Dr. Feda Al-Tamimi

Graduation Project

King Faisal University

Distance Education

Faculty of Art

8th
Semester

Course Introduction

- **The Graduation Project** is a substantial piece of research that students are required to complete in order to graduate. Under the supervision of course instructors, students will make use of previous courses in terms of methodology and content, and put together a complete research proposal for their graduation.

- **Throughout the process,** students will benefit from the feedback and guidance of course instructors in three main fields (linguistics, translation and literature). The process gives students a hands-on experience in designing substantial projects and applying their analytical and problem-solving skills in a professional manner.

Course Overview

- **Course Content:**
- ❖ Recorded lectures:
  They will be given by Dr. Feda Al-Tamimi.

- ❖ Live sessions:
  They will be held by Dr. Feda Al-Tamimi and other instructors when necessary.

- ❖ Students will submit drafts of their work in progress twice and benefit from instructors' feedback

- **Course Overview**
- ❖ Procedures
  Before **25**/**2**/**2016**:
  Choice of a Research topic. (linguistics, translation and literature), (instructor's approval is mandatory):

  At this stage, students should submit a document (one page only) containing
  1) a coherent thesis statement,
  2) a paragraph description of the project, and
  3) a description of the tools necessary for the completion of the project (research material, interviews, surveys, questionnaires, etc).

  Before **17**/**3**/**2016**:
  At this stage students should present a first draft of their complete research proposal presenting the final research proposal and supporting documents.

  Before **21**/**4**/**2016**:
  Final drafts of the complete project should be submitted

- ❖ Assessment:
  Projects will be assessed in terms of their:
  - Originality
  - Presentation (includes the proper and professional use of English, of research material and citations and overall presentation of the project)
  - Completeness of the project, which means that it should contain appropriate literature reviews, surveys and/or questionnaires when necessary.

❖ Grading Formula:
- Live sessions: **10** pts.
- Attendance: **10** pts.
- Coursework and first drafts: **10** pts.
- Final draft: **70** pts.

- **The final draft will then be evaluated out of 70 points according to the following criteria:**

A. **10** points are assigned for a complete abstract and a good introduction with a clear thesis statement.
B. **10** points are assigned for a brief review of previously published literature on the topic being researched (at least two previous studies).
C. **10** points are assigned for a clearly stated research question, and overview of the research's significance.
D. **10** points are assigned for a detailed research methodology that includes the tools to be used in the study, and how the collected data will be gathered and analyzed. If your proposal contains an ethical considerations section, it will be included in the evaluation here as well.
E. **10** points are assigned for an overview of the limitations and the expected results of the study.
F. **10** points are assigned for use of correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.
G. **10** points are assigned for a complete table of contents and a well-organized list of references used in the study.

- **Each criterion will be assigned points according to the following scale:**

- Excellent: **10** to **9** points out of **10** points
- Good: **8** to **7** points out of **10** points
- Fair: **6** to **5** points out of **10** points
- Lacking: **4** to **3** points out of **10** points
- Poor: **2** to **1** points out of **10** points
- Unacceptable: **0** out of **10** points

Choosing a research topic

- **Where do research topics come from?**
  1) Individuals' own experience of practical problems in certain fields.
  2) Individuals' Reading
  3) Literature Review.
     Books, internet, archives, journals, newspapers, etc.
  4) Conducting interviews.
  5) Examining records or reports.

- **A Research topic should be:**
  1) Specific.
  2) Measurable.
  3) Achievable.
  4) Time-specific.

- **Developing your Research topic**

- **Ask yourself the questions:**
- **WHY** did you choose this topic?
  - ✓ **Significance.**
    - o Local
    - o national
    - o international
  - ✓ **Implications.**
  - ✓ **Limitation.**
  - ✓ **Aims**

The Research Proposal

- **The Research Proposal**
  1) What is a research proposal?
  2) Why should you present a research proposal?
  3) How to Develop the Research Proposal?
  4) Suggested Format for the Research Proposal

- **What is a Research proposal?**
  Various terminologies are used to mean a research proposal depending on why the research is carried out?
  - ✓ Research outline
  - ✓ Plan of research
  - ✓ Research/project proposal
  - ✓ Thesis plan

It details how the study will be completed in order to achieve the aims and objectives and address the research questions or problems.

- **Why should you present a research proposal?**
  1) the research proposal is meant to convince your supervisor or department of the validity of your research project and that you have the ability and the work-plan to complete it.
  2) Witting the research proposal gives you an opportunity to think through your project carefully, and define what you exactly want to investigate.
  3) The research proposal can provide you with an outline that guides you through the research process.
  4) Shows your supervisor and/or department know exactly what your research is going to be about and how you are going to do it.
  5) The research projects helps the department to choose an appropriate supervisor based on the latter's specialization.

- **How to Develop the Research Proposal?**
  1) Choosing an appropriate research topic .
  2) Narrowing down and focussing your topic
  3) Determining research objectives
  4) formulating specific research questions for investigation .
  5) Outlining the main literature in the topic area
  6) Deciding on research methodology.

7) Proposing an approach to data analysis
8) Developing a timeline
9) Developing a budget and resources you will need
10) Developing a bibliography/list of references.

- **Suggested Format for Research Proposal**

  Title
  Table of Contents
  - Abstract
  - Introduction
  - Literature review
  - Significance of Research
  - Research Question
  - Research Methodology
  - Ethical Consideration.
  - Limitations of the study.
  - Expected Results.
  - References

Explaining the main points in the research proposal

- **The Abstract**
  The abstract includes:
  A. *An outline of your proposal,*
  B. *What your research will involve,*
  C. *Research questions or hypothesis,*
  D. *Research methods and*
  E. *How you will analyse the data.*

  Some points to keep in mind while writing abstracts:
  - An abstract will nearly always be read along with the title, so do not repeat or rephrase your title. It will likely be read without the rest of the document, however, so make it complete enough to stand on its own.
  - Your readers expect you to summarize your study in an abstract. Emphasize the different points of your study in proportion to the emphasis they receive in the body of the document.
  - *DO NOT refer in the abstract to information that is not in the document.*
  - Avoid using the first person "I" or "we." In addition, whenever possible, choose active verbs instead of passive ones (ex: use "*the study tested*" instead of "*it was tested by the study*" or "*I tested in the study*").
  - Avoid, if possible, using trade names, acronyms, abbreviations or symbols in your abstract.
  - It is best to write the abstract immediately after you finish your project while the ideas are still fresh in your mind.

- **The Introduction**

What is an Introduction?

The Introduction is the opening paragraph(s) of an essay or research paper. It gives a brief idea about the research question, the significance of the research, the methodology used and the main idea of the research. It should be designed in an attractive manner in order to grab the readers' attention.

Why is the Introduction so important?

The purpose of an introduction is to prepare the reader for the body of writing that comes after it.

The introduction catches the readers' attention, making them want to read more.

As a researcher, you know what you are writing about and why you are writing it. But unless you inform your readers of your topic in the introduction, they will feel lost and may judge your research to be an unclear.

The introduction announces the subject matter and tone of your essay (humorous, serious, etc.)

How to grab the reader's attention

The first sentence or sentences in the introduction of your research proposal should be attractive enough to capture the readers' attention. You can start an introduction with a quotation that provoks ideas about the subject. This raises the level of curiosity in the readers and they will continue reading your research.

Clarify the Central Idea of your research.

The introduction should be written in a way that clearly depicts the central idea of the paper. After reading your introduction, readers should not have any doubt about the main idea of your research question or research topic.

Common mistakes often made by young researchers

An introduction should not introduce a detailed background of the topic. However, it should give a brief description of the research question, the importance of the study and the methodology used.

The introduction should mention the significance of the topic in order to grab the attention of the readers.

Introductory paragraphs should not be too long. Half page paragraph or little more than that can be enough.

Common mistakes often made by young researchers

Make sure your introduction introduces your thesis statement.
Don't begin with an apology or complaint. Such statements as "It's difficult to find much information on this topic . . ." and "This controversy is hard to understand, but …"
Don't assume that your audience already know your subject matter. Identify the research question even though you know your instructor/supervisor knows what you are writing about.
You should avoid standard dictionary definitions in the introductions.

- **The Literature Review**
  It means the works you consulted in order to understand and investigate your research problem.

  The literature review is a critical look at the existing research that is significant to the work that you are carrying out. Some people think that it is a summary: This is not true. Although you need to summarize relevant research, it is also vital that you evaluate this work, show the relationships between different work, and show how it relates to your work.

- **Purpose of a literature review**
  A literature review situates your topic in relation to previous research and illuminates a spot for your research. It accomplishes several goals:
  - provides background for your topic using previous research.
  - shows you are familiar with previous, relevant research.
  - evaluates the depth and breadth of the research in regards to your topic.
  - determines remaining questions or aspects of your topic in need of research.

- **Significance of Research**
  An explanation of the significance of a study may include the meaning of the research work to you personally. It should include how your research benefits or impacts others in part or whole. Discuss what people or groups of people might benefit from reading your research. Show how this project is significant to developing a body of knowledge.

  This section, often referred to as the "rationale" is crucial, because it is one place in which the researcher tries to convince an audience that the research is worth doing and could persuade someone to support, or fund, a research project.

- **Research Question**
  Your research question is the most critical part of your research proposal -- it defines the proposal, it guides your arguments and inquiry, and it provokes the interests of the reviewer. If your question does not work well, no matter how strong the rest of the proposal, the proposal is unlikely to be successful. Because of this, it is common to spend more time on the researching, conceptualizing and forming of each individual word of the research question than on any other part of the proposal.

- **Research Methodology**
  -**This section must be well-written and logically organized because you are not actually doing the research**. As a consequence, the reader will never have a study outcome from which to evaluate whether your methodological choices were the correct ones. The objective here is to ensure that the reader is convinced that your overall research design and methods of analysis will correctly address the research problem. Your design and methods should be absolutely and unmistakably tied to the specific aims of your study.

  Methods (or tools) include (e.g.):
  1) Questionnaires
  2) Interviews
  3) Observations
  4) Surveys
  5) Experiments

Briefly describe how each method will be applied.

- **Ethical Considerations**
  1) You should have the permission of the people who you will be studying to conduct research involving them.

  2) You don't want to do anything that would cause physical or emotional harm to your subjects. This could be something as simple as being careful how you word sensitive or difficult questions during your interviews.

  3) Be sure your own personal biases and opinions do not get in the way of your research and that you give both sides fair consideration.

  4) Your research should be conducted under the assumption that you will keep your findings anonymous.

  5) Your research has to be approved by an ethics review committee to make sure you are not violating any of the above considerations.

  6) When reporting your results be sure that you accurately represent what you observed or what you were told.

- **Limitations of the study**
  The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the application or interpretation of the results of your study.

  All studies have limitations. However, it is important that you restrict your discussion to limitations related to the research problem under investigation.

- Possible Methodological Limitations
  o Sample size
  o Lack of available and/or reliable data
  o Lack of prior research studies on the topic
  o Measure used to collect the data

- Possible Limitations of the Researcher
  o Access
  o Longitudinal effects
  o Cultural and other type of bias

- **Expected Results**
  This section should give a good indication of what you expect to get out of the research. It should join the data analysis and possible outcomes to the questions that you have raised. It will be a good place to summarize the significance of the work.

- **References**
  This is the list of the works that you have cited in your research.
  Please see the guide for more information
  http://www.kfu.edu.sa/ar/Deans/E-Learning/Pages/graduation_project.aspx

King Faisal University
College of Arts - English Language Department

- **Graduation Project Manual**
  This manual will take you through the process of working on and submitting your graduation project.

  We highly encourage you to read this manual carefully before working on your project. Failing to do so might lead to the rejection of your research proposal.

1) The Deanship of E-learning will send you a message indicating your supervisor and some necessary dates and deadlines. You need to take note of these deadlines so that you do not lose marks due to late submission.

2) The supervisor might send you, and other students they supervise, announcements and further instructions. Thus, you need to provide your supervisor with your email soon after they were assigned to supervise you (your university email is preferred, but you can also use a personal email as long as you indicate your name and academic number to your supervisor). Please note that we already experienced difficulties in contacting students who used their work servers (e.g. Saudi Aramco and Jubail and Yanbuu Royal Commission) so please avoid using work email if possible. You also need to check your email inbox regularly. You should contact your supervisor in English only.

3) The first piece of work you will need to submit is a topic and a thesis statement (refer to the first recorded lecture for instructions on choosing a valid topic and narrowing it down). In summary, the topic has to be original and specific. Choosing an existing research proposal (e.g. from a colleague who already passed this course) is **not acceptable** because the work is not original. The project has to be about one of these three fields (**linguistics, literature, or translation**). Check the title section in guideline number 7 below for more information.

   In addition, you need to provide a list of the tools you will use in your research (surveys, interviews... etc.).
   You need to submit the thesis statement and the paragraph explaining it and the list of tools in a Microsoft Word document by the end of week 6 (on or before Thursday 25/2/2016).
   Please write "Topic Approval, Your Name" in the title of your message to your supervisor.

   (Follow this link for instructions on writing a good thesis statement:
   http://www.irsc.edu/students/academicsupportcenter/researchpaper/researchpaper.aspx?id=4294967430)

4) Once your supervisor approves your topic (this may take up to **2** weeks), you will need to work on the first draft of your research proposal. See guideline number **7** below for information about the sections required to be included in your first draft.
   Your first draft should be submitted to your supervisor by the end of week 9 (on or before Thursday 17/3/2016). Please write "First Draft, Your Name" in the title of your message to your supervisor.

5) It is important to note that the research proposal is **just a plan of research**. You **do not** have to conduct actual research and you **do not** have to collect data. It should be **between 4 and 6 pages** (not including the cover page). Your supervisor may reject your draft if it exceeds this word limit.

6) Referencing:

Double check that you have good citation of references both in your text and in the reference list This applies to every work you submit to your supervisor (i.e. thesis statement, first and final drafts).

Make sure to **COMPLETELY AVOID PLAGIARISM**. There are two kinds of plagiarism:

A. Copying others' work without citation (e.g. copying from a website and not mentioning that website intext and/or in the reference list).

B. Copying others' words as if they are yours. This is when you cite the reference you quoted directly from and fail to use direct quotation: (use quotation marks if the quoted text is fewer than **40** words and an indented paragraph if the quoted text is more than **40** words). Please note that it is not acceptable to have all of your literature review section quoted directly.

Every reference you use **MUST** be cited **twice**:

(1) In the text (e.g. in the literature review section). This can be done in two ways:

a. When copying the words of other authors, the reference is cited within the paragraph you are quoting from, right after you use quotation marks, for example: "Knowledge is fundamental" Hardy, **2002**, pp. **2345**.

b. When reporting the words of others in your own words, the reference is cited within the paragraph, for example: Hardy (**2002**) suggests that knowledge is essential.

Or

In his book The Importance of Knowledge, Hardy (**2002**) showed how knowledge is very important.

(2) In the reference list at the end of your submitted work.

Refer to the instructions for creating a reference list at the end of section (**7**) below.

7) Your first draft **MUST INCLUDE ALL** of the following sections:

A. Title
B. Table of Contents
C. Abstract
D. Introduction
E. Literature review
F. Significance of Research
G. Research Question
H. Research Methodology
I. Ethical Consideration (Only if you are collecting data from participants. Not required for all topics.)
J. Limitations of the study
K. Expected Results
L. References
M. Appendix (Only if needed. See below.)

Here is a brief description of each of these sections:

A. Title

- Write the title of your research proposal on the first page (cover page) with your name and academic number. The title needs to be specific. For example:
  - **Language Acquisition** is general
  - **Language Acquisition in Saudi Arabia** is still general

- **Using X to Improve Reading Skills of Saudi Students at the Elementary Stage (a study on students at Y school in Z city)** is acceptable because it is a specific title.

B. Table of Contents
- Add a table of contents on the second page that shows each of the sections below with the **page number** of each section.

C. Abstract
- This is a one paragraph summary of your research proposal.

D. Introduction
- Here you provide the reader with overview and background information about the topic.

E. Literature review
- Your literature review section should have **two to four quotes or brief summaries** of what other researchers said about the topic you are researching, and your own comments on these quotes. See here for more information:
- http://faculty.mwsu.edu/psychology/Laura.Spiller/Experimental/sample_apa_style_litreview.pdf

F. Significance of Research
- This section should include why the topic is important and worthy of being researched, and why other researchers should be interested in reading about it.

G. Research Question(s)
- Here you state the problem(s) you are going to research.

H. Research Methodology
- Your methodology section should include description of how you will conduct your research, what tools you will use and how these tools will help you answer your research question(s).

I. Ethical Considerations
- Here you should explain how you will follow research ethics when you deal with your research participants. You only need to include this section if you have research participants. Follow this link for more information: http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/

J. Limitations of the Study
- The limitations of the study section should include any factors that may limit your research. For example factors of time, place and sample size... etc.

K. Expected Results
- Here you try to predict what results will come out of your research after you complete it.

L. Reference list:
- Please note that every reference you use should be cited **twice:**
a. Within the text of your proposal (e.g. in the literature review section). You can refer to section number above for more details on in-text citation.
b. In the reference list (i.e. at the end of your proposal) as explained below:
   - Use correct citation of references as in the following example:

- In your text, you took information from a book called "The Importance of Knowledge" written by an author called Alex Hardy in the year **2002**, and published by the publisher Penguin Books in the city of
- New York. To properly add this work to your reference list, you need to format it as follows:
- Hardy, A. (**2002**). *The Importance of Knowledge*. New York: Penguin Books.
- References should be organized **alphabetically**.
- You can use this site to make citation easier for you: http://www.citethisforme.com/cite/book Here
- is a guide how to cite websites in your references:
- http://www.easybib.com/reference/guide/apa/website
- Note: Some research proposals might also need to include the following section:

M. Appendix
- Here you include the questionnaires, interview questions tests, translated texts... etc. or any other tools and extra data you use in your research.

8) Paginate your proposal, label sections (i.e. give them numbers), and remember to show the page number of each section in the table of contents.

9) Your supervisor may point out some of your spelling and grammatical mistakes, but please be noted that they will not correct all your mistakes. It is your responsibility as a soon-to-be-graduated English student to correct all your spelling/grammatical mistakes before you submit your final draft. Such mistakes will be penalized.

10) **Your final draft should be submitted to your supervisor by the end of week 14 on or before Thursday 21/4/2016. Please write "Final Draft, Your Name" in the title of your message to your supervisor.**

❖ **The final draft will then be evaluated out of 70 points according to the following criteria.**
A. **10** points are assigned for a complete abstract and a good introduction with a clear thesis statement.
B. **10** points are assigned for a brief review of previously published literature on the topic being researched (at least two previous studies).
C. **10** points are assigned for a clearly stated research question, and overview of the research's significance.
D. **10** points are assigned for a detailed research methodology that includes the tools to be used in the study, and how the collected data will be gathered and analyzed. If your proposal contains an ethical considerations section, it will be included in the evaluation here as well.
E. **10** points are assigned for an overview of the limitations and the expected results of the study.
F. **10** points are assigned for use of correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.
G. **10** points are assigned for a complete table of contents and a well-organized list of references used in the study.

❖ **Each criterion above will be assigned points according to the following scale:**
  - o Excellent: **10** to **9** points out of **10** points
  - o Good: **8** to **7** points out of **10** points
  - o Fair: **6** to **5** points out of **10** points
  - o Lacking: **4** to **3** points out of **10** points
  - o Poor: **2** to **1** points out of **10** points
  - o Unacceptable: **0** out of **10** points
  - • **In summary: marks are divided as follows:**
  - • **Research proposal: 70 marks**
  - • **Submitting first draft on time: 10 marks**
  - • **Viewing recorded lectures: 20 marks**

❖ **We hope that you found this guide helpful and wish you all the best of luck in this course and your future endeavors.**

Dear students,
- • **Please read the following instructions carefully. These instructions pertain to the 'graduation project' module.**
1) Please use ONE email address to send/receive emails relevant to the 'graduation project' module (e.g. official university email address). If you prefer to use a Gmail/Hotmail or another email account, please make sure that your name is typed in correctly in the settings (i.e. no nick-names).

2) Please follow the formatting instructions available in the guide that will be sent to you. It is very important that you read the guide as it details important instructions regarding the submission/evaluation of your projects.

3) Please submit your work in time (i.e. before the deadline) as work submitted after the deadline shall incur a penalty deduction of **2** marks for each day of late submission. To avoid penalty deductions, please take note of the following deadlines:
   - Submission of Thesis Statement: on or before **25/2/2016**
   - Submission of the first draft: on or before **17/3/2016**
   - Submission of the final draft: on or before **21/4/2016**

4) We take a 'ZERO TOLERANCE' approach to PLAGIARISM. Any plagiarized work will receive an **F** or **0**. To avoid plagiarism, please read the instructions provided in the guide.

5) **Marks will be distributed as follows:**
   - Coursework= **30** marks
   - Final project= **70** marks
   - (Please read the attached guide for more information)

6) After you send a document, you will receive an email confirming the reception of your work. Once you have received a confirmation email, please DON'T send the document or any other email again until you receive the feedback on your document first.

7) Please include your name, academic number and which segment of the work you are sending (e.g. title –first draft- final draft) in the Subject line of each email you send.

- **Example:**
  Subject: Title , Ahmed Ali , **123456**
  Subject: First draft , Ahmed Ali , **123456**
  (As described in the guide)

8) Please click on the following link to get your supervisor's name and email address
(http://www.kfu.edu.sa/ar/Deans/E-LEARNING/Pages/graduation_project.aspx).
Thank you for taking the time to read the instructions. We wish you all the best with your studies and look forward to reading your works.

Best wishes,
Graduation project supervisors

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Graduation Project - Dr. Feda Al-Tamimi
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