

Investigación en la Enseñanza del Inglés II

Código 5184

Guía de estudio para el libro
PRACTICAL RESEARCH.
PLANNING AND DESIGN
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I. INTRODUCTION

Investigación II is a theoretical-practical course which focuses on the study of the basic elements of research and will lead the students to formulate and implement a final research project. This course is taught through an eclectic teaching methodology and that is the reason why opportunities for both, distance learning and class work, are provided.

Each student does readings and book exercises independently. Then, work is done at the workshops, which are mandatory, through class discussion, exercises and practices. In that sense, the classroom becomes a research environment where the students feel confident and share their work and findings with the tutor and classmates. Finally, at the practical dimension, it is expected that the students work directly in an educational institution to put into practice their projects.

II. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

The contents of Investigación II provide the students with the training needed to design research projects that contribute with their development as future English teachers.

The course, which belongs in the *Bloque L de la Licenciatura*, introduces the students to the practical aspects of research. Action Research turns into a useful tool for teachers to improve their practice and provides the necessary training to develop a concise final research project.

The methodology of this course consists of distance learning activities as well as classroom instruction. Through distance learning, the students will study individually and do the assigned readings and exercises. Throughout the course, the students will be instructed to work on a final research project as the main assignment and they must constantly work and show their progress to the tutor.

There are four compulsory workshops where the pupils will engage in collaborative work through different activities that will be checked by the instructor. Also, they will put into practice the concepts studied independently.

The book from Investigation I (*Practical Research. Planning and Design*) will be used in this course as a general reference. However, other materials from digital sources will also be available. Through constant effort and work, the students will be able to present at the end of the semester a precise and coherent document based on the APA format that includes the project done in *Investigación I* altogether with the new assignments for this course.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- Provide the students with the basic elements of research.
- Develop a solid foundation in educational research as well as in the drafting and writing of final reports.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Master the basis and know the characteristics of the processes of qualitative and quantitative research, the different types of studies, and the design of research instruments, their uses and application.
- Get familiar with the steps of the action research and its value in the learning environments.
- Write down an accurate methodological framework that includes all elements and objectives of the project.
- Use different research techniques and approaches to collect information through the use of designed instruments.
- Arrive at conclusions and give recommendations.
- Write a project report based on the APA style.

III. FIRST WORKSHOP

- A. What is research?
- B. Action research

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Put into practice the elements and features of quantitative or qualitative research processes, types of study, and the design of the appropriate tools.
- Acquire the principles of action research for its implementation in the educational processes.

A. What is research?

Readings

How to Do Action Research by Francis Rust and Christopher Clark (Additional PDF Document provided by the tutor)

Activities

Activity 1

Double check the quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In chart 1, summarize their main characteristics. Decide what they have in common. Justify your answers. Share your findings with the rest of the group in the workshop.

Chart 1. Characteristics of qualitative and quantitative methodologies

| Qualitative Methodology | Quantitative Methodology |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| | |

Activity 2

What is a Hypothesis?

Fill in the lines with the information required.

Remember that *“Research originates with a question or problem.”*

“A hypothesis is a logical supposition, a reasonable guess, an educated conjecture.”

(Leedy, 2010, p. 4.)

- Write your research question here.

- Write your hypothesis here.

Activity 3

Take a look at your work from Investigation 1, analyze it and then answer the following questions.

a. Does it need improvement? Why or why not?

b. How can you make it more accurate and reliable?

c. What information do you think is missing?

d. Which research instruments did you choose and why?

e. Describe all your instruments and state why they are useful to your investigation. Are they valid and reliable? Explain.

f. Define the following types of study.

- Exploration

- Description

- Explanation

- History

- Experiment

h. Which of the studies in item 6 is the closest in meaning to your own study? Why?

B. Action Research

All these activities are based on the reading *How to Do Action Research* assigned for this workshop.

Activity 1

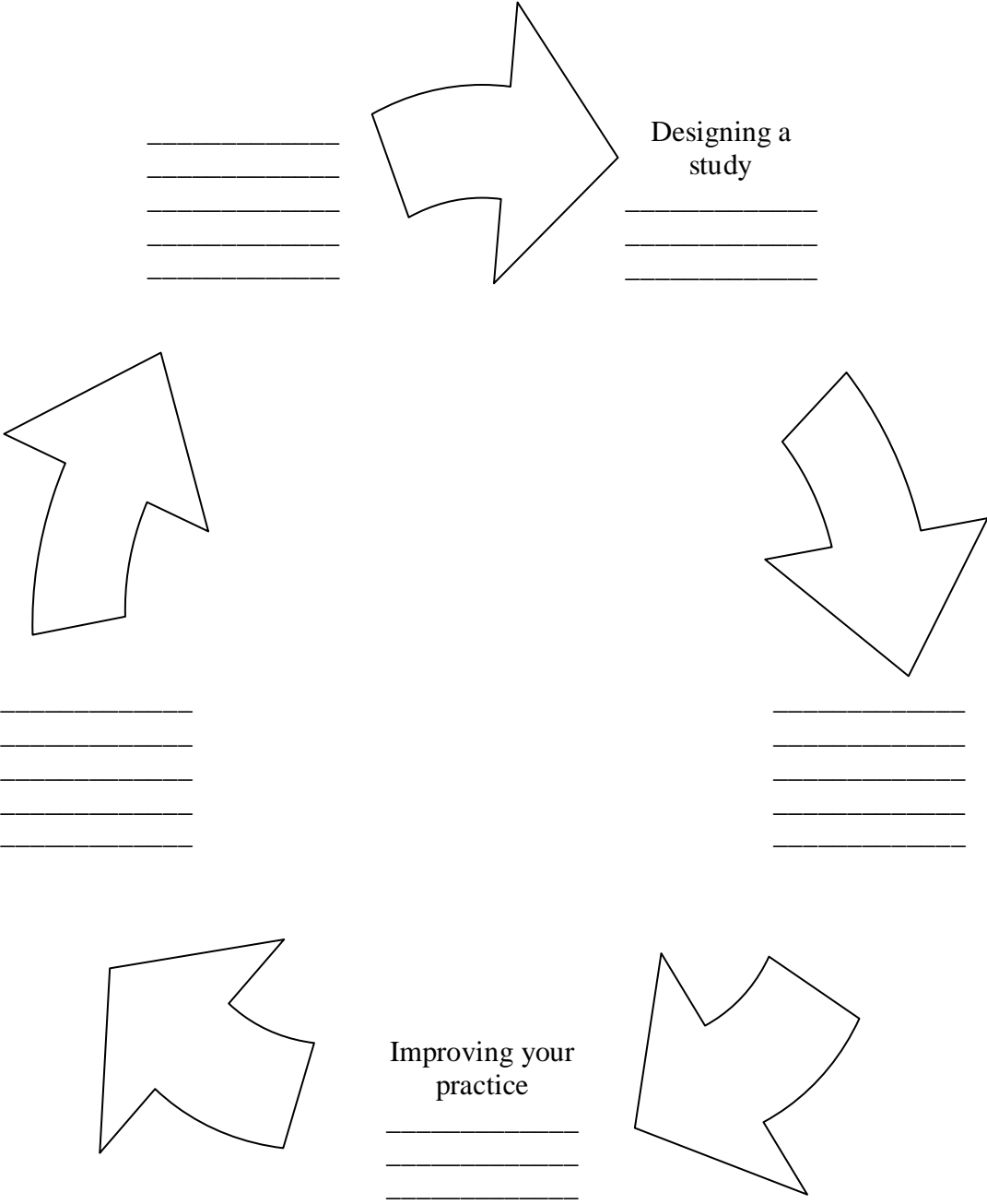
Answer the following questions.

a. What is action research?

b. Why is it important in teaching?

c. What are the 5 stages of action research? Complete the diagram.

Diagram 1. Stages of action research



Activity 2

1. Making the commitment to inquire

Think about your own educational practice and answer these questions.

a. What is or is not working in your classroom, in your teaching?

b. Who is learning?

c. Who is being left out?

d. How does your school curriculum provide opportunity to learn? Do you ever feel like you cannot deal with and implement it? Why or why not? Explain.

2. *Designing a study*

a. Use chart 2 to make a list of 10 questions and topics that you have about students or your teaching, or both.

Chart 2

| | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 2. |
| 3. | 4. |
| 5. | 6. |
| 7. | 8. |
| 9. | 10. |

b. Analyze your questions and topics painstakingly. Share them with your tutor and classmates at the workshop and think which one will be the most useful to study and then grow it to make it totally researchable. Write your research question on the lines provided.

Remember that everyday tools of inquiry in action research are:

- Classroom maps
- Anecdotal records
- Time-sampled observations
- Samples of student work
- Drawings and photographs
- Interviews and conversations surveys
- Teacher research journals

Activity 3

a. Choose three of the instruments listed above. Spend at least two weeks collecting your data in your own classroom. If you are not working yet, you will have to ask for permission at a primary school institution to carry out your action research.

b. Once you have gathered your data, analyze it and then write a report on the results.

Remember that to report on the results of your analysis, you should:

- Describe the action(s) that you took.
 - Reflect on the evidence you have collected.
 - Count. Look for patterns.
 - Share the evidence with colleagues.
 - Examine what different explanations could explain the data (draw on prior research).
 - Revisit assumptions about the children and the learning situation.
 - Formulate a trial explanation.
 - Develop an argument with evidence and claims.
-

Activity 4

Improving your practice

a. Based on the data collected, discuss the following questions with your classmates.

- Did you arrive at valid conclusions?
- How can your findings help you improve your teaching?
- What information can help others improve their teaching?

b. The following two groups of questions belong in the reading *How to Do Action Research*. Discuss them in groups.

- Does the evidence support your claims?
- Do your colleagues find your argument credible?
- How does the argument fit into ongoing debates and conversations?
- What is unique about your setting or context?
- Will others find your argument useful?

Activity 5

Beginning again-New and better questions. Discuss with your classmates the following questions.

- Was your question answered?
- Is the information collected useful?
- Is there a much better way to ask your question?
- Did you come up with new questions? Which ones?

IV. SECOND WORKSHOP

Developing a methodological framework

MAIN OBJECTIVE

- Develop a methodological framework that includes all the corresponding elements according to the selected approach and the objectives.

Activities

Activity 1

Look at the picture below and afterwards discuss the following questions with your classmates.

1. What does the illustration show about research?
2. What are some of the problems that we face in investigation?
3. How should we conduct our research?

Take some notes:



Borrowed from <http://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/RCRintro/c01/0c1.html>.

Before you start working on this section, remember that your methodological framework must include:

- The classification of the research approach (Qualitative or quantitative, or a mixture of both?)
- Participants (Where are you conducting your research? How many and who are your participants? What is the context of the study? What are your sources of information?)
- The analysis category (Define specific concepts.)
- The delimitation of the study (How deep is your study?)
- The description of research techniques and instruments
- The strategies to analyze the information

Activity 2

Read carefully the information provided in the following box and then consider the questions below.

Methods:

The Method section is very important because it tells (...) how you plan to tackle your research problem. It will provide your work plan and describe the activities necessary for the completion of your project.

The guiding principle for writing the Method section is that it should contain sufficient information for the reader to determine whether methodology is sound. Some even argue that a good proposal should contain sufficient details for another qualified researcher to implement the study.

You need to demonstrate your knowledge of alternative methods and make the case that your approach is the most appropriate and most valid way to address your research question.

Please note that your research question may be best answered by qualitative research. However, since most mainstream psychologists are still biased against qualitative research, especially the phenomenological variety, you may need to justify your qualitative method.

Furthermore, since there are no well-established and widely accepted canons in qualitative analysis, your method section needs to be more elaborate than what is required for traditional quantitative research. More importantly, the data collection process in qualitative research has a far greater impact on the results as compared to quantitative research. That is another reason for greater care in describing how you will collect and analyze your data. (How to write the Method section for qualitative research is a topic for another paper.)

For quantitative studies, the method section typically consists of the following sections:

1. *Design* - Is it a questionnaire study or a laboratory experiment? What kind of design do you choose?
2. *Subjects or participants* - Who will take part in your study? What kind of sampling procedure do you use?
3. *Instruments* - What kind of measuring instruments or questionnaires do you use? Why do you choose them? Are they valid and reliable?
4. *Procedure* - How do you plan to carry out your study? What activities are involved? How long does it take?

Information borrowed and adapted from: International Network on Personal Meaning
<http://www.meaning.ca/archives/archive/art_how_to_write_P_Wong.htm>.

1. What is the purpose of your research?
2. What type of research is it?
3. Who is your population?
4. How deep is your study going to be?
5. What instruments are you going to use to gather the information?
6. How are you going to analyze the information?
7. What do you expect to learn?

Activity 3

Describe the type of research you are going to do. Is it quantitative, qualitative or a combination of both approaches? Justify your answer. Provide as much detail as you can.

Activity 4

Think about your target population. Who are they? How many? What are the sexes and ages? Why are you interested in them? What is their economic or social status? Include all the necessary information for readers to have a clear picture of who you are working with? What is their context? What are your sources of information?

Activity 5

Think about the concepts your readers need to know to be able to understand your final report. For example, if you are investigating *The intellectual disability in the English classroom*, you might need to define “intellectual disability”, “English classroom”, “mental challenges” ... and other terms related to the topic you are working on. Think about at least five concepts to define.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Activity 6

Think about how deep your study is. What kind of information are you looking for?
How explicit and specific do you want to be?

Activity 7

Describe your research instruments. How many do you have? Why did you pick them? How are they useful? What information do you expect to gather through their use? Why?

Activity 8

How are you going to analyze the information? What procedures are you going to follow? What do you expect to find out?

V. THIRD WORKSHOP

Data Collection and Analysis

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Apply all the research instruments developed for data collection.
- Analyze the information obtained from the research, draw conclusions and give recommendations.

Readings

1. Chapter 11: Strategies for Analyzing Quantitative Data, pp. 253-290.
2. Appendix A: Using a Spreadsheet: Microsoft Excel, pp. 312-318.

Activities

Activity 1

Data collection

Which research instruments from the following list are you going to work with? Put a check mark next to them and then answer the questions that follow.

- A questionnaire
- An interview
- A survey
- A diary
- An observation sheet
- The Likert scale
- The Guttman scale
- Other _____

a. Why did you choose them?

b. Why are they relevant to your research?

c. What type of information do you think you will be able to collect with them?

Activity 2

List and describe your instruments in chart 3. Then mention some of their uses and the type of information you expect to collect through them.

Chart 3. Instruments

| Instruments | 1. | 2. | 3. |
|------------------|----|----|----|
| Description | | | |
| Uses | | | |
| Expected outcome | | | |

Activity 3

Verify your instruments with your tutor and classmates and then answer the following questions.

a. Are your instruments and procedures objective? Why or why not?

b. Are they reliable? Why or why not?

c. Are they valid? Why or why not?

Activity 4

Once your instruments are verified, proceed to ask for the corresponding permission to administer them in an institution. See *las Orientaciones del curso* for further instructions. Organize and classify your instruments and get ready to analyze the data collected. Check your work with your tutor.

Activity 5

Use a spreadsheet, diagrams, charts, flow charts, conceptual maps, diaries or other resources to record and recode your quantitative information. Have your tutor check your work. Tabulate your information.

Activity 6

Once your information has been tabulated, establish relationships between the data obtained and the research question or hypothesis stated. Think about the following questions.

- What information is significant or meaningful?
- Which specific data answer to your questions?

Activity 7

Summarize the research's findings. What is the most relevant information? How can you organize it so that it makes sense?

Activity 8

Provide conclusions based on the findings. What are your conclusions? Do they relate to your research question? Are they linked to your hypothesis? If that is so, in what ways?

Activity 9

Detail how the results of your study are connected to the findings described in your Literature Review.

Activity 10

Based on your conclusions and results, contribute with substantial and methodological recommendations. What can you and others do to improve their teaching practices based on your conclusions?

VI. FOURTH WORKSHOP

Writing the Final Report

MAIN OBJECTIVE

- Present a final report based on the APA format.

Readings

Chapter 12: Technical Details: Style, Format, and Organization of the Research Report, pp. 291-311.

Activities

Activity 1
Write in general terms the APA rules for research reports. At the workshop, discuss your findings with your classmates and the professor. Use the following space.

Activity 2
Read again Chapter 12 carefully. In this course, you will have to develop a complete research. Your final research report will include both your previous work and the results of your investigation.

1. Front matter
 - Title page
 - Abstract
 - Acknowledgments
 - Table of contents
 - List of tables (if any)
 - List of figures (if any)

2. Body of the report

1. Chapter I. INTRODUCTION

2. Chapter II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

3. Chapter III. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The classification of the research approach:

- The classification of the research approach (Qualitative or quantitative, or a mixture of both?)
- Participants (Where are you conducting your research? How many and who are your participants? What is the context of the study? What are your sources of information?)
- The analysis category (Define specific concepts.)
- The delimitation of the study (How deep is your study?)
- The description of research techniques and instruments
- The strategies to analyze the information

4. Chapter IV. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA COLLECTED

- Include independent analysis of each set of instruments used

5. Chapter V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop at least three conclusions
- Develop at least three recommendations

6. Chapter VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ANNEXES

- List all your sources
- Include your research instruments here
- Include any other relevant material here

Activity 3

Use the following checklist from pp. 307-308 of the textbook to check your work report and assess your writing.

- Is everything complete?
- Did you miss anything?
- Did you proof-read your study?
- Did you check for correct grammar and spelling?
- Did you use the correct format?
- Did you number all the pages?

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