

**University of Ziane Achour-Djelfa**  
**Faculty of Letters Arts and Foreign Languages**  
**Department of Foreign Languages**  
**Research Methodology Course**

**Topic1: Choosing a Topic**

**Level: First Year**

**Group: All groups**

**Task1:** Before reading anything about the lesson below, try to answer the following questions:

- 1 What is a research topic?
- 2 What are the techniques and steps that you personally as a student follow in choosing the appropriate topic for a research?
- 3 What makes a good topic?

A research topic is the subject in which your research will be investigating, gathering information about, or the problem to be solved.

Having an appropriate topic is thus an important step in doing a well-organized research with satisfactory results.

**Finding a topic, thus conducting a research can be for:**

A university degree or practice

To get more knowledge

To solve a problem

(Check the previous lessons)

**There are a variety of techniques and steps that aid the students in finding the right topic to search about:**

**1 Reading about the topic:** reading about the topic is the skimming of some headlines, articles or introductions and summaries of books. It is a useful technique that allows the students to get more knowledge and acquire a better shape of the topic through searching for the right variables to work on.

**2 Observation:** observing the surroundings, checking the contemporary issues can be a good way to find the appropriate topic to search about.

**3 Asking for help:** asking people; teachers, librarians and friends can help to a certain degree to have a new idea or a new path to a certain idea that can be fruitful in formulating a good researchable topic.

**4 Brainstorming:** Brainstorming is the process of jotting down any ideas that come to one's mind. It has no grammatical or logical regulations. The aim of brainstorming is to have a variety of different topics in different fields. It helps the students to choose a topic after having a long list of different topics.

**Practice:** in an extra paper, can you brainstorm, searching for a good topic, for ten minutes?

**Task2:** Can you think of any other techniques that help in choosing a good searchable topic?

After using the previously mentioned techniques or any other suitable techniques, it is recommended to:

**1 set the scope of the topic by answering the following questions:**

Is my topic searchable?

What does the teacher or the instructor of the research look for?

How much time do you have?

How many pages do you have to write?

Practice: what does the following question mean? 'Is my topic searchable?'

**2 Narrow down the topic:**

According to the New York Learning Express, the appropriate way to narrow down the topic is to answer the 5 Ws:

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

Why?

**Practice:** How can answering the 5 Ws help a researcher in narrowing down the topic?

**Note:** you can check the reference; Write Better Essays in Just 20 Minutes a Day (2006) for more details.

### **What makes a good topic?**

There are some indicators that show that your topic is good and worth working on:

You have formulated the topic yourself.

It makes you very excited to search for.

It is very specific.

It is creative.

**Note:** the less references you have about a topic, the more authentic it becomes, the more interesting and successful it is.

### **General Notes:**

1 answering the questions is a mere introductory exercise that helps the students to warm up about the topic and to test his/her prior knowledge about the lesson. Consequently it takes no part in the evaluation in the students' performance and understanding.

2 further details about the lessons are to be provided during the face to face interaction or chat discussions between the teacher and the students to be held later on.