Level: L2	Module: Research Methodology	Teacher: Ms. Ghennai
Groups:01- 06	Academic Year: 2020/2021	

Literature Review
Reading the Literature on a Topic

Reading Strategically

You should not read everything you locate about your topic; rather, you need to recognize the more important authors or texts. Browsing the bookshelves in the library and the electronic resources can help you recognize 'central works' and 'central authors'. Select the most important works and the most recent ones. After selecting what to read, identify the sections that relate to your topic within the book or the article. Being selective in one's reading and prioritizing reading tasks help prevent the reading load from becoming overwhelming.

Task 4: Explain how Reading academic material is very different from reading other text types such as fiction, newspaper texts or Internet sites.

Reading a Book

It is important to develop effective reading strategies for approaching an academic book

1- Try to gain an overall view of what the book is about; what question or questions the author is trying to answer; how the book is structured; and whether, in fact, the questions tackled and the answers put forward are relevant to your needs. You can do this by scanning the cover or jacket, the preface (if any), the list of contents, and the index.
2- If the book is relevant to your research subject, then you must decide on the question or questions that you anticipate will be answered in the book.
3- Review the book to look for answers for your questions. This involves locating the parts of the book where your questions are dealt with.
4- Most chapters will have a title (some chapters begin with a chapter summary or *Abstract*) and section headings may be used within the chapter. If so, leaf through the chapter identifying the headings and skim read the first few sentences of each subsection. After obtaining a general idea of what the chapter covers, it will be easier to locate relevant sections.
5- Try to identify the general idea that the author wants to express, any important *terms* and their *definitions* that are used and useful examples that help you follow the discussion. You must then look for the answers or conclusions that the author has drawn, and also at how the author arrived at them. You will also look at arguments and evidence put forward to support the views expressed and you will make an attempt to assess the validity of the evidence and the structure of the argument which utilizes such evidence. There are, however, cases where conclusions are unsupported, arguments or evidence are non-existent, or sometimes there is no conclusion at all.
6- Supposing that you have extracted the relevant information from the written report, you must now record your data in note form, so that later you can retrieve it.

Reading a Journal Article

The organization of information in a journal article is very structured. It is common to find section headings throughout the article; these may also be numbered. As these section headings signal where particular information is located, reading the entire article from beginning to end may not be necessary in the first instance. It may be enough to read several sections in detail, before using the reading strategies of skimming and scanning to identify pertinent information from the other sections.

Even when reading the entire article, it is not necessary to read each section in the given order in which it appears. Approaches to reading vary depending on the text and individual preferences.

The **Abstract** (if one exists) is the logical starting point. This is a selective, focused overview of what the study was about and the methods and type of data used, and may include a brief indication of the results. As such, it allows the reader to quickly pinpoint information such as where the study was done, who the participants were, how data were

collected and what theoretical approach was used. Its purpose is to allow readers to evaluate whether the topic of the article is relevant to their needs and whether they should read further.

If the article appears useful, two other important sections to look at early on are the *Introduction* and the *Conclusion*. The **Introduction** will tell you how the author has contextualized or framed the study, and how it relates to other published work; it will likely also include the research question(s).

The **Conclusion,** of course, will usually tell you more about what the author actually did in the study and how the results were interpreted, but it might also provide suggestions for new research questions.

Some Conclusions may be very short and they may not contain useful information about the main findings; in this case, you may have to look at the previous section, the **Discussion** (if there is one), or the last few paragraphs of the Results section where the author may summarize the main findings. In their attempt to interpret the findings, authors will endeavour to address questions such as the following:

• How should we understand these results?
• How do these results relate to the findings of previous studies?
• How can we apply this new understanding?
• Do these findings leave any questions unanswered?
• Do the findings lead to more questions?

After reading these previous sections, turn to the **Methods** and **Results** sections to learn more about how the study was conducted and details of the results:

• Where was the study done?
• What sorts of data were used in the study?
• If data were collected from people (participants), who were they?
• If texts were used, how were they chosen? What type of text? How many?
• What did the participants have to do?
• How was their performance evaluated?
• If texts were analysed, how was this analysis done?
• What were the results?
• Did these results provide a clear answer to the research question(s)?

The **Literature Review** (this section may have an alternative title such as *Background*) contains a description of what previous studies have found and, perhaps, how the studies were conducted. By reading the overview of previous research, you will likely learn about other articles or books relevant to your research project. Indeed, examining author citations in the literature we read is an important way to identify additional bibliographic resources.

Task5: Do you think reading the different sections of a journal article in the previously mentioned order is effective and strategic? Discuss.

Task 6: How are these sections ordered in a journal article?

Task 7: The following abstract is taken from a published article. Read it and identify the following information.
   • the research question(s) or topic;
   • reference to a theory or an approach used in the study;
   • motivation for the study;
   • background information relevant to the study;
   • information about how the author did the study;
   • an indication of the findings;
   • an indication of how the results were analysed;
   • an indication of how the findings could be interpreted (i.e. do they confirm or disconfirm previous findings?);
   • an indication of the study's implications and recommendations.

Abstract

The relationship between digital game play and second language (L2) learning is a particularly tricky issue in East Asia. Though there is an emerging presence of Chinese online games, many more young people are playing the English- or Japanese-language versions of the most popular commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) video games. In other words, most Chinese gamers are playing L2 digital games in their leisure time. Informed by research on out-of-class L2 learning, this paper discusses findings from an exploratory study investigating L2 gaming and learning practices in young people's everyday lives. Drawing on rich data from gaming sessions, stimulated recall, focus group discussion, individual interviews and online discussion forums, this paper argues that gamers exercise autonomy by managing their gameplay both as leisure and learning practices in different dimensions (location, formality, locus of control, pedagogy and trajectory). At the same time, gameplay-as-learning practices are supported by wider communities of digital gamers who take on roles as language teachers and advisers. The paper discusses the research and pedagogical implications for L2 gaming and learning.

Keywords: Learner Autonomy, Second Language Acquisition, Computer-Assisted Language Learning.