



Máster en Estudios Textuales y Culturales en Lengua Inglesa 60702 - How to Write a Research paper: Theoretical and applied perspectives to Academic writing

Course 2014 - 2015

Curso: 1, Semestre: 1, Créditos: 7.5

Basic information

Teachers

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Recommendations to attend this course

How to write a research article in English is one of the three compulsory subjects in the first semester. It deepens into those theoretical and applied aspects of academic writing that cannot be approached at a Degree level. Therefore, it is recommended that the student is sufficiently familiarised with general communication strategies for academic writing in English.

Course Schedule and Deadlines

COURSE SCHEDULE

TOPIC 0. An overview of academic English.

TOPIC 1. English in today's research world.

TOPIC 2. Academic writing in context: audience, context and style.

TOPIC 3. The process of writing a research paper.

TOPIC 4. Types of research articles: the IMRD structure vs. the argumentative essay.

TOPIC 5. Computer session: online laboratories and websites for research writing.

TOPIC 6. Writing the introduction of a research paper.

TOPIC 7. Methods and approaches to scholarly research.

TOPIC 8. Rhetoric and argumentation: persuading the audience.

TOPIC 9. On the writing of abstracts

TOPIC 10. Minor or occluded genres in academic and research contexts

PRESENTATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT 1. English in today's research world

Deadline:(pending confirmation)

ASSIGNMENT 2. Computer tools for academic writing

Deadline:(pending confirmation)

ASSIGNMENT 3. Writing the introduction section

Deadline:(pending confirmation)

ASSIGNMENT 4. Argumentation techniques in discussion and conclusion sections

Deadline:(pending confirmation)

PRESENTATION OF THE 3,000 WORD ESSAY: last day of the first semester.

Home

Learning outcomes that define this course

The student, in order to pass the course, will have to show her/his competence in the following skills:

- 1:**
The student can use the basic critical tools to understand and analyse literary, filmic and cultural texts in English.
- 2:**
The student is capable of testing the explanatory power of the most relevant critical approaches to English texts through their application to a corpus of literary, filmic and cultural texts in English within the field of the Humanities.
- 3:**
The student is capable of developing skills in the use of English in a scholarly and critical environment.
- 4:**
The student can provide a critical response to literary, filmic and cultural texts in a research context and in the broader social context.

Introduction

Brief presentation of the course

This subject is specifically designed to help graduate students to understand and put into practice the theoretical principles of academic writing in English. It relies on a genre-based approach, which allows drawing attention to communicative purposes, structures and styles of different types of academic texts.

Competences

General aims of the course

The expected results of the course respond to the following general aims

The aim of this subject is to provide students with an introduction to the rhetorical conventions for information organisation in research articles in the humanities and to understand the use of recurrent lexicogrammatical and discoursal resources in the light of the so called contextualisation criteria of academic prose. In addition, this subject provides an introduction to methods of analysis and applications of theoretical frameworks for the analysis of texts in English.

Context/Importance of the course for the master degree

Together with the subject “Approaches to the study of the literary text in English” and “Issues in film studies” (also compulsory subjects in the first semester), this subject seeks to familiarise students with the basic critical tools for the analysis and interpretation of texts in English and, in turn, seeks to foster the use of the English language in a critical and analytical context. This subject also sets the grounds for writing essays in the optional courses of the second semester.

After completing the course, the student will be competent in the following skills:

- 1:** Developing and applying original ideas in a professional as well as in a research context.
- 2:** Understanding and applying acquired knowledge to solve problems related to professional and social contexts as well as to broader multidisciplinary contexts.
- 3:** Being able to interrelate knowledge from different subjects, handle complex information, apply the proper methodology and frameworks, express informed critical views and provide conclusions in the form of written essays and oral presentations, in clear and appropriate English, aimed at both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- 4:** Ability to carry out a piece of research in an autonomous way, once the student has acquired the required critical and methodological skills.

Relevance of the skills acquired in the course

The proposed goals of this subject are crucial to provide students with a sound theoretical and applied background in order to facilitate them the preparation of a research article in English within the field of English Studies. Similarly, the specific aims of this subject are essential skills to carry out the research process (i.e. presenting the information organisation conventions in research articles, as well as their lexicogrammatical, discoursal and stylistic features, and presenting the application of research methods and frameworks for the analysis of texts in English) are crucial skills for successful research writing and research publishing in the field of English Studies.

The ability to develop and apply original ideas in a professional as well as in a research context is a fundamental skill to conduct successful research in the field of English studies. The same applies to the ability to interrelate knowledge from different subjects, handle complex information, apply the proper methodology and frameworks, express a critical view and provide conclusions in both written essays and oral presentations, in clear and appropriate English, aimed at both specialised and non-specialised audiences, and the ability to conduct work (research) in an autonomous way.

Evaluation

Assessment tasks

The student will prove that he/she has achieved the expected learning results by means of the following assessment tasks:

- 1:**

I. FIRST OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

A) ONGOING ASSESSMENT

B) GLOBAL EXAMINATION (to be determined in the academic calendar):

Assessment task 1. Students are required to write short critical essays and present them orally in the class. In these essays students are expected to understand theoretical concepts and apply them to the texts under analysis. Correct use of academic spoken and written English (at a C1 level) is expected. These activities will credit students' achievement of learning objectives # 1, 2, 3 and 4. Short essays will be graded from 0 to 10, this grade representing 10% of the final score of the student.

Assessment task 2. Students will also be required to write a 3,000 word essay in correct academic English on a specific aspect of the course contents, on a topic previously agreed on with one of the teachers. With this essay the students are expected to demonstrate that they have assimilated the critical approaches presented by the teachers and to prove their ability to use those approaches in the analysis of specific texts. The textual analysis and critical discussion of the readings will credit students' achievement of learning objectives # 1, 2, 3 and 4. This essay will be graded from 0 to 10, this grade representing 90% of the final score of the student in the course. A pass mark in this essay is a sine qua non condition to pass the subject.

Assessment criteria:

Definition of key concepts. Initial hypothesis. Use of a theoretical framework and a methodology. Use of primary sources. Literature review. Argumentation and conclusions = 70%

Independence, originality and critical examination = 10%

Information organization structure of the essay. Layout of the text. Accuracy in the use of language and appropriateness of style = 20%

2:

II. SECOND OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

GLOBAL EXAMINATION (to be determined in the academic calendar):

Assessment task 1. Students will be required to write a 3,000 word essay in correct academic English on a specific aspect of the course contents, on a topic previously agreed on with one of the teachers. In this essay the students are expected to assimilate the critical approaches to literary texts, films or corpus of texts presented by the teachers and to prove their ability to use those approaches in the analysis of those texts. The textual analysis and critical discussion will credit students' achievement of learning objectives # 1, 2, 3 and 4. This essay will be graded from 0 to 10, this grade representing 70% of the final score of the student in the course. A pass mark in this essay is a sine qua non condition to pass the subject.

Assessment task 2. Interview in English. The student will debate with the teachers relevant aspects of the analysis and interpretation of the compulsory readings. In the interview, the students are expected to apply the theoretical approaches and the analytical methods studied to the analysis of various types of literary, filmic or linguistic texts. The textual analysis and the critical discussion of the readings will prove that the students have achieved learning objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4. The interview will be assessed following the established assessment criteria and the established level of exigency. It will be graded from 0 to 10, this grade representing 30% of the final score of the student in this subject.

Assessment criteria for Global Examination (both for essay and for the interview):

Use a C1 level of English (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) to hold one's own, critically and academically, in analyses, explanations and discussions of aspects and issues related to the subject/discipline = 30%

Use relevant theoretical frameworks critically and apply methodological approaches appropriately to a corpus of texts in English = 40%

Provide an effective argument (factual evidence, exemplification, illustrations, citations, etc.) in order to make

Activities and resources

Course methodology

The learning process that has been designed for this course is based on the following activities:

This subject has been specifically designed to train novice scholars in conducting research and writing up research in English. For this reason, the proposed activities (i.e. the analysis and discussion of textual models by means of critical tools and the comments on, presentation of, and reflections on these analyses from various theoretical perspectives) are aimed at putting into practice the basic principles of academic writing in English.

Accordingly, the subject is organised in three modules: 1. Learning the recurrent rhetorical structures and lexicogrammatical and discursive features of a research article in the field of the humanities, 2) learning how to apply analytical methods and theoretical frameworks, 3) becoming acquainted with the contextualization criteria involved in the processes of academic writing and 4) writing of an individual research article, applying the theoretical concepts and applied resources for the development of a selected research topic.

Outline of the Programme

The programme offered to the students to help them achieve the learning results includes the following activities :

- 1:** Theoretical seminars on "The research article as a process and a product" 0.4 credits. Onsite.

Theoretical and analytical seminars aimed at developing a critical view, drawing on a selection of textual models- of the key aspects of the research article genre both as a process and as a product. The seminar will also revise the key concepts of the genre theory and other interrelating theoretical frameworks. These seminars will be conducted following the "guidelines for the analysis of textual models".

TOPICS

TOPIC #1. English in today's research world

TOPIC #2. Academic writing in context

TOPIC #3. The process of writing a research paper

TOPIC #4. Computer tools for academic research

TOPIC #5. What it means to be a critical reader

TOPIC #6. Types of research articles

TOPIC #7. Writing the literature review

TOPIC #8. Writing introductions across genres

TOPIC #9. The body of the research article

TOPIC #10. Academic metadiscourse: rhetoric and persuasion

TOPIC #11. On the writing of abstracts

TOPIC #12. Minor or 'occluded' genres in RA writing

2: Tasks/activities. 3 credits. Onsite.

Classroom activities will provide students with models for textual, discursual and rhetorical analysis. In these tasks students will discuss both individually and in group the recurrent features of the research article genre and the contextualization criteria that may justify those features. The aim of the tasks/activities is also to learn how to use/apply the critical and textual analytical tools and theoretical approaches dealt with in the course and in the module. These activities will be conducted following the “guidelines for the discussion of textual models”.

3:
Individual and group tasks. 5.8 credits. Onsite.

Practical tasks in which students will rely on the application of methods of analysis and theoretical frameworks to discuss a selection of textual models. These tasks will be carried out either individually or in group and seek to enquire into the textual and contextual features of academic writing in the humanities, as well as into the analytical critical tools needed for carrying out research in English studies. These activities will be conducted following the “guidelines for the discussion of textual models”.

4:
Tutorial activities. 0.6 credits. Onsite and online.

Assessment tasks/activities and self-assessment of classroom work. 0.2 credits. These activities will be conducted following the “guidelines for activities on the analysis and discussion of compulsory and recommended readings”.

Course planning

Calendar of actual sessions and presentation of works

ONSITE SESSIONS

SESSION #1. English in today's research world

SESSION #2. Academic writing in context

SESSION #3. The process of writing a research paper

SESSION #4. Computer tools for academic research

SESSION #5. What it means to be a critical reader

SESSION #6. Types of research articles

SESSION #7. Writing the literature review

SESSION #8. Writing introductions across genres

SESSION #9. The body of the research article

SESSION #10. Academic metadiscourse: rhetoric and persuasion

SESSION #11. On the writing of abstracts

SESSION #12. Minor or 'occluded' genres in RA writing

Bibliographic references of the recommended readings

- Academic discourse / edited by John Flowerdew . - 1st publ. Harlow [etc.] : Longman, cop. 2002
- Alcaraz Varó, Enrique. El inglés profesional y académico / Enrique Alcaraz Varó Madrid : Alianza, 2000
- Becher, Tony. Academic tribes and territories : intellectual enquiry and the culture of disciplines / Tony Becher and Paul R. Trowler . - 2a. ed. Buckingham [etc.] : The Society for Research into Higher Education [etc.], 2001
- Belcher, Diane D. "Seeking acceptance in an English-only research world" in Journal of Second Language Writing. Vol.16,

n. 1, pp.1-22. 2007

- Bennet, K.. Epistemicide! The Tale of a Predatory Discourse. En The translator, vol. 13 n° 2, 2007
[<https://www.stjerome.co.uk/tsa/journal/>]
- Feak, C. & Swales, J.M. Telling a research story. Writing a Literature Review. - 2009 Michigan, University of Michigan Press
- Feak, Christine B.. Creating contexts : writing introductions across genres / Christine B. Feak, John M. Swales Ann Arbor, Mich. : University of Michigan Press, 2011
- Hyland, Ken. Disciplinary discourses : social interactions in academic writing / Ken Hyland . - 1st ed. Harlow [etc.] : Longman, 2000
- Mauranen, Anna. Cultural differences in academic rhetoric : a textlinguistic study / Anna Mauranen Frankfurt am Main [etc.] : Peter Lang, cop. 1993
- Myers, G. The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles. En Applied Linguistics, vol 10 n° 1, 1989
[<http://applij.oxfordjournals.org/>]
- Prior, P. Writing/Disciplinarity: A Sociohistoric Account of Literate Activity in the Academy Mahwah, L. Erlbaum Associates, 1998
- Shaw, P. & Dahl, T. Special issue of The Nordic Journal of English Studies, 2008
[<http://ojs.ub.gu.se/ojs/index.php/njes/issue/current>]
- Swales, John M. Genre analysis : English in academic and research settings / John M. Swales Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1990
- Swales, John M. Research genres : explorations and applications / John M. Swales . - 1st publ. New York [etc.] : Cambridge University Press, 2004
- Swales, John M.. Abstracts and the writing of abstracts / John M. Swales, Christine B. Feak [Ann Arbor] : University of Michigan Press, cop. 2009
- Swales, John M.. Aspects of article introductions / John Swales ; with a new introduction Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 2011
- Weissberg, Robert. Writing up research : experimental research report writing for students English / Robert Weissberg and Suzanne Buker Englewood Cliffs, NJ : Prentice Hall Regents, cop.1990
- Writing : texts, processes and practices / edited by Christopher N. Candlin and Ken Hyland . - 1st ed. London : Longman, 1999