

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT  
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

**English 301B: Introduction to Bibliography and Research Methods: Language**

**Course Content and Learning Outcomes**

The main purpose of this course is to introduce students to bibliography and research methods in linguistic study. Students will be assisted in identifying and researching topics relative to their area of interest and will be trained to write a research proposal in preparation for their theses. Topics include basic statistical and research concepts, the experimental method, correlation studies, survey research, ethnography, case studies, classroom observation and research, and critiquing research. Ethical considerations in research and recent advances in computer technology in the field of bibliography and research will also be explored.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify current issues and trends in linguistic research.
- Compile and document a bibliography on a topic of their choice in the broad areas of linguistics and second language learning.
- Distinguish between different types of research typically used in linguistic study and explain the advantages and limitations of each.
- Abstract and critique research articles in linguistics and second language learning.
- Select and research a topic relevant to their area of interest and write a proposal for a linguistic research study, including research questions, rationale for the study, brief literature review, and proposed methodology and data analysis.

**Resources Available to Students**

Brown, H. D. 1994. *Understanding Research in Second Language Learning*. Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. 1992. *Research Methods in Language Learning*. Cambridge University Press.

In addition to these two basic required textbooks, materials and activities from other sources, including articles in specialized academic journals, will be assigned to reinforce or supplement the readings.

## Grading Criteria

- Bibliography (10%)
- Oral Presentation/Discussion Leader (15%)
- Reaction Paper/Critique (Two) (25%)
- Research Proposal (35%)
- Class Participation (15%)

## Schedule

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Topics/Readings</b>  | <b>Assignments</b>                    |
|-------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>    | Introduction to Course  |                                       |
| <b>2</b>    | Overview of Research Methods;<br>Ethical Considerations in Research<br>Nunan, Ch. 1; Brown, Ch. 1; TBA* |                                       |
| <b>3</b>    | Basic statistics; Bibliography<br>compiling – Brown, Chs. 6 & 7; TBA                                    |                                       |
| <b>4</b>    | The Experimental Method – Nunan,<br>Ch. 2; Brown, Chs. 2, 3, & 4  |                                       |
| <b>5</b>    | The Experimental Method (cont'd)<br>Brown, Chs. 5, 8, & 9   | <b>Due: Bibliography</b>              |
| <b>6</b>    | Critiquing Research – Brown, Ch. 13;<br>TBA   |                                       |
| <b>7</b>    | Ethnography – Nunan, Ch. 3  |                                       |
| <b>8</b>    | Case Studies – Nunan, Ch. 4   | <b>Due: Reaction Paper/Critique 1</b> |
| <b>9</b>    | Classroom Observation and Research<br>Nunan, Ch. 5  |                                       |
| <b>10</b>   | Correlation Research – Brown, Ch. 10  |                                       |
| <b>11</b>   | Introspective Methods – Nunan, Ch. 6  | <b>Due: Reaction Paper/Critique 2</b> |
| <b>12</b>   | Survey Research – Nunan, Ch. 7  |                                       |
| <b>13</b>   | Interaction Analysis – Nunan, Ch. 8   |                                       |
| <b>14</b>   | Doing Research: An Overview<br>Nunan, Ch. 10  |                                       |
| <b>15</b>   | Review; Presentations of Research<br>Proposals  | <b>Due: Research Proposal</b>         |

\*TBA: Addition Material To Be Announced

## Course Policies

### *Attendance*

Students are expected to be punctual, to attend all sessions, and to participate in all in-class discussion and activities. Those who miss **three** or more classes will be dropped automatically from the class. Needless to say, there is no makeup for in-class work, and students will be held accountable for any material covered during their absence.

### *Academic Integrity*

Students are expected to uphold AUB's Code of Student Conduct (see Student Handbook Appendix). Both cheating and plagiarism are violations of the University's academic conduct regulations and are subject to disciplinary action, which might lead to a Dean's warning, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.