

# General practice

## Activity I: formulating research questions

Technology and Language Learning  
Reading Comprehension Strategies  
Writing Skills Development  
Listening Comprehension Challenges  
Speaking Fluency Development  
Cultural Influence on Language Learning  
First Language Interference  
Online Learning vs. Classroom Learning  
Teacher Feedback and Student Progress  
Role of Family Support in Language Learning  
Influence of Peer Interaction on Language Practice  
Learning Styles in Language Acquisition  
Group Work vs. Individual Learning in ESL  
Assessment Methods in Language Classes  
Role of Games and Interactive Activities in Learning  
Impact of Teacher-Student Relationships on Language Acquisition  
Bilingualism and Its Effects on Cognitive Skills  
Phonological Awareness in Young ESL Learners  
Retention of Language Skills Over Time

### Instructions

1. **Choose a General Topic:** Select three topics that interests you from the list provided.
2. **Identify Variables:** For each topic, consider the following variables:
  - **Challenge/Factor** – Identify a particular difficulty or factor within the topic (e.g., motivation, anxiety, access to resources).
  - **Setting** – Specify where the research takes place (e.g., classroom, online learning, community).
  - **Language Skill** – Select a language skill relevant to the topic (e.g., speaking, listening, reading, writing).
  - **Population** – Define the group of people involved in the research (e.g., high school students, adult learners, beginners).
3. **Formulate a Research Question:** Use the selected variables to write a research question that is specific and researchable.

### Example

- **General Topic:** Technology and Language Learning
- **Variables:**
  - **Challenge/Factor:** Frequency of technology use
  - **Setting:** Online classroom
  - **Language Skill:** Vocabulary retention
  - **Population:** College-level ESL students
- **Research Question:** How does the frequency of technology use in an online classroom setting affect vocabulary retention among college-level ESL students?

### Activity Table

**Instructions:** Complete the table below by choosing variables and creating a research question for each topic.

General Topic	Challenge/Factor	Setting	Language Skill	Population	Research Question
Motivation in Language Learning					
Pronunciation Challenges					
Grammar Learning Difficulties					
Vocabulary Acquisition					
Social Media and Language Use					

**Activity II:**

Complete the table below to link your research questions, variables, and hypotheses. Use your previously refined research questions or choose from the examples provided.

Refined Research Question	Independent Variable (IV)	Dependent Variable (DV)	Hypothesis
How does social media use influence code-switching in bilingual young adults?	Frequency of social media use	Code-switching behavior	If bilingual young adults use social media frequently, then their code-switching behavior will increase because they are exposed to mixed language contexts.
How does anxiety during exams affect speaking fluency in teenage ESL learners?	Level of exam anxiety	Speaking fluency	
What factors motivate adult ESL learners to improve their speaking skills?	Availability of peer support	Speaking skill improvement	
How does using flashcards impact vocabulary retention in high school ESL students?	Use of flashcards (yes/no)	Vocabulary retention	

**Activity III**

- Choose three undone topics from activity I and formulate their research questions. Afterwards, formulate a hypothesis for every research question.

**Answer key****Activity I: Formulating Research Questions**

General Topic	Challenge/Factor	Setting	Language Skill	Population	Research Question
<b>Motivation in Language Learning</b>	Lack of peer interaction	Classroom	Speaking	Adult ESL learners	How does the lack of peer interaction in a classroom setting influence the speaking skills of adult ESL learners?
<b>Pronunciation Challenges</b>	Anxiety in public speaking	Community workshops	Pronunciation	High school ESL learners	How does anxiety in public speaking during community workshops affect the pronunciation of high school ESL learners?
<b>Grammar Learning Difficulties</b>	Use of interactive software	Online learning	Grammar	College-level beginners	How does the use of interactive software in online learning settings improve grammar acquisition among college-level ESL beginners?
<b>Vocabulary Acquisition</b>	Use of word games	Classroom	Vocabulary	Elementary school learners	How does the use of word games in the classroom affect vocabulary acquisition among elementary school ESL learners?
<b>Social Media and Language Use</b>	Exposure to informal language	Social media groups	Writing	Bilingual university students	How does exposure to informal language on social media platforms influence academic writing skills in bilingual university students?

**Rationale for the Answer**

Each component—challenge/factor, setting, language skill, and population—is carefully selected to guide in narrowing their focus while considering the practical and theoretical aspects of the research. Below is the rationale for each aspect:

**1. Selecting Challenges/Factors**

- The challenges or factors highlight specific issues within the general topics, making them manageable and relevant to real-world problems.
- Examples like *lack of peer interaction* or *anxiety* are relevant and widely recognized as challenges in language learning, encouraging students to think critically about potential obstacles.

**Why This Matters:**

Identifying specific challenges ensures the research question targets a precise problem, increasing its relevance and feasibility.

**2. Identifying the Setting**

- The settings provide contextual boundaries for the research, such as classrooms, online learning environments, or community workshops.
- Settings are essential for defining the scope of research, helping students consider where the research will be applied.

**Why This Matters:**

Research must be grounded in a specific context to ensure clarity and applicability. For example, studying *pronunciation challenges in community workshops* reflects a practical scenario where language learners face speaking anxiety.

**3. Selecting Language Skills**

- Language skills like speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary acquisition are chosen based on their relevance to the identified challenge or factor.
- This ensures the research question aligns with a measurable outcome.

**Why This Matters:**

Defining the specific skill helps focus the study on observable and assessable outcomes, such as *vocabulary acquisition* or *speaking fluency*.

**4. Defining the Population**

- Populations such as *adult learners*, *high school students*, or *college beginners* are specified to provide clarity on the target group.
- The population also reflects practical considerations, such as age, proficiency level, or educational context.

**Why This Matters:**

A well-defined population allows for a more targeted approach, ensuring the results are relevant to the group being studied.

**5. Formulating Research Questions**

- The research questions follow a specific, clear, and researchable format that connects the challenge, setting, skill, and population.
- For example, *How does the lack of peer interaction in a classroom setting influence the speaking skills of adult ESL learners?* is clear, concise, and actionable.

**Why This Matters:**

Clear research questions guide the research design, methodology, and analysis. They ensure the study is achievable and avoids being overly broad or vague.

**Activity II: Writing Hypotheses**

Refined Research Question	Independent Variable (IV)	Dependent Variable (DV)	Hypothesis
How does social media use influence code-switching in bilingual young adults?	Frequency of social media use	Code-switching behavior	If bilingual young adults use social media frequently, then their code-switching behavior will increase because they are exposed to mixed language contexts.
How does anxiety during exams affect speaking fluency in teenage ESL learners?	Level of exam anxiety	Speaking fluency	If teenage ESL learners experience high levels of exam anxiety, then their speaking fluency will decrease because anxiety affects their confidence and articulation.
What factors motivate adult ESL learners to improve their speaking skills?	Availability of peer support	Speaking skill improvement	If adult ESL learners have access to strong peer support, then their speaking skills will improve because peers provide encouragement and practice opportunities.
How does using flashcards impact vocabulary retention in high school ESL students?	Use of flashcards (yes/no)	Vocabulary retention	If high school ESL students use flashcards regularly, then their vocabulary retention will improve because repetition and visual aids enhance memory.

### Rationale for the Answer

The responses demonstrate a clear link between each research question and its corresponding variables. The hypotheses are written in the "if-then-because" format to ensure clarity and logical reasoning:

- **IV and DV:** Each hypothesis clearly identifies the independent variable (the condition being manipulated) and the dependent variable (the outcome being observed).
- **Reasoning:** The "because" clause provides a rationale for the expected relationship between the variables, reinforcing critical thinking and understanding of cause-effect relationships in research.

### Activity II: Writing Hypotheses

#### Step 1: Choosing Three Undone Topics and Formulating Research Questions

General Topic	Challenge/Factor	Setting	Language Skill	Population	Research Question
<b>Role of Family Support in Language Learning</b>	Lack of parental involvement	Home environment	Speaking	Young ESL learners	How does a lack of parental involvement in the home environment impact the speaking skills of young ESL learners?
<b>Impact of Teacher-Student Relationships on Language Acquisition</b>	Quality of teacher-student rapport	Classroom	Overall language skills	High school ESL students	How does the quality of teacher-student relationships in the classroom influence overall language skills in high school ESL students?
<b>Retention of Language Skills Over Time</b>	Limited practice opportunities	Community environment	Vocabulary retention	Adult ESL learners	How do limited practice opportunities in the community environment affect vocabulary retention among adult ESL learners?

#### Step 2: Writing Hypotheses

Research Question	Independent Variable (IV)	Dependent Variable (DV)	Hypothesis
How does a lack of parental involvement in the home environment impact the speaking skills of young ESL learners?	Level of parental involvement	Speaking skills	If young ESL learners experience minimal parental involvement in the home, then their speaking skills will develop more slowly because they lack at-home practice and support.
How does the quality of teacher-student relationships in the classroom influence overall language skills in high school ESL students?	Quality of teacher-student rapport	Overall language skills	If teacher-student relationships are positive and supportive, then high school ESL students will improve their language skills because trust and encouragement foster better engagement.

How do limited practice opportunities in the community environment affect vocabulary retention among adult ESL learners?	Frequency of community practice opportunities	Vocabulary retention	If adult ESL learners have limited opportunities for practice in the community, then their vocabulary retention will decline because consistent use reinforces memory.
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### Explanation of Variables in the Hypotheses

- **Independent Variable (IV):** The variable manipulated or examined for its impact (e.g., parental involvement, teacher-student rapport, practice frequency).
- **Dependent Variable (DV):** The variable measured as an outcome (e.g., speaking skills, overall language skills, vocabulary retention).
- **Hypotheses:** Each hypothesis uses the "if-then-because" structure to predict the relationship between the IV and DV, supported by logical reasoning based on the research question.