

Paper Proposal, Outline and Annotated Bibliography

Due Oct 29 2013

Choose a topic from the list of possible paper topics that I've given you. Each topic is broad and you can address each from a variety of angles. You are to think of a specific question or line of inquiry about the topic for your mini research paper.

For this part of the assignment, your task is to write a short **proposal**, provide a tentative **outline** for your paper, and find **three sources** (other than the papers I posted on Blackboard) which you will consult while you write your paper. These sources must be directly related to the topic. You may use print sources (such as books, research articles published in academic journals, and other media sources like newspaper articles) and online newspaper articles and magazines). However, at least one source must be a book or an academic journal. Your exploration of and answer to the question you describe in your proposal will make up the four page essay, due on Dec. 3rd.

1 Your Task

1. PROPOSAL

Write a single paragraph (approx. 200 words) outlining your research plan. This paragraph should begin with a **research question** followed by a brief statement of how the sources will help you to answer your question. If you already have a tentative answer to the question, you may wish to write a second paragraph summarizing that answer and how you will argue for it in the paper. Doing so will give your TA a chance to provide helpful feedback or comments. Note that in your mini paper you are expected to go beyond a simple summary of the sources you've read. These sources are a starting point.

2. OUTLINE

Provide a tentative outline for your paper. This outline should be an enumerated list of the sections and subsections you will include in your paper; complete with relevant and informative titles. Many writers find it beneficial to create a skeleton outline before writing a paper. This allows you to plan your argumentation in advance, which can substantially improve your paper. You will not receive substantial feedback from your TA on your outline.

3. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Create an **annotated bibliography** of the three sources you plan to use. At least one of your sources must be either a book or an academic journal article. Your bibliography must use proper citation style (either LSA or APA, see below for more information). After each entry, write a few sentences (an annotation), max. 80 words, summarizing the author's thesis statement (i.e., what they are arguing for) and what you find interesting, helpful, and/or relevant about the source.

You must also indicate what the type of source is (i.e., a book, journal article, newspaper, etc.) and whether it is a print source or an online source.

2 Feedback

Your proposal, outline and annotated bibliography will be evaluated for completeness and thoroughness, and you will get feedback on your choice of research question and selection of sources from the TAs. **Please print a copy of the rubric, to be posted on Blackboard next week, and hand it in to your TA, stapled to the front of your assignment.** Research questions and annotated bibliographies submitted without rubrics will not receive as much feedback (or any at all). **Absolutely no late assignments will be accepted.** However, you must still complete this part of the research paper or your final paper will not be graded. Remember to keep these components when you get them back from your TA, as you will need to submit them again with your draft and final paper.

3 Need help?

Below are some common questions and answers about writing a paper of this sort. Please read these before approaching your TA or the instructor with questions.

1. FORMULATING A RESEARCH QUESTION

- ★ Pick the topic you're most interested in. Your work will be better if it's motivated by your own curiosity.
- ★ Read the relevant article that I've provided. Think about what parts interested you the most and what questions you had while reading the paper. You might wish to pursue such a question. Note that you are expected to ask a question that goes beyond the article that I've posted.
- ★ Look through your course notes and the textbook. What did we talk about in class that connects to the topic. What was my take on the question? Again, you're expected to go beyond what we've discussed in the classroom.
- ★ Think about how the topic connects to questions or ideas you've learned about or thought about in the past. Make connections to your previous knowledge.

2. DO I HAVE TO STICK TO THIS TOPIC/QUESTION FOR THE FINAL ESSAY?

- ★ It's normal for research questions to change slightly as you read more deeply and begin writing. Minor adjustments do not need to be cleared with the instructor.
- ★ If you wish to make a major change to your research question or you list of sources, or pick a different topic, you must discuss this with the instructor.

- ★ If you are in doubt as to whether your change is a major or minor change, err on the side of caution and ask the instructor about it.

3. HOW DO I FIND SOURCES?

- ★ The articles the instructor posted on blackboard are a good start. Pay attention to what articles and books the author cites throughout the paper. If they make reference to a source that is relevant to the question you're asking, seek that source out!
- ★ The university library system subscribes to most academic journals in linguistics and has a huge collection of linguistics books. These are usually in sections P through PE.
- ★ Journals written for other disciplines (e.g., psychology, education, computer science) often have articles about language. If you are comfortable reading articles in those disciplines, you can consult those sources as well. Remember to use linguistic terminology in your paper, not the jargon of other disciplines.
- ★ The internet can be a very helpful resource but you must use it with caution. Google can lead to books and articles in journals (esp. Google Scholar) but also to online newspapers and magazines. Wikipedia, while not an appropriate reference for your paper, may provide links and references to appropriate sources.

4. HOW **can** I USE THE INTERNET?

- ★ Be careful! A lot of random people put their uninformed opinions on the internet and present them as facts. If you use a blog or other personal type of website, it is best to choose one whose author is a linguist or a columnist associated with a reputable newspaper or magazine, and who regularly writes about language. You may **not** use a blog as one of your three main sources. You can use blogs to help you find other sources that are appropriate to use.
- ★ Most newspapers and magazines, as well as radio and television networks, have excellent websites with many past articles archived.
- ★ U of T and the City of Toronto library systems have searchable, online catalogues. Through the University of Toronto Libraries' online catalogue, you have access to electronic versions of many print articles.

5. DO I HAVE TO USE A PRINT SOURCE?

- ★ YES. Print media is subject to more rigorous editorial scrutiny than many things published online, and written articles tend to explore topics in more depth than radio or television. You must use at least one book or academic journal article.
- ★ Note that most academic print journals provide online access to their articles (though you may need to log-in through the University of Toronto Libraries' website). Although you can access these through the internet, these are still considered print media, not online media.

6. CAN I USE MORE THAN THREE SOURCES?

- ★ Yes, but for this assignment it's better to only use three sources and understand them thoroughly than to consult a lot of sources but only skim them.
- ★ Chances are you will find more than three sources. Pick the most relevant three. You can make reference to more sources in your final paper if you must.

7. I'VE NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE. WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

- ★ Come see me in office hours before the due date! I'm happy to look at your proposal and annotated bibliography and let you know if it's suitable or how to improve your work.
- ★ The U of T Writing Website (www.writing.utoronto.ca) has several pages of information about writing as well as lists of books you may find helpful. Each college at U of T also has a Writing Centre that can be of use to you. They can meet with you to give you advice, help you develop your writing and editing skills, and assist you in using resources such as the library catalogue. Make sure to contact them early; they are very busy! If you wait, you may not be able to get an appointment! You can book appointments online here: <http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>.
- ★ Here are some websites with information about the LSA and APA styles for formatting your citations and references. You must use one of these two styles. Following one of these will ensure that you provide all the necessary information in a way the grader can understand.

LSA: <http://www.linguisticsociety.org/files/style-sheet.pdf> (see sections 11 and 12).

APA: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>