ENG103 Research Writing Techniques

241 Mid-semester Exam study guide

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Important note:

In addition to this study guide you must also review and consult the other lesson slides in preparation for the mid-semester exam.

LTD Exam Warning

Using a phone or any other personal electronic device such as an iPad is forbidden. Also, accessing another website besides the course LMS exam page such as Google Translate is forbidden. Likewise, accessing another program such as MS Word is forbidden. In addition, to continue to work on the exam after the allotted time has ended is forbidden. It is also forbidden to speak to another student and copy their work. If any of these rules are broken, your exam may be invalidated, and you may be expelled from the exam.

The Linguistics and Translation Department is taking the issue of student misconduct in the exams very seriously, and this message is to inform you about the measures that are operative to prevent and detect cheating in the Mid-Semester exams.

- The instructor will be visually monitoring students' behaviors in class.
- An additional invigilator will visit the class unannounced and can randomly inspect students' behaviors.
- The Netsupport system will be monitoring live, in real time, the students' computers during the entire exam.
- The Netsupport system will save a log of each student's activity, which can be analyzed for misconduct even after they have completed the exam and left the classroom.

If a student is caught cheating, they will be exposed to serious cheating charges that will be processed through the University's policies.

Exam Design

The total potential score of the exam is 20, and the exam comprises two types of questions, which are:

10 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ), which are worth 1 point each.

5 Short Answer Questions (SAQ), which are worth 2 points each.

The allowed duration of the exam is 50 minutes.

The Definition of Research & Research in the social sciences

Research can be defined as an endeavor that adheres to a structure to acquire new knowledge about the world or to test existing assumptions. Moreover, this endeavor involves forming a question, a methodology to address it and ultimately an answer that has a basis that can be scrutinized.

Research in the Social Sciences can be defined as investigations that focus on the behavior of humans and their subjective interactions with the world, rather than the study of objective and consistent variables such as the elements that make up human anatomy and affect it.

A study into coffee culture's impact on social cohesion in Riyadh is a good example of research in the social sciences. While a study into the effects of coffee on human cognition is more related to the Physical Sciences.

Subject, Participant and Stakeholder

Subject: refers to the things or individuals under investigation. For example, when discussing a case study, Matthews and Ross 2010 suggest that "the **subject** of the case may be a person, an organisation, a situation or a country […]" (p. 128).

Participant: Refers to individuals who willingly participate in the research to provide data to the researchers. For example, Saldanha & O'Brien (2014) explain that:

> Our use of the term '**participant**' is in line with new developments in research involving human beings which attempt to recontextualize the research by presenting it as a collaborative process between the researcher and the people who are invited to participate in it. The aim is to recognize the contribution made by those whose views we request and to highlight the fact that, for the research to be valid, they need to be fully informed stakeholders whose consent is free and revocable (p. 150).

Stakeholders: Refers to the "individuals, organizations or communities that have a direct interest in the process and outcomes of a project, research or policy endeavor" (Deverka et al, 2012).

Experimental and Control Groups

Research that uses an experimental design comprises of an experimental group and a control group.

The Experimental group is the group that receives the experimental procedure, which usually involves manipulation with the independent variable. For example, in an experiment to see how coffee affects exam performance, the group that is given coffee to drink before the exam is the experimental group.

The Control Group is the group that does not receive the experimental procedure or test sample. For example, in an experiment to see how coffee affects exam performance, the group that is NOT given coffee to drink before the exam is the control group.

Independent, Dependent and Extraneous Variables

The independent variable is the factor that is changed or controlled by the researcher in a study. It is the cause or reason for a specific outcome. For example, car tires that are used in an experiment to determine how tires affect performance are the independent variable.

The dependent variable is the factor that the researcher measures to determine the effect of the independent variable. For example, track lap times, in an experiment to determine how tires affect performance, are a dependent variable because they are affected by tires.

The extraneous variable is the factor that is NOT changed or controlled by the researcher in a study but affects the dependent variable. For example, air temperature in an experiment to determine how tires affect performance, is an extraneous variable because it will affect a dependent variable such as track lap times.

The meaning of Hypothesis

A **hypothesis**, in the general sense, is defined as a claim involving the relationship between things, which can be tested to verify or dismiss, through experimentation. For example, Matthews and Ross (2012) argue that a hypothesis is "a *testable assertion* about a relationship or relationships between two or more concepts (this is not necessarily a statement about reality; it is something to be proved or disproved)" (p. 58).

For example, the claim that sitting at the front of the class improves grades is a hypothesis until it is proven or disproven.

Generalizability

In essence, generalizability refers to the ability to apply research conclusions, which were based on a sample group, to the population (relevant people outside of the actual research), i.e., to make a generalization from a limited study. For example, researchers concluded that their sample group of 30 student participants in their study increased their coffee intake leading up to an exam. Generalizability, would be the ability to apply the findings of this research to the population (all students), and say students increase their coffee intake leading up to an exam.

Transferability

In essence, **transferability** refers to the applicability of your findings to other contexts, which are different from your research context. Consequently, transferability is important because it refers to the ability to apply research findings from one context to another. For example, a study found that students studying in Columbia University, New York, were not adversely affected by drinking Brazilian coffee 10 minutes before an exam, and thus, in this situation transferability would relate to the applicability of this finding to another context, e.g., students studying at PSU and who drink Saudi coffee just before their exam. However, to enable the reader to make an informed judgment if the results are transferable to another context, it is incumbent on the researcher to provide information about the research context.

Correlation and Causation

Correlation and Causation refers to a claim of causation based on two or more events happening at the same time. The issue of correlation and causation is important because researchers can mistakenly make a claim of causation based on the observation that two factors correlate while failing to identify the actual causative factor. For example, Black (2002) explains that:

> Correlations are a method by which we describe the relationship between pairs of variables resulting from a survey of a single group. This does not mean establishing cause and effect relations, since correlations only indicate the strength of relations between variables in a single sample of subjects and regression equations tell how one variable changes with respect to another [...] Even if the correlation is statistically significant, this still has nothing to do with proving causation (p. 159).

When discussing the relationship between correlation and causation it is important to consider the **direction of the cause**.

Also, it is important to consider other factors, **counterfactuals**, that are not identified but may have been the cause of what has been observed.

Inductive Research and Deductive Research

Inductive research does not begin with a theory rather it collects and analyses data to produce a theory.

Deductive research begins with a theory and collects data and analyses it to test the theory, which can result in the theory being supported, modified or rejected.

In essence, the main difference between **inductive research** and **deductive research** is that inductive research aims at developing a theory by gaining data, while deductive research aims at testing an existing theory against data gained through the research .

Direct quoting with the APA referencing style

When using direct quotes, the components are the same as paraphrasing, but with the addition of "double quotation marks" and the page number, which is signified with the letter p..

An example of a direct when it is comes after the author's name is as follows:

Algamdi (2020) contends that "students who study longer typically achieve higher grades" (p. 38).

An example of a direct quote when the author's name is not mentioned first is as follows:

It is better for students to increase their study time because research findings suggests that "students who study longer typically achieve higher grades" (Algamdi, 2020, p. 38).

Multiple Authors

According to the APA style there are unique rules when dealing with texts that have two or more authors. Regarding situations where there are one or two authors the APA states that "for a work with one or two authors, include the author name(s) in every citation" (American Psychological Association, 220, p.266).

For example: Davis and Barry (2010) argue that women have more employment opportunities in industries that involve creativity.

In addition, in situations where there are three or more authors the APA states that "for a work with three or more authors, include the name of only the first author plus "et al." in every citation, including the first citation…" (American Psychological Association, 220, p.266).

For example: Trotter et al. (1988) argue that Peckham has more of an influence on international trade than New York and Paris combined.

Multiple Authors

Also, the APA style specifics when to use "and" or "&". The APA states that "in parenthetical citations, use an ampersand (&) between names for a work with two authors…in narrative citations, spell out the word "and"" (American Psychological Association, 2020, p.266).

An example of a parenthetical citation:

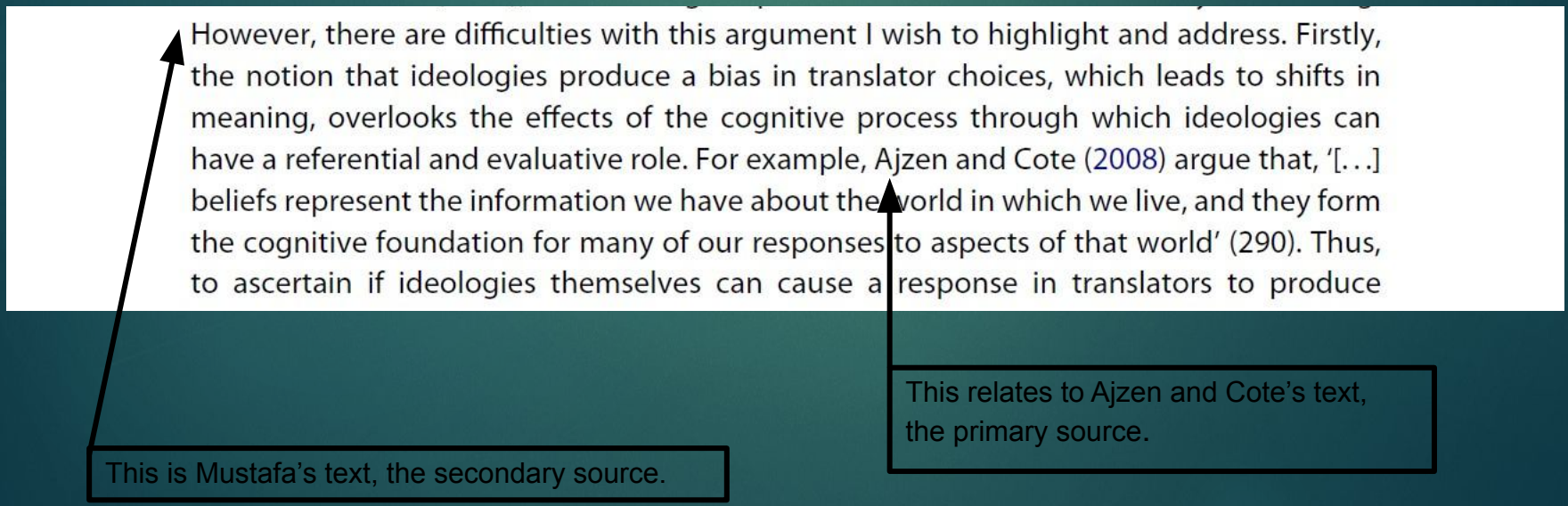
University graduates have more employment opportunities in industries that heavily rely on digital technologies (Davis **&** Barry, 2010).

An example of a narrative citation (a signal phrase):

Davis **and** Barry (2010) argue that University graduates have more employment opportunities in industries that heavily rely on digital technologies .

As cited in

Occasionally, we find good quotes (primary text) and information cited by another text (secondary text) we are reading. The quotes and information are referred to as the primary source while the text that cites them as the secondary source. For example, we are reading an article written by Mustafa (2020) and find valuable information he cited from Ajzen and Cote (2008).



As cited in

In such a situation when we want to cite the primary source, we must follow specific APA rules: “in the text, identify the primary source and then write "as cited in" the secondary source that you used. If the year of publication of the primary source is known, also include it in the text” (American Psychological Association, 2020, p. 258). Accordingly, using the primary source Mustafa cited would be as follows:

Beliefs are important to understand the world. For example, Ajzen and Cote (2008) contend that “. . . beliefs represent the information we have about the world in which we live, and they form the cognitive foundation for many of our responses to aspects of that world” (as cited in Mustafa, 2020, p.5).

Note: the page number is where the quote appears in Mustafa (2020). Also, only Mustafa’s text should appear in the reference list.

End References / Reference List

The reference list is written on a separate page and uses the heading: **Reference List or References**

The references are listed in alphabetical order.

For online articles with one author the following format is used:

Author's surname, Initial(s). (Year of publication). Article title. *Journal Title*, *vol* (no)., pages. DOI

Alharbi, B. (2020). Coffee and human cognition. *Psychology and Nutrition, 12*(3), 89-103. doi:10.1016/j.cognition.2011.07.011

For printed books with one author the following format is used:

Author's surname, Initial(s). (Year of publication). *Title: Subtitle*. Publisher.

Algamdi, S. (2020). *Modern pedological trends: time matters*. PSU Publications

End References / Reference List

According to the American Psychological Association (2020), when there are two or more authors:

- Invert all individual authors' names, providing the surname first, followed by a comma and the initials: Author, A. A.
- Use a comma to separate an author's initials from additional author names, even when there are only two authors; use an ampersand (&) before the final author's name: Author, A. A., & Author, B. B.
- Do not use a comma to separate two group authors: American Psychological Association & National Institutes of Health.
- Use a serial comma before the ampersand (&) with three or more authors (p. 286).

For example:

Davis, R., & Barry, S. (2010). Culturally enforced job roles. *Employment and Ideology, 2*(1), 78-104. doi:10.1016/j.ideology.2011.07.011

Trotter, R., Pearce, M., & Tulseret, D. (1988). The importance of independent traders to global economies. *Employment and Ideology, 12*(3), 87-112. doi:10.3019/j.ideology.6011.08.011