

Conducting a research project



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Tutorial 7: Conducting a Research Project. Conducting a research project in applied linguistics is a complex implementation and researchers usually follow basic steps. In this paper, I would like to present these basic steps in carrying out a research project with some examples based on a report of Zohreh R. Eslami and Abbass Eslami-Rasekh, an article titled “ Discourse Markers in Academic Lectures”. I will comment the article based on the general research process which was presented by the instructor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Le Hung Tien last lecture.

In the abstract, readers can see that the authors identified a research area. “ Academic English established itself a firm position in curricula for all university fields”, “ the need for research into the processes underlying academic performance in English has increased. ”; the study is “ to gain insight into the effect of discourse markers on academic listening comprehension of university students in English as a foreign language setting”. From the abstract, we also realize the research question of the study. Developing the research question is based on the authors’ interest and their experience in the field.

They see that interest in learning English has increased to such an extent that English is now considered by many researchers to be an international language. The authors also see the increasing importance of English for Academic Purposes in Iran. In addition, they have read the studies of Long, Flowerdew, MacDonald, Badger and White on the features of lectures that might aid L2 learners’ comprehension and they have found that “ the role of discourse markers in aiding listening comprehension has not been fully explored yet”. Additionally, while several researchers have studied discourse

markers from the descriptive and contrastive perspective, there is relative lack of experimental work on this topic. ” The study investigates the effect of the use of discourse markers in academic listening comprehension of Iranian university students. The research is based on the premise that the knowledge derived from this investigation will provide insights to facilitate the academic listening comprehension.

About the literature review of the study, the authors constructed it briefly in the abstract part with a written summary and critique of research relating to the research question, containing the main points, issues, findings, research method synthesized by the researcher through a critical review of the readings. Annotated bibliography which contains a list of relevant studies relating to the research question was displayed in the study and at the end of the study in references part.

A research proposal was prepared quite completely with title, identification of the problem, purpose of the study, definition of terms such as discourse markers and academic lectures, review of literature, method and procedure, statements on how results will be presented and references. Data collection method is also determined. The participants were enrolled in language lab two and language lab three courses which are part of the bachelors’ degree curriculum for students majoring in English. These course are designed to improve the listening comprehension of the students. Three academic texts were used for this study.

The texts were selected from the material that students typically encounter in their class. Two versions of the same lectures were used. Data were analyzed based on findings from the implemented texts. In the conclusion of

the study, we can see that the conclusion was drawn from the analyzed data. The findings of this study have wider implications within the context of lecturing in English to speakers of other languages. The conclusion also give out the practical implications of this study is that “ our findings may be used to determine instructional actions to be undertaken in different teaching contexts.

Students should be made aware of the presence, importance and facilitating effects of discourse markers for academic lecture comprehension. ” “ The findings show that how the academic content should be delivered to the student is of high significance and that content lectures should consider how best they could assist the students to cope with the academic system of education faster and better”. From considering the construction of a research project, I myself find many advantages to conduct my research project in the future. However, I have to read and study more to reach expected results. Tutor’s signature. Dr. KiOu Th? Thu H-ng