and Oluwatoyin B. Jegede was published by Stirling Horden Publishers located in Ibadan in 2005; it was titled *Studies in Poetry*. A paper was written by Professor Dele 'Layiwola and was published in the volume 2, issue 1 of *Iq̄e*: Ibadan Journal of Folklore in the year 2000. It was titled 'African Theatre and Intuitive Ethno-Semiology' and claimed pages 122 to 130 of the journal. Reference both materials using first the APA and then the MLA.

#### **SAQ 10.2 (tests Learning Outcome 10.2)**

References and bibliography are both ways of acknowledging the sources of words and ideas we have used in our own research. Identify at least one difference between the two.

### **Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 10**

#### **SAQ 10.1**

APA:

Dasylva, A. O. and Jegede, O. B. (2005) *Studies in Poetry*. Ibadan: Stirling Horden Publishers (Nig.) Ltd.

'Layiwola, D. (2000) 'African Theatre and Intuitive Ethno-Semiology' *Iq̄e*: *Ibadan Journal of Folklore* 2, 1: 122-130

MLA

Dasylva, Ademola Omobewaji and Jegede, Oluwatoyin *Studies in Poetry*. Ibadan: Stirling Horden Publishers (Nig.) Ltd.2005

'Layiwola, D. 'African Theatre and Intuitive Ethno-Semiology' *Iq̄e*: *Ibadan Journal of Folklore* 2, 1 (2000): 122-130

#### **SAQ 2**

In academic works, a bibliography can also refer to a list of recommended texts on a particular topic.

## **REFERENCES**

How to Write Citations and Bibliographies in APA Style. (2010). *Memorial University of Newfoundland*. Retrieved January 25, 2012 from <http://www.library.mun.ca/guides/howto/apa.php>

Research and Citation. (2011). *OWL. Purdue Online Writing Lab*. Retrieved January 25, 2012 from <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/09/>

MLA citation style. (2009). *Concordia University Library*. Retrieved January 25, 2012 from <http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/mla.php>

# PROBLEMS CONFRONTING RESEARCH IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

In this study session, you will learn about the problems that confront research in developing nations. A number of constraints will be presented and then possible solutions will be delineated.

### Learning Outcome

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 11.1 identify some of the constraints of research in developing nations
- 11.2. discuss some possible solutions to the problems.

## 11.1 Doing Research in Developing Nations

The term *developing nations* is used to refer to countries within the following regions of the world: Africa, Asia Latin America and the Caribbean. These countries are sometimes referred to as Third World nations (Sauvy, 1952). According to Todaro (1993) the developing nations are “mainly characterized by low levels of living, high rates of population growth, low income per capita, and general economic and technological dependence on First world economies”. These inadequacies in developing nations make research a necessity. Its benefits are not only in terms of scientific and technological advancement but also in the areas of socio-political and economic developments. To this end, poor research capacity is inimical to development. When you compare research in developed nations of the world to that of developing nations, you see a wide range of differences. Developed nations are not only technologically advanced but also socially, politically and economically stable than the developing ones. These differences have to do with the level of research in these nations of the world. Clearly, there are challenges being faced by developing nations in the area of research development. Below are some of the constraints of research in developing nations.

- ITQ Mention some countries that constitute developing nations.
- ITA Developing nations are countries that are mainly characterized by low levels of living, high rates of population growth, low income per capita, and general economic and technological dependence. They include: India, Jamaica, Uganda, Mali, Haiti.

### 11.1.1 Illiteracy and Ignorance

The problem of illiteracy is a serious factor inhibiting research development in most developing nations. Most developing nations of the world have a high level of illiteracy which makes it difficult for people who cannot read and write to effectively communicate. This also makes information gathering difficult. Ignorance is another factor that affects research as it makes research participants to be suspicious and therefore reluctant to furnish information that might positively affect their lives. (See Osuala, 1987:7)

- ITQ What the total adult literacy rate in Nigeria?
- ITA 51.1% (2008-2012, according to UNICEF)

**11.1.2 Problems of the Utilisation of Research Findings:** the major aim of research is to obtain knowledge, which is meant to be applied towards the betterment of human life. However, this singular aim has regrettably been defeated, especially in developing countries. Most often research in developing nations are shelved in the libraries without any meaningful application of their findings to improve the quality of people’s lives or to make proper and informed policy formulation and decision-making. For instance, the outcome of interesting research in areas such as conflict studies, religion and terrorism, geology, econometrics, food technology, etc. will no doubt be of dire significance to the national growth of some of these nations (Oyawale, 2005).

**11.1.3 Secrecy and corruption:** There is also the problem of unnecessary secrecy. It is noticed that even in government ministries, information that otherwise could be for public consumption is considered secret. There is, therefore, difficulty in obtaining vital data from statutory national agencies (Osuala, 1987:8). This is not unconnected to the corruption that is eating deep into the fabrics of most developing nations, where civil servants

### 11.1.4 Poor State of Research Infrastructure

Research infrastructure such as libraries, laboratories, facilities/funds for field trips, survey and ICT (Ekhaguere, et al., 2006) are generally in very poor state in most developing countries and this greatly constrains research. Most university libraries are silent graveyards for old and outdated books and reference materials, which serve no current or relevant research purposes. Laboratories are not any different as necessary chemicals and instruments are either not available or in very bad shape. Field trips and surveys are often done at the researchers' expense as facilities and funds are not provided. In this era of ICT and technological advancement, most developing nations are lagging behind in terms of reliable and stable internet facility. The relative lack of these research infrastructures has constrained research in developing countries of the world.

**Reflection:** In Nigeria, for example, there are universities without libraries and/or laboratories; there are libraries with miserly, mostly old, books and there are laboratories with scant apparatuses. There are libraries where kerosene stoves serve as Bunsen burners. What books are predominant on the shelves of Kenneth Dike Library, old or new? When last did you go to Kenneth Dike Library to search for a book and you found it where the catalogue indicated it to be?

**11.1.4 Problem of finance and capital:** Many developing nations are poor and as a result could not finance research projects that could lead to major breakthrough. There are limited outlets for research works owing to escalating international standards, high cost of publishing in local and international journals and poor motivation on the part of government and institutions. International experience is inadequate because of difficulty in accessing funds for conferences, fellowships, staff training, etc. According to Osuala (1987:10), there is also the dearth of research centres, workshops, laboratories and computers. These make the work of researchers difficult and inconclusive. Beside this is the fact that research consumes much time and is usually expensive; for an individual this is also a challenge (See Ekhaguere *et al.*, 2006:322-324).

- ITQ What is Nigeria's GDP?
- ITA □ 80.3 trillion (\$490 billion) for 2013

**11.1.5 Unethical practices:** Research in developing nations is hampered by problems of unethical practices. These include corruption, and other negative attitudes of researchers, such as negligence and incompetence. According to Ekhaguere *et al.*, (2006:323) young researchers are often fond of the following unethical practices in research: "manipulation and falsification of data; reporting experiments that were never done; results that are not reproducible; lack of truth and trustworthiness in research".

## 10.2 Possible Solutions to Research Problems in Developing Nations

Ekhaguere *et al.*, (2006:320) propose the following strategies for sustainable research activities:

1. Building research capacity and synergy through;
2. Good and implemented institutional policy on research;
3. Providing the enabling environment for research;
4. Enhancing the scope for intellectual, scientific discourse;
5. Making research a feature of various levels of training;
6. Formulating and implementing strategic national research policies;
7. Promoting interdisciplinary/trans-disciplinary research collaborations;
8. Making institutionally research announcements, high-lighting selected new developments or directions.;
9. Network/collaborative activities involving various partners: industries, other research institutions, etc;
10. Packaging and dissemination of research products.

### STUDY SESSION SUMMARY

In this study session, we have discussed the problems confronting research in developing nation some of which include: illiteracy and ignorance, lack adequate funds, poor state of research infrastructures. We noted that these

## **Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 1**

Now that you have completed this study session, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting. You can check your answers with the Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this Module.

### **SAQ 11.1 (tests Learning Outcome 11.1)**

Developing nations are “mainly characterized by low levels of living...” How does the presence of low levels of living leadsnaturally to constraints in research?

SAQ 11.2 Providing the enabling environment for research;

Network/collaborative activities involving various partners: industries, other research institutions

These are some of the solutions proffered to the problems confronting research in developing nations; how would they, if implemented, solve some of the problems?

## **Notes on the Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) for Study Session 1**

**SAQ 11.1** The presence of low levels of living means that people are still struggling for basic needs such as food and shelter, and in that condition interest in rigorous intellectual engagements would naturally be low. For the few in whom this interest still survives, there would be inadequate or no grants and vibrant research infrastructure to vigorously pursue the interest. Researches done under this condition possesses a thin chance of measuring up to international standards or competing with those from developed countries. And, the worst of all, the researches have no choice but to rot away in library shelves (most of them even rickety) as there are no adequate resources to implement their findings or, out of corruption, the resources have been squandered or embezzled.

### **SAQ 11.2**

There would be adequate grants and research infrastructure to carry out researches and interest for research would be widely aroused.

## **REFERENCES**

Ekhaguere, G.O.S, Olayinka, A.I., Taiwo, V.O., Alonge, T.O and Obono, O.M. (2006). “Challenges of Conducting Research in Developing Countries”. In A.I. Olayinka, V.O. Taiwo, A. Raji-Oyelade and I.P. Farai (Eds) *Methodology of Basic and Applied Research*. Ibadan: University of IbadanPostgraduateSchool.

## APPENDIX I

### AN OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE AND GENERAL REVISION

At the beginning of this course, we said that the course material would help you to do the following:

- define research and state its characteristics;
- generate a good research topic/ title in your area of specialization;
- state clearly the problems your research topic intends to address;
- identify the objectives of the research topic ;
- carry out a robust literature review on any research topic;
- plan and describe a suitable methodology for the research topic, stating the theoretical framework, the instrument(s) and procedure for data collection as well as data analysis;
- analyse and interpret your data carefully and present your findings orderly; and
- produce a well- written research report.

Across the main study sessions of the book, we have done the following:

1. We have looked at the nature, definitions and characteristics of research. We have noted that research has to be systematic, scientific and theory-driven;
2. We have observed that a major purpose of research is to search for knowledge, gain new insights into a particular phenomenon, test some hypotheses etc.
3. We have made the point that depending on the purpose, a research could be exploratory/formative, descriptive or empirical; and that research could foster scientific and inductive reasoning, advance knowledge and address various dimensions and manifestations of social, political, economic and technological problems;
4. We have discussed the various types of research some of which include: pure and allied research, quantitative and qualitative research, content analysis and case study;
5. We have discussed the elements to be considered in conducting research. These are: identifying a research problem and choosing a topic, which has to be researchable, feasible, and original. The steps should include:
  - i. introduction,
  - ii. The Statement of the Problem
  - iii. Purpose of the Study
  - iv. Hypothesis
  - v. Significance of Study
  - vi. Scope of the Study
  - vii. Definition of Terms
  - viii. Review of Related Literature
  - ix. Research Methods of Procedure and Design
  - x. Analysis of Data, Presentation and Discussion of Findings
  - xi. Summary of Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendations
  - xii. Bibliography
6. We have highlighted the features of literature review and methodology; we have also discussed the issues needed to consider in data analysis and discussion of findings.
7. To assist you in getting fully equipped for your research, we have discussed two basic methods of reading, namely, skimming and scanning. We have also looked at the “SQ3R” technique of reading which has good implications for your reading and research experience. Also discussed is the relevance of reading to research.
8. We have discussed the concept and techniques of note-taking and note-making together with their relevance to your research.

and MLA, and what differentiates one from the other.

10. Finally, we have discussed the problems confronting research in developing nation some of which include: illiteracy and ignorance, lack adequate funds, poor state of research infrastructures.

## APPENDIX II

### QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE AND ADDITIONAL READING LIST

#### PART 1

1. What is research? Discuss the major characteristics of research.
2. With reference to research in language and literary studies, discuss the purpose and functions of research
3. With clear illustrations, discuss three types of research.
4. Outline and explain all the essential stages in the conduct of a research.
5. In not less than 1000 words, describe how you would analyse a data set and discuss your findings
6. Of what relevance are note-taking and note-making to research?
7. How can scanning and skimming help in research?
8. What is the difference between intensive reading and extensive reading?
9. Enumerate and discuss the major features of a good research.
10. Discuss the major problems confronting research in Africa.

#### PART 2

##### 1. Outline the text/extract below:

One day an ass and a fox entered into an agreement with the lion that they would assist each other while hunting for food. They felt that their combined efforts would ensure that none of them would have to starve.

Of course, both the ass and the fox were a little nervous about accompanying the lion in the hunt. But the thought of the game they would acquire with his help, made them salivate. They put the nervousness down to nerves.

It was an excellent hunt. The three had combed the jungle in their search for food. When they came to a clearing by the lakeside, they dispersed.

It was decided that the ass would keep an eye out for animals to prey on; when he spotted one, he would go up to the animal and introduce himself. The introductory bray would alert the other two, who were hiding.

The fox would come out at first, growling at the animal. The frightened animal would try to run, the fox would give chase and in trying to avoid him, the animal would run directly in the path of the lion. The lion would then finish the animal off in one swoop.

In the evening, the tired but happy trio assembled in front of the lion's den with their large booty. The lion ordered the ass to allot to each of the three partners, his due portion in the treaty.

The ass was very happy. He felt that, by asking him, the lion had bestowed a great honour on him. Very carefully, he divided the spoil into three equal shares. "Sirs, I have done the needful. I modestly request the two of you to take your shares," he said.

The lion stared at the shares for a minute. "Oh! So you think each one of us deserves an equal share. You think that your feeble attempts to chat with the game compares with my efforts to kill them," he said and

Then he told the terrified fox to make the division. The fox accumulated all that they had killed into one large heap and left to himself the smallest possible share. The rest he requested the lion to have.

"Who has taught you, my dear fellow, the art of division? You are perfect to a fraction," said the lion, pleased as punch.

"I learned it from the ass sir, by witnessing his fate," replied the fox. He made up his mind never to take a lion as partner in any future venture.

(Written by Brishti Bandyopadhyay)

**2. Applying the principles introduced to you in this course material, attempt a literature review of the paper below:**

**VARIOUS SEMANTIC MODELS**

**Don Nilsen**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Before going on with recent developments in semantics, we'll review the terms which have been and are now in use in the field, not so much because they are important in themselves, but because the concepts behind the terms are important, and the existence of the terms shows the kind and the amount of work that has been done.

When a person is trying to communicate, the intended meaning exists in that person's mind. It comes to the surface either through speech or through writing. In either case, there are complications which might interfere with the intended communication. These can occur with either a single word or with an entire sentence. The problems in speech are not necessarily the same problems as will occur in writing. For example, in writing there might be confusion caused by homographs which are words written with the same characters but having different meanings and different origins. Since homographs are pronounced the same way, it is appropriate to also call them homophones. The nouns *bank* as in "I'm putting my money in the bank," and "She was sitting on the river bank," are both homographs and homophones because they are written and pronounced the same. However, the three words *their*, *there* and *they're* are not homographs because their spelling is different. But they are homophones (at least in some dialects) because they sound the same. A cover term, which is the word most commonly used for this concept, is homonym. Homonyms are words which have different meanings but which sound the same regardless of their spelling. Words which are spelled the same but which have different pronunciations and different meanings are called heteronyms, for example, the verb *lead* as in "I will lead you there," and the noun *lead* as in "I broke the lead in my pencil."

If there are sentences instead of words which have the same pronunciation and/or spelling, but different meanings they are labeled ambiguous. Just as words can be homophonous, sentences can be phonologically ambiguous. For example, "He said he was a bee feeder," sounds very much like "He said he was a beef eater." And just as words can be homographous, sentences can be orthographically ambiguous. The purpose of most punctuation is to try to bring to writing the intonation and pause patterns of speech. Without these helps, many sentences would be orthographically ambiguous. Even so, there are still sentences where punctuation can not make clear which of several readings is intended. For example, "The photographs were taken by the main office," could mean that someone in the main office was the photographer or that the photographs were taken in the vicinity of the main office, or that the photographs had been dropped off at the main office. With this sentence, as with many others, in actual use the intended meaning would probably come through because of the speaker's intonation or body language, or because of the real-world situation which the speaker and the listener are both aware of. But in writing, none of these things are present in the same degree so that written sentences tend to be ambiguous more often than spoken sentences. A sentence commonly given as an example of this kind of ambiguity is the headline or

Words which have similar meanings but different spellings and sounds are called synonyms, for example *trousers* and *pants*. Sentences having similar meanings but different words are called paraphrases, for example, “John came by plane,” and “My best friend arrived on a 707 jet.”

But what about a pair of words like *borrow* and *lend*? The sentences, “John lent me \$5.00,” and “I borrowed \$5.00 from John,” refer to the same real-world situation. Therefore, in a sense the words *borrow* and *lend* must have the same meaning and might therefore be considered synonyms. More specifically, such pairs as *borrow-lend*, *buy-sell*, *give-take*, etc. are called converses, meaning that they occur with the same words (e.g., John, me, and \$5.00), and have basically the same meaning, but they impose a surface structure constraint that the words must be in a different linear order. They cause different words to end up as subjects, objects, and prepositional phrases. This means that different words are emphasized, but the meanings are the same. So, in a way, it is possible to consider such terms as *lend* and *borrow* both as synonyms and as antonyms without being contradictory.

Words which are alike or very similar in all three areas of meaning, pronunciation, and spelling but which occur in different languages are called cognates, for example Italian *studiare* and English *study*. At the opposite extreme from these very similar words are words which are different in meaning, pronunciation, and spelling, and the differences in meaning are opposite or antithetical. These words are called antonyms as exemplified by the pair *freeze-melt*. But it is not enough to say simply that the meanings of two antonyms are different, since there are some semantic constraints on the amount and type of difference. First, antonyms must be of the same syntactic and semantic class. And second, within this class, they must be polar opposites. The following graph summarizes this discussion of the interrelationships between the terms relating semantics, phonology, and orthography.

	Term for Words:	Example:	Meaning:	Phonology:	Orthography:	Term for sentences:
Homonym	Cognate	English: study Italian: studiare	Similar	Similar	Similar	-----
	Homograph	bank-bank	Different	Same	Same	Ambiguity
	Homophone	their-there	Different	Same	Different	Ambiguity
	Heteronym	lead-lead	Different	Different	Different	-----
	Synonym	pants-trousers	Similar	Different	Same	Paraphrase
	Converse	lead-borrow	Similar	Different	Different	Paraphrase
	Antonym	freeze-melt	Same class but polar opposites	Different	Different	-----

There are several approaches to the study of semantics. Some of these are full-fledged rigorous models presenting machinery for the treatment of semantic matters, while others are merely statements about semantics and ways of dealing with it. In the United States, early semantic models included general semantics, Whorfian semantics, and semantic differentiation. More recent developments are logical and mathematical semantics, interpretive semantics, generative semantics, case grammar, and Chafe grammar.

## GENERAL SEMANTICS

When the layperson hears the term “semantics,” he probably thinks of general semantics, which is concerned with very practical matters such as the improvement of communication through better word usage. General semanticists work basically with performance rather than competence. The kind of work done in this model can be seen from the titles of some of the important books written by general semanticists. They are listed chronologically. *The Meaning of Meaning* by C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards (1923); *Language in Thought and Action* by S.I. Hayakawa (1939, third edition, 1972); *Philosophy in a New Key* by Susanne K. Langer (1948); *Words and What They Do to You* by Catherine Minteer (1952); *Science and Sanity* by Alfred Kozybski (1958); and *Semantics and Common Sense* by Louis B. Salomon.

It can be seen from the types of issues which the general semanticists deal with that they have had an influence on later models. However, it should be pointed out that general semantics is an informal model and is considered by modern linguists to be outside the scientific investigation of language.

the world around them is influenced by the language they happen to speak. Taken literally, this means that if we speak a language that is different from someone else's, then we will see the world differently than that person does. People use Whorf's idea as an explanation of one of the causes of international misunderstanding and strife. And feminists have been referring to the Whorfian hypothesis as supporting their desire to change parts of the English language, which they feel make the male seem more important than the female.

Chapter Ten of Edward Sapir's *Language*, which was published in 1921, gives a good statement of Whorf's ideas. And in 1956, John B. Carroll edited *Language Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. More recently, George Lakoff published a chapter entitled, "Whorf and Relativism" in his *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things* (1987).

## SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIATION

A significant semantic model, which has developed within the field of psychology, is termed semantic differentiation. Informants are asked to rate words along a number of subjective scales designed to help the researcher determine the connotations of a particular word. For example, on a seven-place scale, a person would have to indicate whether "father" would be considered happy or sad, hard or soft, fast or slow, etc. Seventy-six such contrasts were originally proposed, but this number is by no means set. These seventy-six scales can be grouped into categories according to whether the scale is a test of some sort of evaluation (good-bad, optimistic-pessimistic, kind-cruel, etc.), potency (hard-soft, strong-weak, severe-lenient, etc.), stability (stable-changeable, cautious-rash, orthodox-heretical, etc.), tautness (angular-rounded, straight-curved, sharp-blunt, etc.), novelty (new-old, usual-unusual, youthful-mature, etc.), aggressiveness (aggressive-defensive, etc.), and miscellaneous (ornate-plain, near-far, tangible-intangible, etc.). The informant is forced to make a ranking for each item. Thus, he is forced to rate a word like "father" somewhere on the seven-point scale ranging, for example, from angular to rounded, and there is always the problem that different informants are using different intuitive criteria in making such judgments. Even those scales which are extremely relevant to the terms being analyzed are subjective. The subjectivity, which is being measured, is very elusive. This is the chief value as well as the chief limitation of this particular method. A good statement on this model is *The Measurement of Meaning* by Charles Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum (1957).

## LOGICAL AND MATHEMATICAL SEMANTICS

For quite some time, specialists in symbolic logic and set theory have been working with various issues which are highly significant to the work of semantically oriented linguists. Recent work in semantic theory has borrowed heavily from these two fields.

Logicians have been interested in denotation; in contrasting, for instance, a vague concept like "gryphon" which has no concrete referent in the real world with a concept like "horse" which has a definite referent, they make the distinction between intentional meaning, which is the semantic qualities of a word, and extensional meaning, which is the way a word extends or relates to the real world. They are also interested in whether an expression represents an accidental or purposeful action. And one of their most important interests concerns the analyticity of a statement. If the truth of a statement can be determined wholly by a knowledge of the meanings of its parts, then it is said to be analytic. A sentence, which does not have this quality, is said to be synthetic. An analytic sentence is either logically true (tautological), or logically false (contradictory) by its internal structure. A contradiction is a statement in which two or more parts of the internal structure are incompatible with each other. For example, the sentence, "Kings, presidents, magistrates, and dictators are rulers," is tautological (true by definition) because if you know the meanings of the words *Kings, presidents, magistrates, dictators, and rulers*, you can correctly judge the sentence to be true. By the same process if you know the meanings of the words *peasants and rulers*, you can correctly judge the sentence, "Peasants are rulers," to be contradictory. Both of these decisions were arrived at through studying the internal structure of the sentences. But with the synthetic sentence, "Elmer is a ruler," "there is nothing in the sentence itself which will enable us to judge its truthfulness or falseness. Instead we have to know something about the real world and about Elmer.

Logicians have also been interested in sentence analysis. Consider, for example, the sentence "John hit Mary." In this sentence, "hit" is described as a two-place predicate because it requires two nouns: a subject and an object. In terms of logical predicates, this sentence could be analyzed as follows:  $hit_{xy}$ .  $Human_x$ .  $male_x$ .  $name_{xz}$ .  $John_z$ .  $human_y$ .  $female_y$ .  $name_{yw}$ .  $Mary_w$ . And this would be read as follows: "x hit y. and x is human, and y is female, and y has the name w, and w is Mary." This type of analysis is similar to proposals by some linguists in which such logical predicates as "human," and "male," are thought of as semantic features. It is also similar to some recent analyses in that it considers the predicate as the central word in the sentence.

if...then, and if and only if, and mathematical terms such as *equals*, *is greater than*, and *is greater than or equal to*. Such concepts as reflexivity, transitivity, and reciprocity are also worked on. For example, two words are said to be reflexive if one refers back to the other, as in “*I cut myself*.” A transitive expression in the mathematical sense is one which extends a quality, for example such expressions as *tall*, *old*, *fat*, etc. in that if A is taller than B, and B is taller than C, then A is automatically taller than C. In contrast, the expression *friend* is not transitive. A could be a friend of B, and B a friend of C without A being a friend of C. Two expressions are reciprocal if their positions can be reversed in reference to the predicate. For example, if A is a neighbor of B, B is a neighbor of A. In the sentence, “John married Mary,” *marry* is a reciprocal predicate, but in the sentence, “The priest married Mary,” the verb *marry* is not reciprocal.

People working in logical and mathematical semantics have devised an elaborate shorthand for dealing with the various concepts they are interested in. Some good books in which these concepts have been developed are *Machine Translation of Languages* edited by William N. Locke and A. Donald Booth (1955), *Handbook of Mathematical Psychology* edited by R. Duncan Luce, Robert R. Bush, and Eugene Galanter (1963), and *Mathematical Linguistics in Eastern Europe* by Ferenc Kiefer (1968).

Books on logical semantics include *Word and Object* by Willard Van Orman Quine (1960), *Signification and Significance* by Charles Morris (1964), *The Language of Logic* by Morton Schagin (1968), and *Towards a Semantic Description of English* by Geoffrey N. Leech (1970)

## INTERPRETIVE SEMANTICS

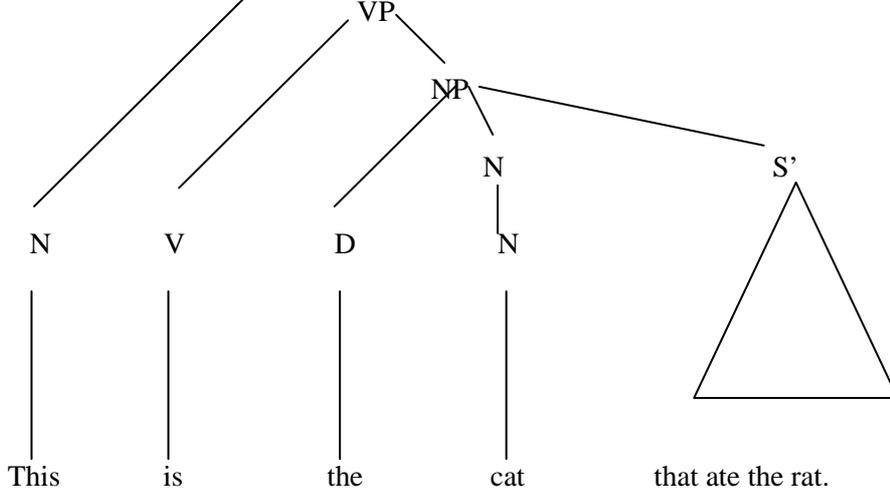
When Noam Chomsky presented his revolutionary grammar in his 1957 *Syntactic Structures*, he did not pay particular attention to meaning or semantics. It wasn't until 1963, that someone proposed a way to work with semantics as part of generative grammar. Jerrold J. Katz and Jerry Fodor, both philosophers at MIT, published an article in *Language* entitled, “The structure of Semantic Theory.” The semantic model outlined in this article was further developed in a book entitled *An Integrated Theory of Linguistic Descriptions* (1964) by Katz and Paul Postal, a linguist. The article in *Language* and the book by Katz and Postal were responsible for many of the revisions of the generative-transformational model, which were proposed by Chomsky in his *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965).

Interpretive semantics, now also called the standard theory, relies on projection rules to give an interpretation to a sentence. According to this model, each lexical item has associated with it a certain number of features. One of these features is the part of speech which is partially determined by the strict subcategorization constraints on a particular item. For example, any particular verb characteristically requires certain grammatical categories to precede it and follow it. Thus, an intransitive verb such as *walk* does not require anything to go with it except a subject, while a transitive verb such as *hit* requires both a subject and a direct object. A verb like *dart* must be followed by an adverb of motion. These are statements about the strict subcategorization of these three verbs. In sentences like “\*John hit,” or “\*John saw of,” the strict subcategorization requirements of the verb are violated, in the first sentence by not having anything after the transitive verb, and in second sentence by having a preposition after the transitive verb rather the appropriate noun phrase.

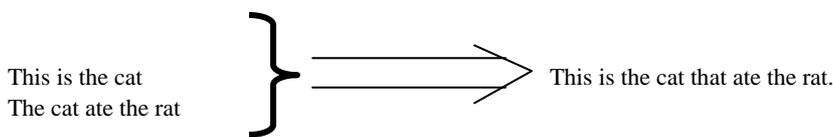
Strict subcategorization rules are basically concerned with syntactic matters rather than semantic matters. But there are also certain semantic features associated with each lexical item. The semantic markers are those semantic features which have general importance in the grammar. A particular semantic marker will be a feature of not just a single word, but of many words. Semantic distinguishers have relevance for only a particular word. A distinguisher is the semantic feature which separates one lexical item from all others. For example, in the most common meaning of the word “bachelor,” the feature “noun” is the part of speech: the features “human,” “male,” and “adult,” are the semantic markers, and “never married” is the distinguisher.

It is the function of the projection rules to scan the features, i.e., the part of speech, the semantic markers, and the distinguishers of each lexical item, and to combine these features with those of other lexical items with which the individual words form a constituent, and to determine which of the features are compatible with each other at a particular level. Thus, the projection rules would show that the word “ball” is ambiguous, meaning either a spherical object for use in a game, or a formal dance. But the projection rules would show that the expression “soccer ball” is unambiguous since the features of “soccer” are normally compatible only with the spherical-object meaning of “ball,” rather than the formal-dance meaning. Projection rules can therefore be seen as rules of disambiguation. After the projection rules have scanned the entire sentence, including embedded sentences, if any, in much the same way, as they scanned the features of the expression “soccer ball,” they would be able to specify if a sentence is deviant or has no composite meaning, i.e., is anomalous, or if it has one composite meaning, i.e., is unique, or if it has more than one composite meaning, i.e., is ambiguous. By making a distinction between the syntactic features and the semantic features, it is also possible to tell if an anomalous or ambiguous sentence is deviant because of syntax or semantics. For example, the sentence, “He was seated by the President,” is semantically ambiguous because the confusion is due to the double meaning of *by*. The sentence, “I won't speak at any more dull women's meetings” is ambiguous because the confusion is due to the placement of the two modifiers *dull* and *women* in front of *meetings*. The syntax does not show which word *dull* is modifying.

makes frequent reference to the cover term, Complex Symbol or CS, which refers to all the features of a particular lexical item. Chomsky did not actually write semantic rules into his revised grammar, but by using CS as his last notation on tree diagrams, he made it possible for semantic information to be plugged into his syntactic analysis. Another difference is that in the later model, the tree diagram shows sentences to be embedded into other sentences in the following manner.



Before the 1965 *Aspects*, generative transformationalists made a distinction between kernel sentences, which are the most basic simple sentences, and derived sentences, which have been changed into such things as questions, imperatives, passives, and negatives. They also generated each sentence separately and then combined the sentences together by means of a generalized transformation such as the following:



There were problems in applying projection rules in this earlier model because each sentence had to be scanned separately. This meant that the projection rules could not be used to determine the meaning of the super sentence that resulted when the two sentences were merged together in some way.

Further reading on these matters might be found in Roderick A. Jacobs and Peter S. Rosenbaum's *English Transformational Grammar* (1968), Jerrold J. Katz's *Semantic Theory* (1972), and Ray S. Jackendoff's *Semantic Interpretation in Generative Grammar* (1972).

## GENERATIVE SEMANTICS

In works by such linguists as George Lakoff, James McCawley, Jeffrey Gruber, and Leonhard Lipka, a number of problems in the interpretive semantics model have been noted. These writers reject the idea that syntax occupies an intermediate position between phonology and semantics. When using syntax as the base, it is therefore necessary to go in two different directions, up to the phonology and down to the semantics. Secondly, semantic features are universal whereas syntax and phonology are mainly language specific. They claim that it makes sense to go from this universal base toward the more specific and divergent syntactic and phonological components of various particular languages. Third, they feel that there may not be any justification for a separate syntactic level at all, and if there is no independently justified level of syntax, then this level cannot be the base level since it doesn't really exist. And fourth, as Wallace Chafe has pointed out, the speech act – and probably the origin of language as well – begins with concepts and these are encoded into language rather than the reverse being true. A final criticism of the interpretive semantic model is that it has two separate kinds of rules – transformations for handling syntactic and phonological matters, and projection rules for handling semantic matters. The generative semanticists feel that only one type of rule is necessary and this is the transformation. They feel that they can handle semantic information by postulating higher predicates and predicate-lifting transformations which have the effect of combining a lower predicate with a higher predicate which results in a new word with all of the meanings of the two words from which it was formed. For example, they see the verb *kill* as consisting of the state *dead* plus the two higher level predicates *cause* and *become*. Thus, taking the expression, “cause to become dead” one predicate-lifting transformation will change *become dead* into *die*, and a second will change *cause to die* into *kill*. It has been argued by non-generative semanticists that *cause to die* does not mean exactly the same as *kill*. The generative semanticists have answered that the higher predicate *cause* is different from the lexical item *cause*, and in fact differs in exactly those ways which make *cause to die* an accurate paraphrase of *kill*. In a way, it appears that on this particular point the generative semanticists have come full cycle in their reasoning. They claim to be able to handle semantics without resorting to semantic features. Yet what they call their higher predicates look very much like semantic features since they make a distinction between them and regular lexical units or words.

Some of the readings on the generative semantics viewpoint are James D. McCawley's “Where do Noun Phrases Come From?” In *Reading in English Transformational Grammar* (1970), Jeffrey Gruber's *Studies in Lexical Relations* (1970), Paul Postal's “On the Surface Verb ‘remind’” in *Linguistic Inquiry* (1970), George Lakoff's “On Generative

## CASE GRAMMAR

Shortly after *Aspects* was published in 1965, Charles Fillmore began working on a new kind of semantically oriented grammar. For more than a year, mimeographed copies of his article outlining this model were circulated among linguists. Finally in 1968, the article entitled "The Case for Case" was published in *Universals in Linguistic Theory* edited by Emmon Bach and Robert Harnes. In this article, Fillmore proposed that all languages have deep cases like Agent, Instrument, Experiencer, Object, etc. (These will be capitalized to distinguish them from the standard parts of speech, some of which have the same name.) He defined the Agent as the animate actor, the Instrument as the inanimate cause, the Experiencer (this term was suggested in his later work) as the animate receiver, the Object as the thing manipulated, etc. And although he took note of a correlation between subjects and Agents, between direct objects and Objects, between indirect objects and Experiencers, etc., he pointed out that this correlation is by no means perfect since subject, direct object, and indirect object are surface structure designations, while Agent, Object, and Experiencer are deep structure designations. Thus, to use his example, the Agent is a subject in "John broke the window with a hammer"; the Instrument is a subject in "A hammer broke the window"; and the Object is a subject in "The window broke." In showing that there is a partial correlation between the surface structure functions and deep structure cases, Fillmore noted that whenever there is an Agent in an active English sentence, it is automatically the subject of the sentence; the Instrument is next in line of eligibility as a subject, and the Object is eligible to become the subject only if there is no Agent or Instrument in the sentence.

Fillmore generalized that each deep case has a particular preposition associated with it. For example, the preposition for the Agent case is *by* as in "Paris was captured *by* the German army." The preposition for the Experiencer case is *to* as in "John told a story *to* Mary." The preposition for the Instrumental case is *with* as in "John hit the window *with* a hammer." And the preposition for the Object case is also *with* as in "John loaded the truck *with* hay." He feels that the preposition is always present in the deep structure, but is lost whenever the noun phrase becomes a subject, a direct object, or an indirect object in a surface structure, as in "the German army captured Paris," "John told Mary a story," "a hammer hit the window," and "John loaded hay onto the truck," respectively. In the deep case, Fillmore considers all noun phrases to be prepositional phrases. He pointed out that the noun phrases can be moved around in the sentence or be deleted as long as the preposition remains with it, but as soon as the preposition is lost, as it is when the noun phrase becomes a subject or direct object, the noun phrase can no longer be moved or deleted.

To this point, we have been discussing Fillmore's treatment of noun phrases. He handles verbs not in terms of deep cases, but rather in terms of deep case frames. That is, he would classify verbs according to which deep cases they co-occur with. In the sentence "John jumped from one side of the ditch to the other side," the verb *jump* has associated with it an Agent (John), a Source (one side of the ditch), and a Goal (the other side of the ditch). The fact that the sentence, "Jumped," is not grammatical, shows that for the verb *jump* an Agent is necessary, whereas a Source and Goal are possible, but not necessary. Fillmore would therefore say that the verb *Jump* has the case frame [+ - A (S) (G)]. In reading this kind of notation of case frames, the brackets indicate that the enclosed cases are members of the set of cases that occur with a particular verb. The plus sign means that the cases mentioned are present rather than absent. The blank space can be read as "in the context of." Next, Fillmore lists the cases, which go with the verb. In actual use, at least in English, one of these cases will precede the verb because it will be acting as subject. In the sentence, "John enjoyed the movie," both the Experiencer (John) and the Object (the movie) are necessary; this verb therefore has the case frame [+ - E O]. As another example, consider the sentence, "John hit the wall (with a hammer)." In this sentence, the Agent (John), and the Object (the wall) are necessary to the sentence, but the Instrument (a hammer) is not necessary. The verb *hit* therefore has the case frame [+ - A (I) O]. A very important consequence of this type of analysis is that a classification of verbs according to their case frames corresponds very closely to a classification of verbs according to their real-word significance. Thus, the case frame [+ - E O] is appropriate not only for the verb *enjoy*, but for all verbs of psychological events. And the case frame [+ A (I) O] is appropriate not only for *hit*, but for all verbs of contact. And even more exciting is the possibility that [+ - E O] is appropriate not only for verbs of psychological events in English, but in *all* human languages. Because Fillmore is dealing with universal concepts, he cautions that the cases are unordered in these case frames, although it may be decided later that ordering is necessary so as to represent eligibility for such things as subject marking if this is shown to be a universal hierarchy.

Two important criticisms have been directed at the case model. The first question is whether deep cases are adequate as a universal linguistic base. The second question is related to the first: If it is shown that something more basic than deep cases, such as semantic features, is required as a universal linguistic base, then can deep cases be justified as an intermediate structure somewhere between deep structure and surface structure? Our own feeling is that although deep cases provided some very important insights into the workings of language, they are too gross to be semantic primes. Therefore, we would make only the weaker claim that they represent an intermediate structure. And even with this claim, further work may show that semantic features by themselves are perfectly adequate and possibly even simpler than deep cases in explaining the fascinating facts which Fillmore brought to light.

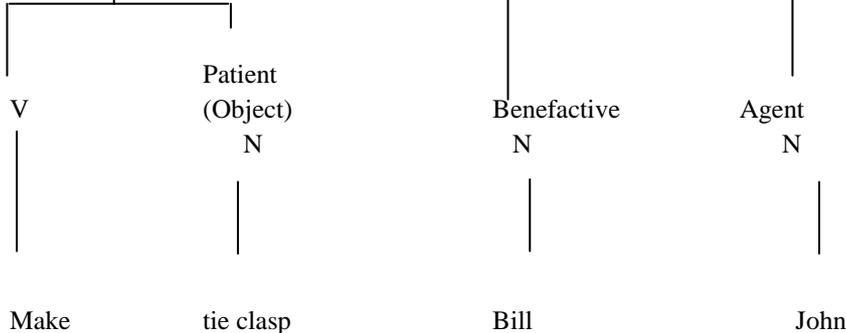
rules in a kind of hierarchy, whereby *require* would be said to entail *possible*; *steal* and *accuse* would entail both *criticize* and *responsible*, etc. He would say that *persuade* entails *cause* and *believe*, while the generative semanticists would postulate these expressions as lower predicates. Fillmore is also very interested in figuring out presupposition, i.e., what a speaker assumes to be true and known before he says anything. For example, in the sentence, "Harry realizes that John is President," it is presupposed that "John is President." Since negation does not affect presupposition, the sentence "Harry doesn't realize that John is President," also presupposes that "John is President." One aspect of presupposition which Fillmore is especially interested in is that resulting from various kinds of orientation. A cube in space has six sides. If this cube is sitting on the ground, it has a top, a bottom, a front, a back and two sides. And finally, if there is some reason to distinguish one side from the other, it has a top, a bottom, a front, a back, a right side, and a left side. A dresser would be an example of this last situation, and it would be noteworthy that the right-hand side of a dresser is the same as the right-hand side of the person who is facing the dresser, rather than the right side of the dresser itself. Fillmore has been very concerned with such aspects of language, although it is not entirely clear how this fits into his Case Model grammar.

In his Case Model grammar, Fillmore has been basically interested in justifying his deep cases by morphological and syntactic considerations. He uses several tests for deciding on the membership of a case. One such test is based on the assumption that only members of the same case can be conjoined. For example, with the acceptable "John and Marry broke the window," there are two Agents joined as the subject. But the sentence, \*"John and a hammer broke the window," is deviant because an Agent and an Instrument have been joined. Another test Fillmore uses is that there can be only a single use of a deep case per simple predicate. For example, "John broke the window with a hammer," is acceptable, but \*"The hammer broke the window with a chisel," is unacceptable because of the two different uses of the Instrument case. Fillmore's third test for case membership has already been mentioned. It is the particular preposition used as a marker, i.e., *John* is an Agent in the sentence, "The cookie was stolen by John," because *John* can be marked with *by*, but in "John stole the cookie," but it has been deleted from the surface structure as happens when an Agent noun phrase becomes the subject of the sentence.

Some of the followers of Fillmore have not placed such a heavy reliance on syntactic and morphological considerations for determining deep cases. Although they have not contested Fillmore's syntactic and morphological tests, they have supplemented these tests with semantic evidence stated in terms of semantic features. Their work can be seen in Dorothy Mack Lambert's dissertation, "The Semantic Syntax of Metaphor" (1969), Ana Maria McCoy's dissertation, "A Case Grammar Classification of Spanish Verbs" (1969), and Thomas Shroyer's dissertation, "An Investigation of the Materials" (1969). Two books based on the case model are John M. Anderson's *The Grammar of Case: Toward a Localistic Theory* (1971) and D. Terence Langendoen's *Essentials of English Grammar* (1970).

Wallace Chafe in his *Meaning and the Structure of Language* (1970) states that "When introspection and surface evidence are contradictory, it is the former which is decisive," (page 122). His model of grammar differs from Fillmore's in that it gives priority in assigning cases to semantic categories rather than to syntactic or morphological considerations. Chafe has a lengthy discussion of various kinds of semantic features: derivational, inflectional, and selectional. Chafe also postulates a direct relationship between case frames and semantic categories of verbs such as state, process, event, and action. He indicates that a state is a one-place predicate which is filled by a Patient (what Fillmore calls an Object) as in "The wood is dry." He considers a process to be a change of state which is also a one-place predicate with a Patient filling that one place as in "The wood dried." He considers an action also to be a one-place predicate with the one place being filled by an Agent as in "Michael ran." An event is a combination of an action and a process. Thus Chafe would conceive of the sentence, "Michael dried the wood," as an event consisting of an action (Michael acted) and a process (the wood dried). Since an event consists of an action, which has an Agent, and a process, which has a Patient, it is logical that an event such as "Michael dried the wood," would be considered a two-place predicate consisting of an Agent (Michael), and a Patient (the wood).

It can be seen from the above examples that Chafe's grammar makes use of deep cases. Unlike Fillmore, however, Chafe marks these deep cases as being hierarchical. For example in the sentence, "John made Bill a tie clasp," Fillmore would consider the Agent (John), the Benefactive (Bill), and the Object (a tie clasp) all to be on the same level. But Chafe would diagram this sentence as follows so that it would show the subject-predicate dichotomy:



Chafe's diagramming tends to superordinate those cases likely to become subjects and to subordinate the others.

Chafe is also very interested in discourse analysis, i.e., the grammar of items larger than the sentence. He points out, for example, that such a sentence as "I bought a car yesterday, but the fender was bashed in," is not ungrammatical, even though the definite article *the* is marking a previously unidentified noun. His point is that when a speaker introduces a concept like *car* he is at the same time introducing all of the parts that one assumes are automatically a part of all (or most) cars. When someone mentions a car, it can be assumed that the hearer has conceptualized a car in his mind with many of its parts, and it is therefore possible to refer to *the* windshield, tires, hand brake, etc. even though the windshield, tires, and hand brake have not been previously designated independently. This observation has important ramifications in considering the nature of semantic features.

One of the most important considerations in discourse analysis is the pronoun system. Postal and others have shown that pronouns have both deep structure and surface structure constraints. Relative pronouns, personal pronouns, and reflexive pronouns must all have antecedents, but Paul Postal has pointed out that identity of sense is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to allow pronominalization. Identity of reference is also required. The sentence, "Max's parents are dead and he deeply misses them," is grammatical because the two noun phrases *parents* and *them* have both identity of sense and identity of reference. However, the sentence "Max is an orphan, and he deeply misses them," is ungrammatical because the *orphan* means a person without parents and *them* refers to this incorporated term *parents*, but they do not have identity of reference in that *orphan* and *them* do not refer to exactly the same thing. Stated differently, Postal has shown that a feature must reach the surface structure in order to be pronominalized.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SEMANTICS

Because of Noam Chomsky's bias in the direction of syntax and his criticisms of the field of Semantics as being too broad and subjective to be considered a science, most mainstream linguists have tended to study semantics only with a strongly syntactic spin. Recently, linguists interested in semantics have carved out territories that deal with semantics but without using the term "Semantics" as a way to identify the field. Rather than studying "Semantics," linguists like Jacob Mey might study "Pragmatics." Linguists like Debra Shiffrin might study "Discourse" or "Speech Acts." Linguists like H. P. Grice might study "Conversational Implicatures." Linguists like Del Hymes might study "Communicative Competence. Linguists like Erving Goffman call it "Frames." Linguists like Roger Schank and Robert Abelson and Victor Raskin call it "Scripts." Linguists like George Lakoff might study "Metaphor," or "Prototypes." But whatever they call it, any linguist who studies "meaning" is studying "Semantics." To get an idea of the work that is currently being done in Semantics, please consult the following "References."

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### 3. Showing your workings, apply the technique of SQ3R to the text below:

Alice Munro is considered by many to be the finest short story writer now working in English. A native of Ontario, Canada, where she presently lives, the first of her (to date) eleven volumes of short fiction, *Dance of the Happy Shades*, was published in 1968, the most recent, *The View from Castle Rock*, in 2006.

Munro is a rare thing among writers of short fiction, an international bestseller. She is also widely acclaimed in the academy, and her work has been the subject of several critical monographs. Yet despite the attention Munro's stories have deservedly received in recent years, there persists a marked reluctance to deal with them *as* short stories. Even among enthusiastic readers of her work, one detects a desire to explain away the negative connotations of the 'short story' genre-mark. Hence the dust jackets of her books overflow with testimony to the novel-like quality of the stories, their satisfying range and depth and complexity of characterization. It is as though Munro is to be considered a great writer *in*

*spite* of the fact that she *only* writes short stories. Munro is not much given to commenting on her own writing, but in an interview in 1983 she made a comment that provides a useful starting point

for the student new to her large body of work. Looking back on the style she had adopted in her first collection, she made the following observation:

I've never been an innovator or an experimental writer. I'm not very clever that way. I'm never ahead of what's being done at the time. So in those stories in *Dance of the Happy Shades* there's an awful lot of meaningful final sentences. There's an awful lot of very, very important words in each last little paragraph. And that's something that I felt was necessary at the time for the stories to work. It was the way I felt that you made a story most effective. And now, I would go back, if I could rewrite most of those stories, and I would chop out a lot of those words and final sentences. And I would just let each story stand without bothering to do the summing up, because that's really what it amounts to.<sup>1</sup>

Munro here narrates the major shift in her work that took place in the early 1980s, around the time of her collection *The Moons of Jupiter* (1983).

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