

UNIT 2

Initiating a research

CONTENTS

Warm-up

During-reading tasks

- Process of doing a research
- Process of writing a paper

Language focus

WARM- UP

- What is the purpose of initiating a research?
- Do you usually select a topic because of your own interest or the assignment? And why?
- What kind of topic can be researched?



Purpose → Process → Product

(Good Questions)

(Systematic Approach)

(Valid Answers)

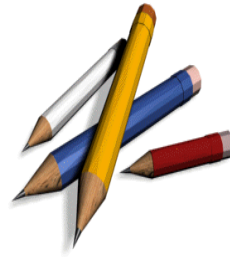
PROCESS OF DOING A RESEARCH AND WRITING A PAPER

- **PPP**
- **4-STEP process (frame working):**
 - Selecting a topic (research questions)
 - Formulating thesis statement (topic sentence(s) of the whole paper)
 - Writing a title
 - Outlining

FROM TOPIC TO TITLE

- **What is your research topic?**
----What is/are your research question(s)?
- **How would you answer the research question(s) ?**
-----Thesis statement (T.S.)
- **What makes a good title?**
----SCI
(SPECIFIC, CONCISE, INFORMATIVE)

WHAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED IN TOPIC-SELECTION?



Choosing a topic is **the most important crucial part** of the entire thesis process.

Personal interest / Social benefit

Be adequately **restricting** and **focusing**

Avoid overly ambitious and challenging topic

A small piece of an important topic or a small piece of an area that intrigues you.

A GOOD TOPIC?



Interesting

Significant

Researchable

Modest

Familiar

TOPIC, QUESTION AND THESIS STATEMENT

Topic: a broad range or general field of interest

(Metaphor)

Question: a particular part or aspect of a topic that is narrow enough to investigate and write about

(What are the effects of metaphorical use of language in communication?)

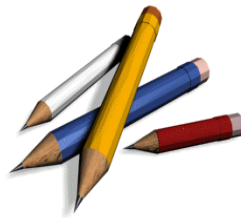
T.S.: An assumption about the topic, an approach to it, an attitude toward it, a proposition to be examined.

(Metaphors at different levels add lots of power and glory to the language in communication.)



How to choose a topic?

- Consider the requirement of your school
- Identify **a research interest** or research topic
- **Narrow the topic down** as much as possible
- **Review the literature** on the topic as completely as possible
- **State the problem** in a question form.
- Translate or turn your research question into **a thesis statement.**



How to narrow down the topic?

“Who”, “What”, “How”

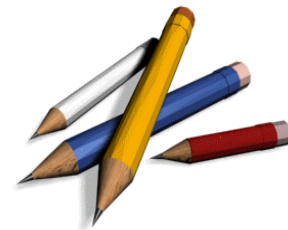
“the acquisition of English Vocabulary”

Who: English/non-English major university
freshmen

What: productive vocabulary in speaking

How: interview, questionnaire, observation,
measurement....

FORMULATING GENERAL & SPECIFIC QUESTIONS



Research topic:

L2 argumentative writing

Topic focus: A study of university students' argumentative writing in English; rhetorical knowledge and discourse pattern

General question:

What is the relationship between the students' *rhetorical knowledge* and *discourse patterns*?

Specific questions:

- 1) Does the subjects' perception of the rhetorical organization of English argumentative discourse vary from the expected English norms?**
- 2) Do these English argumentative essays written by the subjects demonstrate any deviations in rhetorical organization from the expected English norms?**
- 3) Are there any correlations between the subjects' rhetorical knowledge and the discourse pattern of their English argumentative texts?**

FORMULATING A THESIS STATEMENT

T.S. *answer your research question* and/or *clearly state the purpose* of your research.

T.S. is can be **one or two sentences** with the topic as the grammatical subject.

a topic part + a comment part

WORKING T.S.



A thesis statement is supposed to be **specific**. Here is an example of a too broad statement:

The Catholic Church's influence on the labor unions was extremely significant.

Revision:

The Catholic Church, by means of the pulpit and the purse, greatly influenced the labor movement in the United States during the final decades of the nineteenth century.

MAJOR FEATURES OF AN EFFECTIVE T.S.



SCI

(SPECIFIC, CONCISE, INFORMATIVE)

Be specific

Use your own ideas

Be sure you can build an argument

A single, direct sentence

WRITING A TITLE

A good title is defined as the **fewest** possible words that *adequately describe the contents of the paper.*

A noun phrase / gerund phrase / prepositional phrase
Sometimes, a complete sentence.

e.g.

Juvenile delinquency as the result of television

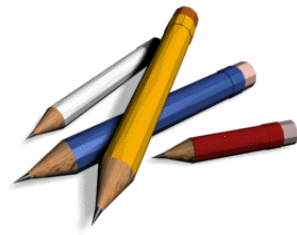
Death penalty – is it beneficial or unfavorable?

The TV impact on the modern society

The controversial character of Napoleon Bonaparte

Frank Lloyd Wright: Key Principles of Design For the Modern Home

Abnormal muscular tension caused by paspertin: report of 12 cases



FINDING AN APPROACH

Examine or analyze

Evaluate or criticize

Compare and contrast

Establish relationships

Argue for / Against / Persuade



LANGUAGE FOCUS

Personal pronoun

Nominalization

P17 PRACTICE

1. I think that doctors should be required to complete communication skill courses.

Doctors should be required to complete communication skill courses.

2. When you read Hamlet, you should notice clear foreshadowing of events to transpire.

Clear foreshadowing of events to transpire should be perceived in Hamlet.

3. I chose this method because it was less complex.

This method was chosen because of its simplicity.

4. My reading has shown that there are several reasons why plants are dispersed by ants.

According to the literature reviewed, there are several reasons why plants are dispersed by ants.

5. The one I have found the most agreement for is that ant nests are nutrient enriched sites and therefore it may be advantageous for seeds to germinate from within ant nests .

There is the consensus that ant nests are nutrient enriched sites and therefore it may be advantageous for seeds to germinate from within ant nests .

6. I also found that the results of this study concurred with Berg's (1975) hypothesis that seeds are protected from fire through their burial in ants nests.

The results of this study concurred with Berg's (1975) hypothesis that seeds are protected from fire through their burial in ants' nests.

2.2.2 *The following sentences do not sound academic. Rewrite them with nominalization.*

2. Crime was increasing rapidly and the police were becoming concerned.

The police were becoming concerned about rapid increase of crimes. /

The rapid increase in crime was causing concern among the police.

3. Germany invaded Poland in 1939. This was the immediate cause of the Second World War breaking out.

Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939 was the immediate cause of the outbreak of the Second World War.

4. We need to know which parts of our library are being used most extensively so that we can project what resources are most needed.

We need to know which parts of our library are in most extensive use so that we can project what resources are most in need.

5. I know English well. I worked for three years in a factory in Shanghai. I think I am good enough for your job.

Both my English proficiency and my three-year working experience in a factory in Shanghai qualify me to be an ideal candidate for the job.

REPORT TIME

Requirements

- 1. <5 mins. Q&A 2 min**
- 2. Title on the blackboard**
- 3. Send to my email box after class**