

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra  
Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of Arabic Language and Literature

**PEDAGOGICAL HANDOUT**

# **Research Methodology**

for Master One Students

Specialty: Modern and Contemporary Criticism

**by: Dr. Saliha SEBGAG**

Academic Year: 2026/2025

عنوان الماستر: نقد حديث ومعاصر

السداسي: الأول

اسم الوحدة: المنهجية

اسم المادة: منهجية البحث

الرصيد: 3

المعامل: 2

محتوى المادة:



المحاضرات:

1- المحاضرة الأولى: البحث العلمي وشروطه

- تعريف البحث العلمي

- أنواع البحوث العلمية

- شروط البحث العلمي

2- المحاضرة الثانية: الباحث وشروطه

- تعريف الباحث

- شروط الباحث

- خطة البحث

3- المحاضرة الثالثة: مرحلة إعداد البحث:

- الإعداد الأولي للمصادر والمراجع (الببليوغرافيا)

- تدوين المراجع على البطاقات

- مرحلة القراءة

- مرحلة جمع المادة (التهييش)

- تنظيم البطاقات



مسؤول فريق ميدان التكوين لغة وأدب عربي

د. هويدا ل. باديس

**Master's Program Title: Modern and Contemporary Criticism**

**Semester: First**

**Module Title: Methodology**

**Course Title: Research Methodology 1**

**Credits: 3**

**Coefficient: 2**

**Course Content:**

**Lectures :**

**1-Lecture One :** Scientific Research and Its Requirements:

- Definition of scientific research
- Types of scientific research
- Requirements of scientific research

**2-Lecture Two:** The Researcher and Their Qualifications:

- Definition of the researcher
- Qualifications of the researcher
- Research plan

**3 -Lecture Three:** The Research Preparation Stage:

- Preliminary preparation of sources and references (bibliography)
- Recording references on index cards
- The reading stage
- The data collection stage (gathering materials)
- Organizing the index cards

مسؤول فريق ميدان التكوين لغة و أَدب عربي

محمد خضير بادييس



الممسوحة ضوئيا بـ CamScanner

## Introduction

The module “Research Methodology” is one of the core modules. It is designed for first-year Master’s students. It targets the Modern and Contemporary Criticism program. It is a central support in building the student’s academic identity. It also prepares the student to move from consuming knowledge to producing it. This must be done using solid scientific rules.

This teaching booklet responds to an urgent need. It offers a clear and complete methodological framework. It helps students gain the theoretical and practical foundations of scientific research. It helps them understand what research is. It also helps them grasp its stages. It trains them to respect its conditions. And it guides them to use its tools correctly. It also aims to address recurring methodological problems seen in university research. These problems often relate to the research question, defining concepts, choosing methods, analyzing results, and academic referencing.

This module is based on a clear view. Scientific research is an organized knowledge activity. It depends on systematic questioning. It requires critical thinking. It needs careful analysis. And it demands respect for research ethics. So, teaching research methodology is not about memorizing formal steps. It is about building a research mindset. A mindset that questions data, tests hypotheses, and reaches justified conclusions. Conclusions should also be open to scientific discussion.

The booklet covers several key issues, such as:

- Defining the concept of scientific research. It also explains its features and functions.

- Presenting types of research, based on academic level and adopted methods.
- Identifying the conditions of scientific research and its quality standards.
- Introducing the researcher and their scientific and ethical qualities.
- Explaining how to prepare a research plan and formulate the research problem.
- Clarifying academic writing rules and scientific documentation standards.

In preparing this booklet, clear academic language was used. The structure is gradual and student-friendly. It combines theory with practice. This matches the requirements of the **(L.M.D)** system (*Licence–Master–Doctorate*). It also aligns with quality standards used in Algerian higher education institutions.

### **First: General objectives of the module**

The module “Scientific Research Methodology” aims to achieve the following general objectives:

1. Help the student understand the nature of scientific research and its role in building knowledge.
2. Provide the student with the basic principles that govern research work in different fields.
3. Train the student to respect methodological and ethical rules in academic work.
4. Prepare the student to produce university research that meets approved scientific standards.

### **Second: Specific objectives (procedural)**

By the end of this module, the student is expected to be able to:

1. Define scientific research and explain its features and types.
2. Distinguish between academic research levels (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate) in terms of requirements and method.
3. Formulate a clear, specific research problem that can be handled scientifically.
4. Define the study's objectives and its hypotheses or research questions accurately.
5. Choose the appropriate method for the topic and justify that choice scientifically.
6. Use research tools correctly (questionnaire, interview, text analysis, etc.).
7. Prepare a complete research plan with coherent elements and structure.
8. Follow approved citation styles, such as **(APA)**, **(MLA)**, or others depending on the field.
9. Present results and analyze them in an organized academic style.
10. Avoid all forms of plagiarism. Commit to academic honesty and integrity.

### **Third: Targeted competencies**

This module belongs to methodological modules. It aims to develop **cross-cutting (Transversales)** competencies and specialized competencies. They can be summarized as follows:

#### **1. Cognitive competencies (Savoir)**

- Familiarity with the basic concepts of scientific research.
- Knowledge of research methods and the key features of each one.
- Understanding research quality standards and the conditions it must meet.
- Awareness of the importance of referencing and research ethics.

## 2. Methodological and practical skills (Savoir-faire)

- The ability to identify problems and formulate research questions.
- Skill in building a coherent and complete research plan.
- The ability to analyze data and draw conclusions.
- Efficient use of research tools and data-collection techniques.
- Writing an academic text in clear, correct, and well-organized scientific language.

### Fourth: The importance of the module in the training pathway

This module is a key link in the student's training pathway. It forms the basis for preparing the Master's thesis. It is also an essential foundation for continuing research at the doctoral level. It helps strengthen a scientific culture built on analysis and critique, instead of relying only on passive reception and memorization.

For this reason, the module is not seen as an isolated theoretical subject. It is viewed as practical training in producing knowledge through a disciplined methodology. It enables the student to integrate effectively into the academic community. It also supports the development of scientific research, inside and outside the Algerian university.

In preparing this material, we aimed to present its content through a gradual scientific approach. It combines theoretical grounding with practical guidance. This matches the requirements of the **(L.M.D)** system (*Licence-Master-Doctorate*). It also matches the module outline set by the field coordinator. It aligns as well with quality standards adopted in higher education institutions. We also took into account the specificity of the specialization and the students' real

needs when writing their university research. The goal is to overcome recurring methodological problems. And to strengthen critical thinking and organized analysis skills.

As we place this booklet in the hands of first-year Master's students in Modern and Contemporary Criticism, we hope it will be a helpful academic support in their training journey. We also hope it will contribute to building an aware research identity. One that can produce serious and responsible knowledge that serves the university and society.

And God is the Grantor of success.

## **Lecture 1: Scientific Research and Its Conditions**

1. Definition of scientific research.
2. Types of scientific research.
3. Conditions for scientific research.

## **1–Definition of scientific research:**

Scientific research is one of the highest mental activities humans have developed. It helps us understand reality in an organized way. It also builds knowledge step by step. This knowledge can push both thought and society forward.

Research is not just technical steps. It is not only formal procedures. It is a complete thinking process. It rests on rational principles. It also has a moral and inner side. It begins with a real desire to understand. It comes from the feeling that what already exists is not enough. Even inherited “ready-made” knowledge is not enough.

When a researcher studies a phenomenon, they do more than describe it. They ask precise questions. They look for deeper meanings behind what appears on the surface. They trace causes, factors, and interactions. They follow a strict method. This method disciplines their thinking. It also protects them from bias and shallow conclusions.

Scientific research is also a purposeful effort to solve problems and improve human life, not just to collect information. It aims to produce new, reliable results that can be tested and used—whether in medicine, education, technology, or social development. For that reason, research depends on evidence and careful reasoning: the researcher gathers data, analyzes it, compares explanations, and accepts results only when they are supported by clear proof. In this way, scientific research becomes a bridge between what we *think* is true and what we can *prove* is true.

In addition, scientific research requires qualities that go beyond intelligence, such as patience, accuracy, and honesty. A researcher must be ready to revise their ideas if the evidence goes in a different direction, and they must report

findings transparently even if the results are unexpected. Research also grows through criticism and review, because knowledge becomes stronger when it is examined by others. So, scientific research is not an individual act only; it is part of a wider scientific community that builds knowledge over time and corrects itself whenever new facts appear.

**Scientific research has been defined as:**

“A study based on investigating and tracking a specific subject through a particular method, in order to achieve a specific aim. This aim may be adding something new, gathering scattered material, organizing mixed ideas, or other goals of scientific research.”<sup>1</sup>

In this sense, research is also an ethical practice. It requires intellectual honesty. It requires respect for truth. It needs patience with uncertainty. It demands continuous verification. It rejects rushing results. It also rejects fake certainty. It is a journey to discover the self and the world. A sincere researcher does not come back the same.

This definition highlights two key elements: method and purpose. Research is not random reading or general writing; it begins by selecting a clear topic, then following a systematic path such as observation, experimentation, analysis, and interpretation. At the same time, it is directed toward a meaningful goal—either producing new knowledge, correcting misconceptions, arranging ideas in a clearer way, or offering solutions to real problems. In other words, scientific research connects *organized thinking* with *useful outcomes* that can be shared, tested, and built upon by others.

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<sup>1</sup> – Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman bin Ali Al-Rubai‘ah, *Scientific Research: Its Reality, Sources, Material, Methods, Writing, Printing, and Discussion, 6th ed., Riyadh, 2012, p. 23*

This definition also implies that scientific research is a deliberate, goal-oriented effort: it starts with a limited subject, follows a chosen method, and ends with results that serve a clear purpose. That purpose may be innovation, organization, or problem-solving, but in all cases it requires disciplined investigation rather than casual opinion. Because the method is explicit and the aim is defined, the research becomes something that others can evaluate, verify, and extend—so it contributes to knowledge as a shared, cumulative human project.

**It was also defined as:**

“What is meant by scientific research is that you study a topic and reveal its truth and importance to people. In technical terms, it is the pursuit of truth, investigating it, and spreading it. In the book *Lisan al-‘Arab* by Ibn Manzur, research in language is defined as asking about something and seeking information. So, research in all its forms carries the meaning of reaching the truth and sharing it with people, or with those concerned.”<sup>2</sup>

If we look deeper, research is not only a tool to gain knowledge. It also helps us understand knowledge itself. How is knowledge built? What are its limits? What conditions make it valid?

A serious researcher does not chase the largest amount of information. They focus on producing reliable knowledge. Knowledge that can be tested. Knowledge that can be criticized. Knowledge that can be improved. This needs a strict methodology. It needs logical sequence. It needs discipline in collecting data. It needs rigor in analysis. It also needs openness to review and revision.

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<sup>2</sup> – Ayman Abu Al-Rus, *How to Write a Successful Research Paper: 25 Steps for Preparing University Research and Theses*, Dar Al-Tala’i’ for Publishing, Distribution, and Export, Riyadh, 2001, p. 7

This definition also shows that research has a linguistic and human meaning before it becomes an academic procedure: it is a careful search, a question asked with intention, and an effort to reach what is true and make it clear to others. So scientific research is not about repeating what people already say; it is about revealing the value of a topic, clarifying its reality, and presenting it in a way that can be understood and evaluated. In this way, research becomes both a personal effort to discover truth and a social responsibility to share it with those who need it.

**Scientific research has also been defined as:**

“A methodological means for the scientific and logical discovery and interpretation of phenomena, trends, and problems. It starts from hypotheses or assumptions that can be verified by following ways that achieve goals measurable through natural or social laws.”<sup>3</sup>

This methodology begins when the researcher notices a real or theoretical problem worth examining. Then they build a clear research problem. They formulate precise hypotheses or questions. They decide what data they need. They choose how to access it. Then they analyze it. They may use quantitative tools or qualitative tools, depending on the topic.

Seen from this angle, scientific research is closer to a guided investigation than a simple search for information. It works like a logical map: the researcher begins with a question or an assumption that *could be wrong*, then tests it using clear steps that allow others to check the results. What matters here is not only reaching an answer, but reaching an answer that is measurable, explainable, and connected to laws or patterns in nature or society. That is why hypotheses

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<sup>3</sup> – Aqeel Hussein Aqeel, *The Philosophy of Scientific Research Methods*, Madbouli Bookstore, 1st ed., Cairo, Egypt, 1999, p. 25

are central—they turn curiosity into something testable, and they protect the study from being just personal opinion or random impressions.

This definition emphasizes that research gains its scientific character when hypotheses are translated into observable indicators and tested against evidence within a clear analytical design. The researcher does not stop at proposing assumptions; they operationalize them (define what will count as evidence), choose procedures that can be repeated, and interpret findings within known patterns or laws in the natural or social world. In this way, hypotheses become a disciplined bridge between theory and data, allowing the study to move from plausible explanation to justified conclusion.

**Dr. Hussein Aqeel expressed this idea by saying:**

“Because research is a search for something absent. It is present yet absent from proof, and present in the mind. It is the organized scientific activity of recognizing the truth.”<sup>4</sup>

This statement captures the tension at the heart of scientific research: the researcher often begins with an idea that feels “present” as a possibility or intuition, yet it is still “absent” because it has not been supported by evidence. In other words, research starts in the mind as a question, a suspicion, or a tentative explanation—but it does not become knowledge until it is proven through organized steps.

That is why Dr. Aqeel links research to “recognizing the truth”: truth is not simply claimed, it is gradually approached through observation, testing, analysis, and verification. The value of research, then, lies in turning what is mentally imagined into what is scientifically demonstrated.

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<sup>4</sup> – Ibid., p. 25

## **2–Types of scientific research:**

Classifying research into clear types is a basic step. It helps us understand how knowledge is produced. It also helps us organize it. You cannot study a phenomenon well without choosing the right type of research. The diversity of research is not a cosmetic issue. It reflects diverse human questions. It reflects different fields. It also reflects different methods required by each topic.

So, knowing the types of scientific research helps the researcher choose the most suitable path for the topic. Each type has its own purpose and tools, and selecting the right one makes the study more accurate and the results more reliable. In this way, classification is not only a label, but a guide that directs the whole research process.

Classifying scientific research also helps clarify what kind of result the study is expected to produce. Some types aim to describe a phenomenon accurately, others aim to explain causes and relationships, and others aim to test an intervention or predict outcomes. When the researcher understands this difference, they can set realistic objectives, choose suitable evidence, and avoid judging a study by standards that do not match its type.

In addition, research types often overlap in practice, so classification helps the researcher combine approaches wisely when needed. A study may start descriptively to map a problem, then move to analytical or correlational work to interpret patterns, and later inspire experimental or applied research to propose solutions. Knowing the types, therefore, does not only organize research; it also supports a gradual, cumulative path from observation to explanation and, when possible, to improvement.

**Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim notes that:**

“Scientific research is an attempt to reach the cause or causes of a certain phenomenon. It is an attempt to uncover the causes of a problem or how it happens through analyzing it. It is also an attempt to uncover a relationship between two variables. Or it is an attempt to prove a claim starting from certain premises. Or to discover the premises that prove that claim.”<sup>5</sup>

With the growing overlap between disciplines, this distinction has become necessary. We can classify research using several criteria. For example: the purpose of the study. The method used. The time frame of the research. The academic level. Or the professional context in which it is conducted.

This classification does more than help the researcher choose tools and methods. It also guides research effort toward accuracy and relevance. So, knowing the types of scientific research is not only theory. It is an essential starting skill. It helps the researcher move with clear and organized steps. It also helps produce knowledge with scientific and social value.

This view shows that scientific research is not limited to describing events or collecting facts; it is mainly about explaining why things happen and how they are connected. By searching for causes, testing claims, and studying relationships between variables, the researcher moves from surface observations to deeper understanding. This is what gives research its real value: it helps us interpret problems logically and build conclusions that can be supported, discussed, and applied.

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<sup>5</sup> – Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim, Foundations of Scientific Research for Preparing University Theses, Al-Warraaq Foundation, 1st ed., Amman, Jordan, 2000, p. 18

Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim's description highlights that research is fundamentally an explanatory effort: it searches for causes, tests relationships, and builds arguments from clear premises rather than stopping at surface description. This means the researcher is always moving from "what is happening" to "why it is happening," using analysis to uncover the factors and links that shape a phenomenon and give it meaning within its context.

It also shows why classifying research types becomes necessary in modern studies. When research may aim at identifying causes, measuring relationships, or proving claims, each aim requires a different design, tools, and standards of evidence. So classification is not only an academic arrangement; it helps the researcher match the research goal with the appropriate approach, which strengthens validity, reduces confusion, and produces conclusions that are more relevant and defensible.

### **First: Classifying research by academic level or educational purpose**

#### **1) Graduation research (Bachelor's / Licence):**

The graduation project is the student's first real research experience. It is a key step. It moves the student from theoretical learning to actual research work. It is done in the final stage of the first university degree (Licence). It also becomes a foundation for higher levels later, such as the Master's and the PhD.

This research is usually limited in size. Yet it is still a serious academic challenge. It gives students a chance to show their ability to analyze information. It also tests their ability to organize it. And it encourages them to present fresh ideas.

In this type of research, the student must choose a clear research problem. They must formulate it precisely. The research problem is the starting point. Through it, the student defines the main aim of the study. They also set the

research questions they want to answer. The student is also expected to build a well-framed research issue related to their field. It should be based on a clear academic background.

The graduation project does not have to offer a completely new scientific contribution. Still, the student must show important skills. These include collecting information, analyzing data, citing sources, and offering a critical reading of earlier studies. In this context, Ali Jawad Al-Zahir said: “This research must be broader than an essay. The standards must be stricter. It should reach fifty pages or more. It is reasonable that it should not exceed that by much, in order to protect quality.”<sup>6</sup>

This means the project should be more than a normal course paper. It should include deeper analysis of the chosen problem. Often, it ranges from 50 to 70 pages. It shows the student’s ability to organize ideas. It also shows critical thinking and proper use of available research tools. At the same time, it should focus on quality more than quantity. The student should deliver a careful, deep analysis. They should avoid excessive expansion in data collection. They should also avoid complex experiments.

When writing a graduation project, the student must follow a clear research method. They must choose suitable tools. These may include literary studies, interviews, questionnaires, or a literature review, depending on the topic. The student must document sources correctly. They must apply the chosen method clearly. And they must analyze evidence critically. So, the student is expected to understand key references well. They should be able to critique earlier works. They should also apply the method accurately to the topic.

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<sup>6</sup> – Ali Jawad Al-Zahir, *Methodology of Literary Research*, Al-Ma‘ani Press, Baghdad, Iraq, 1970, p. 28

In summary, the graduation research is designed to train the student on the essentials of academic work: choosing a focused topic, turning it into a clear problem, and then treating it with an organized method. It is the stage where the student learns how to move from reading and memorizing to questioning, analyzing, and building an argument supported by sources.

It also serves as a practical test of research discipline and academic writing. Even if it does not aim for a major scientific discovery, it should show seriousness, clarity, and good structure—producing a balanced study that values accurate documentation and thoughtful analysis more than length or excessive details.

## **2) Master's research (the thesis / dissertation):**

The Master's thesis is a decisive stage in the student's academic path. It is more advanced. It shows clear growth in research skills. It also shows the ability to work independently within a specialization.

A Master's thesis marks the shift from supervised learning to guided independence. At this level, the student is expected to manage the research process with less reliance on step-by-step direction: they refine a focused problem, justify their choices, and sustain a coherent argument across chapters. The thesis therefore becomes a practical proof that the researcher can think within a specialization and handle its concepts, debates, and methods with maturity.

It is also a stage where the work is judged by its depth and academic discipline. The student must show stronger engagement with previous studies, more careful documentation, and a clearer analytical voice—moving beyond description toward interpretation and reasoned discussion. Even if the contribution is limited, it should be visible in the form of a new angle, a sharper

critique, or a more precise application of method that strengthens understanding in the field.

In this research, the student is expected to handle problems with more depth. They should understand complex academic issues. They should also use more advanced research tools. This includes stronger analytical methods and precise academic documentation. A Master's thesis is not only a review of past knowledge. It is also a chance to present a new angle. It can also offer a fresh contribution. Or it can add critical thinking that strengthens understanding in the field.

One key feature is advanced methodology. The student may use specialized approaches. For example, statistical analysis in social sciences. Or qualitative analysis in literature and the humanities. The student must choose tools that fit the nature of the study and its questions. In literary studies, this may include text-analysis tools. In other fields, it may rely on in-depth interviews. Or it may use questionnaires to collect data from participants.

Academic referencing is a central part of the Master's thesis. The student must cite sources accurately and professionally. They should use internationally recognized styles, such as **(APA)** or **(MLA)**. Proper citation is not just mentioning sources. It is a careful process. The student must check the accuracy of references. They must evaluate their credibility. And they must confirm their relevance to the topic. This skill builds the thesis's credibility. It also shows the student's grasp of research rules and tools. Referencing also helps trace ideas and concepts used in the thesis. This strengthens the knowledge framework and supports the development of the research.

The student is not required to produce completely new scientific results. But they are expected to present ideas in an organized way. They should analyze

results methodically. They must present findings clearly and convincingly. They should also write in a way that helps readers follow the flow of ideas. In the end, the student is expected to provide recommendations. These can guide future research in the field. They can also suggest practical solutions to the studied problems.

Unlike the graduation project, a Master's thesis is expected to feel like a real research product, not just training. The student does not only "apply" a method; they justify why it fits the problem, explain its limits, and defend their choices with academic logic. Here, the researcher's voice becomes clearer: they compare perspectives, weigh evidence, and build a coherent position that reflects maturity in the specialization.

It is also the stage where the thesis is judged by its **argument and reliability** more than its size. The work should show a controlled structure, careful use of sources, and results that can be discussed or tested. Even if the contribution is modest, it must be meaningful: a new interpretation, a stronger critique, a clearer model, or recommendations that open practical or research paths for others.

### **3) PhD dissertation:**

Ammar Bouhouche defined the PhD dissertation as: "A comprehensive and integrated research work. It is required to obtain the highest university degree. It is awarded by internationally recognized scientific institutions."<sup>7</sup>

This definition shows how important this stage is. It is a major scientific project. The researcher is expected to master the topic widely. They must also be able to develop a new conceptual framework. This framework should add to the scientific literature in the field. This kind of research often takes years. It

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<sup>7</sup> – Ammar Bouhouche, *A Researcher's Guide to Preparing Academic Research and Studies*, Al-Hindawi Press, Amman, Jordan, 1981, p. 26

tests new hypotheses and ideas. It uses advanced methods. These may include fieldwork, statistical analysis, or deep theoretical study, depending on the discipline.

The PhD dissertation is the highest level of academic research. It is not just completing a study. It is an original contribution to the field. In this context, Jawdat Al-Rikabi explains the standard of “originality” at this level. He states: “A dissertation submitted for the State Doctorate must contain something new added to human knowledge, stronger and clearer... so that the work becomes an excellent creative achievement. After that, the researcher can work independently without a supervisor and produce high-level scientific works.”<sup>8</sup>

This shows that “newness” is not cosmetic. It is not repetition in different wording. It is a strong and clear qualitative addition to knowledge. The value of the dissertation is measured by its lasting scientific impact. So, at this stage, the researcher must offer something new. This could be a new theory. It could be an improved model. Or it could be testing hypotheses in an innovative way. The goal is to produce an “excellent creative work.” It should reflect mature scientific independence.

Methodology is also crucial here. The researcher is not expected only to collect and organize data. They are expected to develop new methods. Or to use advanced techniques to observe and analyze the studied phenomena. Scientific research, at its core, is a disciplined investigation. It aims to add knowledge that can be communicated. It must also be verified through scientific testing.

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<sup>8</sup> – Jawdat Al-Rikabi, *Methodology of Literary Research: Preparing University Theses (Diploma, Master’s, Doctorate)*, Mumtaz Publishing, Translation and Authorship House, Damascus, Syria, 1993, p. 18

The dissertation defense before a committee is a central step. It is not a formal presentation. It is a real test. It tests the researcher's ability to justify methodological choices. It tests the logic of conclusions. It also tests how they respond to objections about data, analysis, and applications.

At the PhD level, the dissertation becomes a scientific identity card for the researcher. It is not written to prove that the student can study; it is written to prove that the researcher can *produce* knowledge and lead inquiry. The work must show a wide command of the field, but more importantly, it must show a personal scientific stance: where the researcher stands, what they add, and how their contribution changes or sharpens what was known before.

What makes a dissertation "doctoral" is the weight of its original contribution. Originality here is not a new title, nor a rearrangement of earlier ideas. It is an addition that can survive discussion: a concept that clarifies a debate, a model that explains better, a method that reaches evidence more precisely, or results that open a new research line. That is why the dissertation is often long and demanding—not because length is the goal, but because building a solid contribution requires depth, documentation, and careful reasoning.

And because this work is meant to join the scientific record, the defense is treated as a serious dialogue, not a ceremony. The committee's questions are part of the scientific test: they examine the logic, the method, the validity of data, and the strength of interpretation. A successful defense shows more than good answers; it shows scientific independence—the ability to defend choices, admit limits, and propose future directions with confidence and clarity.

#### **4) Postdoctoral research (Postdoctoral Research):**

Postdoctoral research is a key station in the path of any researcher who wants to continue in academia or research. It is a stage of advanced

specialization. It involves ongoing research in specific scientific or technical areas.

After finishing the PhD, the researcher may move into postdoctoral work. This stage allows them to expand their dissertation topic. Or to contribute to other research projects. Often, they work within multidisciplinary research teams. This stage is a strong opportunity to build an academic future. It is especially important for those who aim to become university faculty members or independent researchers.

Postdoctoral research is often where the researcher moves from “proving competence” to building a sustained research profile. The focus is not only on producing a single major study, but on generating a sequence of publishable results, strengthening research networks, and refining a clear scientific direction. In many cases, the postdoc becomes a period of high productivity: writing articles, presenting at conferences, applying for grants, and developing skills that support long-term academic leadership.

It is also a stage of deeper integration into the research community and its standards. Working with teams and laboratories trains the researcher on collaboration, project management, and advanced techniques, while exposing them to different schools of thought and methods. Over time, this experience helps the postdoctoral researcher shift toward independence—designing their own projects, leading parts of larger studies, and preparing to establish a distinct line of research as a future faculty member or principal investigator.

#### **5)Research published in peer-reviewed journals:**

Peer-reviewed journal articles are a main pillar of scientific output in many academic fields. They go through strict evaluation by specialized review committees. This makes them a real test of quality and originality. In this context,

Mohammed Al-Diwary explains that publishing is not a formal routine. It is meant to show that the results “are valued by specialists in the research field, represented by the review committees adopted by these journals.”<sup>9</sup>

This shows that peer review is more than judging the text. It is an institutional process. It checks that the study adds something new. It also checks that the method can be examined. It starts from the research problem. It includes how data were collected. It tests the strength of analysis. It evaluates the conclusions. It also considers how far the results can be generalized.

Passing through field experts also makes publication a channel for global academic exchange. It is not only about sharing results. It places results inside review, debate, correction, and improvement. A peer-reviewed article becomes a meeting point between the researcher and the knowledge community. The work is tested with shared standards. Credibility is protected through specialist critique before wide circulation.

Publishing in peer-reviewed journals is also an important step in the student’s academic path. It is not just an “extra achievement.” It is real training in scientific writing rules. It teaches how to build a problem statement. It teaches how to arrange arguments. It requires proper citation. It also requires clear results that can be reviewed.

In this sense, Mohammed Al-Diwary highlights that academic writing is aimed at a specific audience. It is mainly written for specialists. This means the student should learn its language early. He says: “Academic writing is the writing that all students, university professors, and researchers are asked to produce...

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<sup>9</sup> – Mohammed Al-Diwary, translated by Abdeljalil Nazim, *Methodology of Academic Writing and Professional Writing*, Topkal Publishing House, 1st ed., 2008, p. 26

[It] is generally directed to the same group of readers, meaning higher–education students, university professors, and researchers.”<sup>10</sup>

In this context, peer–reviewed publishing trains the student to address this “specialist reader.” It requires precise language. It needs organized arguments. It requires a clear method. So it builds skills beyond presenting ideas. It trains the student to build a scientific discourse that can be tested. This includes reviewing the literature to locate the new contribution. It includes choosing the right method and tool. It includes accurate data analysis. Then it requires justified conclusions.

Writing for publication also teaches “scientific economy.” It means concise writing without losing meaning. A peer–reviewed article needs a focused presentation. It must balance clarity and proof. So publication becomes advanced training in scientific thinking and logical organization. It is not a decorative line in a CV.

Peer–reviewed publishing is also a strong way to spread knowledge and connect academic cultures. Scientific research is directed to a wide “scientific community.” This community receives results, checks them, and builds on them. “Research is a scientific work that a researcher presents to the scientific community, revealing something new.”<sup>11</sup>

Peer–reviewed journals allow researchers worldwide to read published studies and discuss them. They do so within standards that control quality, like peer review, proper citation, and accurate presentation. This helps build an

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<sup>10</sup> – Mohammed Al–Diwary, translated by Abdeljalil Nazim, *Methodology of Academic Writing and Professional Writing*, Topkal Publishing House, 1st ed., 2008, p. 23

<sup>11</sup> – Abdullah bin Salim Al–Rashid, *Writing Scientific Research: Principles, Insights, and Experiences*, 1st ed. (digital edition), Riyadh, 2020, p. 12

international academic community. It exchanges knowledge and experience. It approaches issues from different scholarly and cultural angles.

This wide network also strengthens cooperation between universities and research institutions. It supports partnerships, joint projects, and sharing data and expertise. This speeds up knowledge accumulation. It can lead to broader scientific progress. So, publishing in peer-reviewed journals is a central step. It supports global science. It turns individual effort into knowledge that can be shared, built on, and developed.

Peer-reviewed publishing also works as a filter of credibility. When a paper is reviewed, the researcher is forced to make every step visible: why the problem matters, how the data were obtained, and whether the conclusions truly follow from the evidence. Even when reviewers disagree with parts of the study, their comments usually push the work toward stronger reasoning, clearer writing, and more careful limits—so the final article becomes more trustworthy than a text that was never tested by specialists.

At the same time, journal publishing creates a shared scientific memory. Once an article is accepted, it enters databases, becomes citable, and turns into a reference point for future studies. Others may confirm it, challenge it, or extend it, but in all cases the article becomes part of an ongoing conversation. That is why peer-reviewed journals are not only a place to “announce” results; they are a structured space where knowledge is continuously refined and connected across researchers, institutions, and countries.

#### **Fourth: Classifying scientific research by method (how it is studied):**

##### **1) Quantitative research:**

Quantitative research is based on numerical measurement. It relies on statistical analysis of data. Its aim is to reach results that can be generalized to

a wider population. So it often uses standardized tools. Examples include questionnaires, tests, and psychological or educational scales. It usually starts with clear hypotheses that can be tested.

This approach matches the idea of scientific research as a disciplined process. Hassan and others stress that scientific research “is very precise. It follows strict laws and methods so that its results are objective, trustworthy... and repeatable in different places around the world. The wider its impact, the better it is.” (Ahmed Hassan, and others, *Fundamentals of Scientific Research*, Egypt’s Scholars Foundation, Egypt, 1st ed., first release, 2016, pp. 43–44).

In language education, quantitative research may study the effect of a teaching method. For example, cooperative learning or digital learning. It can measure its impact on students’ grammar achievement. It may use a pre–test and post–test. Then it analyzes results statistically.

In applied linguistics, it may measure the frequency of a linguistic feature. For example, how dense grammar errors are in learners’ writing. Or how fluent second–language learners are.

In literature, it can appear in statistical stylistics. For example, counting how often certain words appear in a poet’s work. Or comparing lexical fields across different novels.

The strength of this method is precision and objectivity. It also supports generalization. But sometimes it cannot explain deep meanings behind numbers. In that case, it needs qualitative interpretation to complete the picture.

Quantitative research works best when concepts are turned into measurable variables. The researcher defines what will be measured, how it will be measured, and what counts as a change. This is why operational definitions are

central: instead of saying “motivation increased,” the study clarifies the indicator (for example, a validated motivation scale score, attendance rate, or time-on-task). Clear measurement rules make the study easier to replicate and reduce personal interpretation.

Another important feature is sampling and statistical inference. Because quantitative studies often seek generalization, the way participants or texts are selected matters as much as the analysis itself. Researchers pay attention to sample size, representativeness, and possible bias in selection. They also use statistical tests to estimate how likely results are due to chance, and they may report confidence intervals or effect sizes to show not only *whether* a difference exists, but also *how strong* it is.

Finally, strong quantitative research depends on quality control: reliability and validity. Reliability checks whether the instrument gives consistent results, while validity asks whether it truly measures what it claims to measure. Researchers also manage threats such as confounding variables, missing data, and weak experimental control. When these issues are handled carefully—and reported transparently—the numbers become more meaningful and the conclusions more defensible.

## **2) Qualitative research:**

Qualitative research focuses on meaning. It explores experiences, interpretations, and context. It pays attention to social and cultural surroundings. It is less concerned with statistical generalization. It cares more about depth. It tries to read the phenomenon “from the inside.”

This connects with what Al-Rashid says about method. He states: “The method is the path followed to approach the research corpus, examine it, and make it speak. It comes after looking at the corpus, not before it.”<sup>12</sup>

Here, “making the corpus speak” fits the spirit of qualitative work. The researcher does not only record facts. They analyze and interpret. They seek what lies behind appearances. They look for symbols, meanings, and contextual relations.

So qualitative research uses tools like in-depth interviews. It uses participant observation. It also uses text and discourse analysis.

In Arabic literature, it is very common. It analyzes texts (poem, novel, play). It aims to reveal aesthetic, symbolic, and intellectual meanings. Examples include studying the image of women in contemporary Arabic novels. Or studying representations of identity in resistance poetry.

It can also be used in language education. It may explore teachers’ and learners’ experiences with curricula through interviews. Or it may observe classroom interaction.

In sociolinguistics, it helps explain the link between language, identity, power, and cultural context.

This method gives deep and complex understanding. But it usually does not aim for statistical generalization. It aims to interpret meaning and build understanding.

Qualitative research treats the researcher as a careful listener and interpreter. Instead of starting with fixed variables, it often starts with open

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<sup>12</sup> – Abdullah bin Salim Al-Rashid, *Writing Scientific Research: Principles, Insights, and Experiences*, 1st ed., Riyadh, 2020, p. 100

questions and lets the field—texts, interviews, classrooms, communities—guide what becomes important. The value here is in capturing nuance: contradictions, hidden assumptions, unspoken rules, and the “why” that numbers alone may miss.

To stay rigorous, qualitative work relies on systematic interpretation rather than impressionistic reading. Researchers may code data into themes, compare cases, and return to participants or sources to check understanding. They also practice reflexivity: being aware of how their background, position, and expectations might shape the interpretation. This kind of discipline keeps qualitative analysis grounded, even when it aims for depth rather than generalization.

### **3) Descriptive research:**

Descriptive research aims to describe phenomena as they are. It does not try to change them. It collects detailed information about features and dimensions of the phenomenon.

The spirit of this method lies in careful observation and tracking. Muwafaq bin Abdullah defines scientific research as: “A search, or a careful examination to discover information or new relationships, to develop current knowledge, and to verify it.”<sup>13</sup>

This meaning fits the core of descriptive research. It does not create the phenomenon. It does not impose change. It examines it as it happens. Then it organizes the data. It describes patterns. This can prepare the ground for later explanation. It can also prepare for solutions in other studies.

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<sup>13</sup> – Muwafaq bin Abdullah bin Abdulqadir, *Scientific Research Methodology and Writing Academic Theses*, Al-Tawhid Publishing House, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1st ed., 2011, p. 13

In language studies, it may describe common errors among learners of Arabic as a second language. Or it may describe the features of youth language on social media.

In education, it may describe how digital tools are used to teach language or literature in schools.

In literature, it may appear as classificatory studies. It can describe dominant literary trends in a specific period.

This type is an important base for later research, especially in exploratory stages.

What makes descriptive research especially useful is that it builds a clear picture before judgment or explanation. By mapping the phenomenon accurately—its forms, frequency, distribution, and main characteristics—it provides a reliable starting point for other research types such as experimental or correlational studies. In many fields, a good description is not “simple” work; it requires careful criteria, well–designed observation or documentation tools, and organized presentation of results so that patterns become visible and comparable across contexts.

### **3–Conditions of scientific research:**

#### **1) Objectivity:**

Objectivity is a core foundation of scientific research. It is the first guarantee that a study becomes more than an opinion. It turns it into knowledge that can be tested and trusted.

Objectivity means the researcher tries to set aside personal preferences. They also avoid pre–judgments. This must appear in every step. It includes defining

the problem, choosing the sample, building tools, collecting data, analyzing it, and interpreting results.

The researcher should not let “what they want to prove” control the process. They should not pick only supporting evidence. They should not ignore data that contradicts their expectations. In this sense, Ahmed Hassan and others state: “Neutrality means the researcher should have no bias, neither when presenting their own research nor when evaluating others’ research.”<sup>14</sup>

This shows that objectivity is not a slogan. It is practical behavior. It appears in details. For example, documenting procedures as they happened, not as we wish they looked. It also means not changing experiment or measurement steps. It means not deleting “annoying” data without declaring it. It also means separating evidence-based results from personal interpretation. And it means admitting limits and constraints.

Objectivity is strengthened through clear methodological practices. For example, using standardized tools. Also setting analysis criteria before starting. Also making procedures and data open to review. Also using more than one tool when needed to reduce bias. And finally, reporting results as they are, even if they disappoint expectations. The value of research comes from loyalty to truth, not loyalty to the researcher.

The objective researcher works with data as collected. They analyze it using clear standards. Then they interpret it only as far as evidence allows. They avoid mental leaps. They avoid unsupported readings. For this reason, Al-Rashid

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<sup>14</sup> – Ahmed Hassan, and others, *Fundamentals of Scientific Research*, Egypt’s Scholars Foundation, Egypt, 1st ed., first release, 2016, p. 93

says: “A sound method requires you to be a fair judge and an impartial critic. You mention what is in the writer’s favor and what is against them.”<sup>15</sup>

Here, objectivity is not “cold neutrality.” It is methodological fairness. It prevents forcing data to fit a prior opinion. For example, if a researcher studies the impact of the internet on social communication, and they already believe it is negative, objectivity requires restraint. They should not push the data toward that belief. They should let indicators shape the conclusion.

The data may show negative effects in some areas, like isolation or weaker face-to-face interaction. It may show positive effects in other areas, like wider social networks or easier family contact. It may also show neutral effects depending on groups and contexts. So the objective researcher writes non-leading questions and measurement items. They allow multiple possibilities in analysis. Then they report results as they are, even if they contradict the first belief. Research value is measured by honest inference, not by pleasing conclusions.

Objectivity also means the researcher must not steer results based on wishes or hopes. Sometimes, a researcher feels pressure to “get” certain findings for personal or professional reasons. They must let go of that pressure. They must handle the data with integrity and neutrality.

A clear example appears in medical drug trials. The researcher must treat clinical data seriously. They must do so whether the drug shows effectiveness or not. The same seriousness. The same objectivity.

Objectivity is also supported by procedures that reduce the influence of the individual researcher. For example, using clear criteria for inclusion and

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<sup>15</sup> – Abdullah bin Salim Al-Rashid, *Writing Scientific Research: Principles, Insights, and Experiences* (digital edition), p. 172.

exclusion, applying the same rules to all cases, and—when possible—using blind or double-blind designs so expectations do not shape observation. Even in non-experimental fields, peer review, replication, and transparent reporting play the same role: they make the study open to checking, not dependent on the researcher’s personal authority.

At the same time, objectivity does not mean pretending the researcher has no perspective; it means managing that perspective responsibly. The researcher acknowledges potential biases, explains choices clearly, and separates what is supported by evidence from what is interpretation. When this separation is respected, the reader can follow the logic of the study step by step, and the results become more credible—even for those who might disagree with the researcher’s initial assumptions.

## **2) Methodology:**

Methodology is a decisive pillar in research. It is not only “arranging steps.” It is a framework of rules. It disciplines the researcher’s thinking. It organizes the move from question to result.

Yusuf Khalif expresses this meaning clearly. He defines methodology as: “A set of general rules and laws that guide the mind, define its operations, and lead it to a known result in a given subject.”<sup>16</sup>

So methodology becomes the “plan” and the “path.” It ensures the researcher works in an organized and accurate way. It shows how to define the problem. It shows how to choose tools. It shows how to collect data. It shows how to analyze it. And it shows how to justify conclusions so results remain reliable and verifiable.

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<sup>16</sup> – Yusuf Khalif, *Methods of Literary Research*, Dar Al-Thaqafa for Publishing and Distribution, Cairo, Egypt, 1997, p. 17

Methodology is not a single rigid step. It includes internal review and adjustment during execution. This is what Ismail explains when he says: “Planning is not one stage. It is a thinking process.”<sup>17</sup>

So commitment to methodology means documenting this whole process. It is linked planning, execution, and review. Ismail outlines clear steps in one connected track: “First: the pre-writing process (planning)... Second: drafting (composition)... Third: revision and editing.”<sup>18</sup>

Methodology starts with defining the research problem. This is the first step in any scientific study. The problem sets the topic. It sets the main questions the researcher wants to answer. It must be specific and clear. It should not be vague. It should not cover too many sides at once. It must focus on one defined issue in the field.

For example, in a study about social media and academic achievement, the problem could be: “How do hours of social media use affect students’ academic performance?” This is clear. It is focused. And it can be investigated.

If the study requires deeper testing, the next step is choosing the best method. The method must fit the topic and the needed data. A method is not a “label” stuck onto a study. It is a working path that controls observation and analysis.

In this sense, Al-Rashid says: “The method is the path followed to approach the research corpus, examine it, and make it speak... After the researcher

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<sup>17</sup> – Ismail, Baligh Hamdi, *Academic Writing: A Guide to Developing Persuasive Argumentative Writing Skills*, Arab Press Agency (Publishers), no ed., Giza, Egypt, 2022, p. 39

<sup>18</sup> –Ibid., p. 54

becomes grounded in the topic, they should consider which methods are most effective for the study.”<sup>19</sup>

So the choice depends on what the hypothesis wants to prove and how it can be measured. If the study needs numbers and precise statistics, like measuring how economic factors affect consumer behavior, then a quantitative approach fits better. It works with variables, measurement, and comparison.

If the study aims to understand experiences and meanings, like students’ experiences with new teaching methods, then a qualitative approach is better. It answers “why” and “how” inside context.

The researcher may also choose a mixed method when the phenomenon is complex. They may track trends with numbers, then explain them through interviews or observation.

This choice becomes more disciplined when the researcher distinguishes between the method and procedures. Al-Rashid warns about a common error. It is naming the method as “analytical” or “descriptive” as if they are full methods. In reality, these are tools and procedures used across methods. “There is no method without induction, description, and analysis.” So choosing a method should be a conscious scientific decision. It should fit the research question and its data. It should not be a formal decoration.

Methodology also gives research its logical coherence. It links the parts together so the study does not become a collection of scattered sections. When the method is clear, the reader can see why the problem led to certain questions, why those questions required specific data, and why that data was analyzed in a particular way. This coherence is what makes the final conclusion persuasive,

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<sup>19</sup> - Abdullah bin Salim Al-Rashid, *Writing Scientific Research: Principles, Insights, and Experiences* (digital edition), p. 100

because it appears as the natural outcome of an organized path, not as a sudden claim added at the end.

In addition, methodology is the main guarantee of verification and repeatability. When procedures are described precisely—how participants were selected, how tools were applied, how data was cleaned, and how analysis criteria were set—other researchers can test the same approach or improve it. Even if they reach different results in another context, the comparison becomes scientifically meaningful. So methodology is not only a guide for the researcher; it is also a “shared language” that allows the scientific community to evaluate, critique, and build upon the work.

### **3) Precision and control:**

Precision and control give research its strength and quality. They ensure that concepts, procedures, and results are clear. They make them specific. They also make them verifiable.

Precision starts early. It begins with defining terms and concepts in operational ways. It also appears in writing research questions and hypotheses. It appears in selecting measurement tools. It appears in analysis methods. And it appears in presenting results without exaggeration or rushed generalization.

Ismail stresses honesty and precision in scientific presentation. He says: “You must be accurate, truthful, and complete in presenting theories, facts, and statistics.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> – Ismail, Baligh Hamdi, *Academic Writing: A Guide to Developing Persuasive Argumentative Writing Skills*, , p. 48

Precision also needs linguistic and conceptual discipline. This prevents confusion and reduces misunderstanding. A vague term opens the door to conflicting interpretations. It can make correct data read incorrectly. So the researcher must know the key terms of the topic. They must understand their meanings. And they must use them in the right place.

Control completes precision by ensuring that the research conditions are managed as much as possible, so the results are not left to chance or hidden influences. This appears in setting clear criteria for sampling, standardizing procedures, and limiting variables that may distort findings (or at least identifying them and accounting for them in analysis). When precision and control work together, the study becomes more solid: concepts are defined, steps are consistent, and conclusions remain within what the evidence truly allows.

#### **4) Clarity and specificity:**

Clarity starts with language. The researcher should choose precise words. Words should not be confusing. Then clarity extends to the research problem, questions, and hypotheses. It also includes setting the scope of the study. This means time, place, sample, and corpus. Without this, writing becomes blurry. It becomes general claims.

Scientific meaning is not reached through vagueness. It is not reached by piling information. It is reached by organizing information clearly. Information must be presented in an attractive logical order. This helps deliver the researcher's point in a clear way.

Specificity protects the study from "path branching." The researcher defines concepts and limits before asking the reader to accept conclusions. They also

control transitions between ideas. Each paragraph should naturally lead to the next. Then the work becomes easy to follow, understand, and discuss.

Clarity is also tied to correct language and accurate terminology. If a term is left without definition, it becomes a gate for multiple interpretations. Then readings multiply. And the research result can be lost.

So Muwafaq advises the researcher to write in a simple and clear way. He says: “The researcher is advised to present a simplified and clear account of the study, using language correctly and avoiding vagueness.”

Formulating the research problem is not a formal step. It is the heart of the study. It sets the path, limits, and tools. So it must be written with precision and clarity. It must be researchable and testable. Otherwise, it becomes a loose title. It opens the study to scattered interpretations and weak direction.

Clarity and specificity also improve the quality of evaluation: when the reader knows exactly what the study examines—and what it does *not* examine—they can judge the method and results fairly. Clear limits make it possible to distinguish between evidence and opinion, and they prevent the researcher from making conclusions that go beyond the scope of the data. In practice, this means writing focused objectives, defining key terms early, and presenting findings in direct statements supported by references or data, so the argument remains transparent and easy to trace.

#### **5) Originality and scientific contribution:**

Originality means the study adds something real to the field. Even if it is “small but meaningful.” It is not just rewriting what was already said.

This meaning appears in the definition by Al-Ma'ani and others. They describe scientific research as involving “investigation in order to provide new additions to human knowledge.”<sup>21</sup>

This contribution is not limited to a “revolutionary discovery.” It can be a new angle. It can be expanding the studied corpus. It can be improving an analysis tool. Or it can be observing a phenomenon that was not studied enough.

Sometimes, research does not offer a completely new idea. But it offers a new way to handle an old topic. This is common in literary studies. For example, resistance literature in the twentieth century has been studied before. Originality may appear in the approach. The researcher might use cultural analysis or sociological analysis. This can explore links between literature and social or political change. It differs from purely traditional literary criticism. This kind of originality adds value. It uses new theoretical frames that enrich understanding.

Contribution can also appear in improving research tools themselves. Research is not judged only by “a new theory.” It is also judged by better ways of understanding, measuring, and analyzing.

Contribution may also appear through a new interpretation of old results. Or by rereading them in light of variables that were previously ignored.

If studies only repeat what exists, they lose scientific value. Knowledge grows through continuous renewal. This happens by adding concepts, expanding understanding, or exploring neglected sides.

So originality does not always mean brand-new ideas. It can be a fresh interpretation. It can be an innovative treatment. Or it can be developing research

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<sup>21</sup> – Ahmed Al-Ma'ani, and others, *Scientific Research and Statistics Methods: How Do You Write a Scientific Paper?*, Ithraa for Publishing and Distribution, 1st ed., Amman, Jordan, 2012, p. 31

tools. Originality means a tangible addition that expands horizons in a field. Every scientific study should add something that improves understanding or improves methods.

Originality is also measured by the researcher's ability to locate the gap accurately: what has been said, what has not been said, and what still needs clarification. A study can look new on the surface, but if it ignores the literature and repeats the same conclusions, its contribution remains weak. That is why reviewing prior studies is not a "background" section only; it is the space where the researcher proves that their work has a reason to exist and a place within the ongoing scholarly conversation.

In addition, scientific contribution becomes clearer when the researcher explains its value and implications. What does this study change in understanding? What does it help explain better? What new questions does it open? A meaningful contribution does not end with findings; it shows how those findings can be used—by researchers who build on them, by educators who adapt them, or by institutions that benefit from their recommendations. In this way, originality becomes not just novelty, but added scientific usefulness and lasting impact.

#### **6) Proper scientific documentation:**

Proper documentation is essential in serious research. It turns research from a "free-form text" into knowledge that can be reviewed and verified. It also guarantees transparency. It strengthens scientific integrity by returning ideas and data to their original sources

Research depends on cumulative knowledge. So the researcher cannot take an idea, a result, or a definition and present it as personal production. They must refer to the source they used. Ahmed Hassan and others state: "If a researcher

relies on another study, they must indicate that in their research... this is their right.”<sup>22</sup>

So documentation is not a formal detail. It is a control mechanism. It prevents mixing the researcher’s view with the source’s text. It allows the reader to return to references and check accuracy and conclusions.

Documentation also affects the value of the study inside the academic community. Quality is not measured only by what the study says. It is also measured by whether others can rely on it and build on it.

For this reason, Hassan and others say: “The most important standard of research quality is the extent to which other researchers rely on it and cite it.”<sup>23</sup>

When the researcher documents accurately, whether in the text, footnotes, or the reference list, they protect the study from plagiarism claims. They increase trust in the results. They also help other researchers trace the chain of ideas and data. Then others can develop it, test it, or critique it in a disciplined scientific way.

Proper scientific documentation is also what makes research traceable and credible: it clearly separates quotation, paraphrase, and the researcher’s own analysis, and it allows readers to return to the original sources to verify ideas, data, and conclusions. When references are accurate and complete—whether in-text, in footnotes, or in the bibliography—the study becomes easier to evaluate, less vulnerable to plagiarism, and more useful for other researchers who want to build on it, test it, or critique it.

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<sup>22</sup> – Ahmed Hassan, and others, *Fundamentals of Scientific Research*, Egypt’s Scholars Foundation, Egypt, 1st ed., first release, 2016, p. 90).

<sup>23</sup> – Ahmed Hassan, and others, *Fundamentals of Scientific Research*, p. 93

Proper documentation also improves the professional usability of the research: it standardizes citations (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.), keeps references consistent, and makes it easier to track sources through details like editions, URLs, DOIs, and access dates for online materials. When the researcher follows one clear style and records complete information from the start, the study becomes easier to edit, publish, and share, and it allows readers to locate every source quickly without confusion or missing data.

## **Lecture 2: The Researcher and Their Requirements**

1. Definition of the researcher.
2. Requirements of the researcher.
3. The research plan.

**First: Definition of the researcher:**

The researcher is the center of the research process. They are the person responsible for producing scientific knowledge through an organized method. They rely on research principles and research tools.

A researcher is defined as: “A person who has natural and psychological readiness, in addition to acquired scientific competence.”<sup>24</sup>

This means the researcher is not guided only by a general desire to “do research.” They combine readiness with scientific preparation. This helps them study a phenomenon or a problem in a systematic way. They may aim to understand it, explain it, analyze it, or suggest solutions. They start from clear questions or specific hypotheses. They work within an academic framework. They also use different sources and methods that fit the topic.

The researcher is not just a collector of information. They are not a simple transmitter of old knowledge. They are an active scientific agent. They build knowledge and develop it through connected tasks. They begin by identifying the research problem and setting its limits. Then they review what has been written to find the gap their study will fill. After that, they choose the suitable method and tool. Then they collect data or a “corpus.” Then they process it in an organized way. Finally, they reach results that can be justified.

Here, the researcher’s role appears in organizing knowledge and writing it scientifically. They show the logical link between data and conclusions. They are

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<sup>24</sup>– Aboud Abdullah Al-Askari, *Scientific Research Methodology in the Humanities*, p. 20

not asked to repeat what came before. They are asked to discuss it, critique it, and add to it.

So the researcher becomes a bridge. They connect inherited knowledge with produced knowledge. They read previous work critically. They identify strengths and weaknesses. They balance opinions. Then they form their own evidence-based position. This research personality does not appear suddenly. It grows through knowledge accumulation and methodological practice.

A strong researcher is also defined by a set of practical qualities that shape their daily work. They have curiosity, but it is a disciplined curiosity: they ask clear questions and do not accept quick answers without evidence. They also have patience with complexity, because many research problems do not yield results easily. Alongside this, they practice intellectual honesty—reporting what the data shows, not what they hoped it would show—and they remain open to correction when stronger arguments or new evidence appear.

In addition, the researcher carries responsibility toward the academic community and society. Their work should respect ethical standards: protecting participants when research involves people, using sources transparently, and avoiding manipulation of data or conclusions. Because research is cumulative, the researcher's credibility affects more than one study; it affects trust in the field itself. For that reason, the researcher's value is not only in producing results, but in producing results that are reliable, shareable, and worthy of being built upon.

## **Second: Requirements of the researcher**

### **1) Knowing the scientific method well:**

This is one of the most important conditions. A valuable study cannot be done

without clear awareness of the method's steps and principles. The researcher must also be able to apply them correctly.

The scientific method is the organized framework that guides the whole work. It starts with defining the problem and writing questions or hypotheses. It continues with choosing the method and tool, and collecting data. It ends with analyzing results and drawing objective conclusions that can be defended.

In this context, Al-Khesht notes that good research should develop the researcher's own competence. He says: "Supervisors often prefer that the research helps raise the researcher's competence, especially in using research tools and methods."<sup>25</sup>

In practice, a method-aware researcher does not treat research as "information gathering" only. They treat it as a structured construction. They know how to define concepts and limits. They know how to choose a method that matches the data (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed). They know how to standardize tools and use them well. They also know how to connect data to results with a coherent analytical logic.

So it is not enough to know the steps in theory. The researcher must have conscious choice, disciplined application, and responsible interpretation. Research quality is measured by the soundness of the path, not by results alone. Knowing the method also means practical ability, not only theory. A researcher may know the method academically, but still fail in the field if they cannot use it effectively. This requires continuous training and practice. It helps them choose the right tools and the best method for the topic.

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<sup>25</sup> – Mohammed Othman Al-Khesht, *The Art of Writing Scientific Research and Preparing University Theses*, Berlin Library for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, Cairo, Egypt, 1990, p. 10

This knowledge also strengthens credibility. Methodology is not a formal luxury. It makes the research open to evaluation by others. Clear and reliable steps allow others to test the logic, review evidence, and judge objectivity.

It also builds readers' trust. A researcher who chooses a fitting method, applies it accurately, and states limitations clearly, provides results that others can rely on. But if the method is confused or inconsistent, then even attractive results remain weak, because readers cannot verify the procedures or the link between data and conclusions.

In the end, mastering the scientific method is not about memorizing its steps, but about turning it into a habit of thinking: asking precise questions, choosing tools for clear reasons, and relying on evidence instead of impressions. When methodology becomes part of the researcher's mindset, randomness decreases, and every result becomes a logical extension of a traceable path that others can review.

From this perspective, methodological awareness is what gives research its scientific value even before it gives it "findings." Even if the results are modest, the way they were reached determines their credibility and whether others can build on them. The more disciplined, justified, and transparent the method is—along with openly stated limits—the higher the research quality becomes, and the more useful it is to the academic community.

## **2) The ability to identify problems and formulate research questions:**

This is a basic condition. Research cannot stand if the researcher does not define what they study, where they stop, and why they choose one side over another.

Al-Shamikh points out that the thesis introduction should clarify the limits and justifications of the work. He says one of its aims is that the researcher

“describes the scope they set for the research, and the reasons that made them focus on certain aspects and neglect others.”<sup>26</sup>

Here, limiting the topic is not random narrowing. It turns a “general topic” into a researchable problem. It defines the field. It chooses the corpus or sample. It explains the logic of selection. It gives the reader a clear standard: why this material entered the study, and why that material did not.

So formulating the problem is not only writing a “nice question.” It is building a controlled question with clear boundaries and scientific reasons. For example, one side may have been studied enough, while another still needs research. This makes the plan coherent. It also keeps results tied to the original question, not scattered because the beginning was vague.

After choosing the right problem, the researcher must phrase it clearly and precisely. Good phrasing does not only state the central question. It also makes it researchable. It relies on concepts that can be measured or interpreted. A good problem statement sets the scope and priorities. It prevents distraction and overload.

It also requires reviewing previous studies. The researcher must see what was done before. If the issue was studied, they must identify what can be built on or improved.

Once the problem is clear, the researcher builds a research plan that matches it. The plan is the document that maps the route from start to results. It turns the broad question into clear procedural steps.

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<sup>26</sup> – Mohammed Abdulrahman Al-Shamikh, *Preparing Literary Research*, Al-Ulum for Printing and Publishing, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1st ed., 1985, p. 57

The ability to identify a problem and formulate research questions is what turns research from a broad interest into a focused scientific task. When the problem is sharply defined and its boundaries are justified, the whole study becomes more coherent: the literature review has a clear purpose, the method is easier to choose, and data collection follows specific criteria. Without this skill, even strong tools and rich sources can lead to scattered results, because the research loses its direction and cannot clearly show why its findings matter or how they answer the original question.

### **3) Mastering research tools and techniques:**

This is a practical condition that cannot be ignored. Tools like observation, interviews, questionnaires, and content analysis are the bridge. They turn the phenomenon into research material that can be studied and concluded from.

Research material is defined as: “The information produced through tracking, investigating, and properly selecting it.”<sup>27</sup>

The meaning is clear. Strong results start with strong tracking and selection. This needs a researcher who chooses suitable tools and knows their limits and validity conditions. So success is not based on theory alone. It also depends on skill in collecting and managing data.

Today, this mastery also includes modern techniques. Software has become part of the researcher’s toolkit. It helps in statistics, text analysis, and content analysis. It increases accuracy and speed.

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<sup>27</sup> – Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman bin Ali Al-Rubai‘ah, *Scientific Research: Its Reality, Sources, Material, Methods, Writing, Printing, and Discussion*, vol. 1, 6th ed., Riyadh, 1433H/2012, p. 140

In this context, Ismail Baligh Hamdi stresses that serious academic work requires: “Proving and documenting everything it uses from facts and ideas, and attributing them to their owners and sources.”<sup>28</sup>

Mastering research tools means more than knowing their names; it means understanding when to use each tool, how to apply it correctly, and what its results can (and cannot) prove. An interview, for example, can reveal motives and meanings, but it needs careful question design and ethical handling of participants. A questionnaire can reach large numbers, but it requires valid items, clear scales, and a sampling strategy that reduces bias. Content analysis can be powerful, but only if coding categories are explicit and consistently applied. In all cases, tool mastery protects the study from weak data and forced conclusions.

This mastery also depends on technical competence and transparency. Modern research often uses software for statistics, qualitative coding, corpus linguistics, or text mining—yet these tools do not replace scientific judgment. The researcher must still clean data, justify analytic choices, and report procedures in a way others can replicate or critique. When tools are used responsibly and documented carefully, they become a real bridge from observation to evidence, and from evidence to findings that deserve trust.

#### **4) The ability to analyze information and draw conclusions:**

The researcher must have analytical ability. It helps them deal with raw data and turn it into organized knowledge. It helps them reach logical and disciplined conclusions that show deep understanding. It also protects them from rushed or shallow results.

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<sup>28</sup> – Ismail, Baligh Hamdi, *Academic Writing: A Guide to Developing Persuasive Argumentative Writing Skills*, Arab Press Agency (Publishers), pp. 47–48

This skill is crucial. It is the moment where “raw data” becomes “scientific knowledge” that others can use. Analysis is not only tables and charts. It is a mental and methodological effort. It uncovers relationships between variables. It finds patterns and trends that do not appear at first glance.

Good analysis is linked to methodological critique. It turns analysis from simple “description” into scientific reasoning. It strengthens credibility. It produces results that can be understood, used, and applied.

The ability to analyze information also means connecting evidence to meaning without overstepping what the data allows. A skilled researcher distinguishes between what is clearly supported, what is probable, and what remains uncertain, then builds conclusions that follow a logical chain from findings to interpretation. This requires comparing results with previous studies, testing alternative explanations, and stating limitations openly—so conclusions stay disciplined, defensible, and useful for future research or practical application.

#### **5) Strong academic scientific language:**

Good academic language directly affects the strength of argument and the credibility of results. Language organizes ideas. It controls logical links between premises and conclusions. It prevents drifting into general talk and rhetorical writing.

In this frame, the same reference stresses neutrality. It says: “Academic writing is objective language, not emotional or personal.”<sup>29</sup>

Strong academic scientific language is not about complex vocabulary; it is about precision, neutrality, and logical structure. The researcher writes in a way that makes relationships clear—cause, evidence, comparison, limitation—using

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<sup>29</sup> - Ismail, Baligh Hamdi, *Academic Writing: A Guide to Developing Persuasive Argumentative Writing Skills*, p. 47

defined terms and consistent wording so meanings do not shift across the study. This kind of language avoids emotional judgment and rhetorical exaggeration, and it relies on careful transitions that guide the reader from claim to proof to conclusion, which strengthens both the argument and the credibility of the results.

Strong academic scientific language also requires appropriate academic tone and calibrated certainty. The researcher should state claims with the right level of confidence—using careful verbs and hedging when needed (e.g., *suggests*, *indicates*, *may reflect*)—and reserving stronger wording only when evidence is solid. This style helps distinguish between facts, interpretations, and possibilities, and it makes the discussion easier for specialists to evaluate because the reader can clearly see what is proven, what is inferred, and what remains open for further investigation.

**A researcher’s language can be judged through clear indicators, such as:**

- **Terminological precision:** use field terms consistently, define concepts at first use, and avoid uncontrolled synonym switching that confuses the reader.
- **Clarity and coherence:** sentences and paragraphs should move logically, each paragraph serving one main idea, and ideas linked with precise connectors.
- **Formality and discipline:** avoid slang and vague phrases, reduce direct address, and prefer analytical informative sentences that show evidence before judgment.

The researcher must also follow academic citation and referencing rules. Research is built on sources and evidence. These must be documented carefully in the text. The researcher should know how to quote correctly using the style used in the field, such as **(APA)** or **(MLA)**. Proper documentation shows respect

for previous academic work. It also strengthens credibility. It helps readers verify sources. The researcher must also be honest in citation, because inaccurate quoting can lead to scientific and ethical accountability.

#### **6) Commitment to research ethics:**

Ethical commitment is not a decorative extra. It is a foundation. It gives research legitimacy. It protects results from suspicion. Research ethics, at its core, rests on two things. Respect for human beings and their rights. And respect for scientific truth.

Al-Ma‘ani and others emphasize that: “Research ethics requires respecting others’ rights, opinions, and dignity.”<sup>30</sup>

Scientific integrity in quoting and referencing is also central. It is strongly tied to plagiarism. It means attributing ideas to their owners and not distorting them. Al-Ma‘ani and others stress “The need to uphold scientific integrity when quoting... [which focuses on] indicating the source or sources from which the researcher drew information and ideas.”<sup>31</sup>

They also stress “making sure not to distort transferred ideas and opinions.”<sup>32</sup>

So ethics is not a paragraph at the end of the study. It runs through all stages. It starts from designing tools and dealing with participants. It continues with data analysis and writing results. It includes citing references and quotations. The more accurate the researcher is in these rules, the more solid and acceptable the results become.

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<sup>30</sup> – Ahmed Al-Ma‘ani, and others, *Scientific Research and Statistics Methods: How Do You Write a Scientific Paper?*, Ithraa for Publishing and Distribution, 1st ed., Amman, Jordan, 2012, p. 47

<sup>31</sup>– Ibid., p. 33

<sup>32</sup> - Ibid., p. 34

## 7) Scientific honesty:

Scientific honesty is the cornerstone of research work. It is the first guarantee of the researcher's credibility and the value of results.

Honesty starts from collecting material. It starts from choosing sources before quoting. Ayman Abu Al-Rus says the researcher should choose reliable information produced by specialized scholars: "... information that has been produced by specialized professors or those who have standing in scientific research and knowledge."<sup>33</sup>

Honesty also appears clearly in quoting and referencing. The researcher must not claim what is not theirs. Not an idea. Not a text. Not a result. When quoting, they must identify the quote precisely. They must mention the source and page number. They must clearly separate "the researcher's words" from "others' words." They must avoid paraphrasing that hides the original without citation.

Scientific honesty is also tied to respecting rights. Taking others' texts or ideas without documentation breaks the ethics of knowledge and destroys trust in the scientific community.

Scientific honesty also includes being truthful about the research process itself: how data were collected, what difficulties appeared, and what limitations affected the study. A researcher should not hide weak points, exclude inconvenient results without explanation, or present uncertain findings as absolute facts. When errors happen—as they sometimes do—honesty means correcting them clearly rather than covering them up. This transparency is what allows readers and other scholars to judge the work fairly and build on it safely.

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<sup>33</sup>– Ayman Abu Al-Rus, *How to Write a Successful Research Paper: 25 Steps for Preparing University Research and Theses*, pp. 38–39

It also requires resisting pressures that can distort results, such as the desire to “prove” a preferred conclusion, publish quickly, or satisfy an institution’s expectations. Honest research accepts that evidence may lead to unexpected outcomes, and it treats negative or neutral results as valuable knowledge, not as failure. In this way, scientific honesty protects the credibility of the individual researcher and preserves the trust that makes scientific knowledge possible in the first place.

### **Third: The research plan:**

The research plan is the backbone of any scientific project. It turns a general idea into an organized path. It becomes something you can apply, follow, and review.

It is not a formal attachment. It is a “work map.” From the start, it answers simple questions. What exactly will be studied? How will it be studied? On which corpus? Using which tools? And what limits will prevent distraction?

Presenting the plan is part of the writing design itself. So the plan is not just “headings.” It is an early announcement of how the study will be built. It also shows the order of chapters, so neither the reader nor the researcher gets lost in details.

The research plan also works as a **control system** for the whole project. When the plan is clear, every chapter has a purpose and every section serves the main problem, so the study does not turn into scattered reading or unrelated discussion. It helps the researcher keep a steady direction, choose evidence carefully, and move from one part to the next with logical continuity.

It also makes evaluation and follow-up easier. A well-written plan allows the supervisor or committee to see the feasibility of the topic, the suitability of the method, and the balance between chapters before full writing begins. This early

clarity reduces later revisions, saves time, and gives the researcher a stronger foundation for drafting and defending the study.

### **What does a good research plan include?**

**A good plan is usually built around connected elements, such as:**

- A controlled provisional title (it shows the topic and its limits).
- A precise problem statement in one central question, with sub-questions or hypotheses when needed.
- Clear objectives (what do you want to prove, describe, or analyze?).
- Study limits (time, place, topic, corpus) so the topic does not expand without control.
- Key terms and concepts, agreed on from the start.
- Previous studies: not for copying, but to see what was done and identify the “gap.”
- The corpus or sample: which texts? how were they chosen? what is the selection rule?
- The method and tools, and how they will be applied step by step.
- A structural outline (parts, chapters, sections) with a short note about the role of each part.
- A rough timeline for stages (collection, analysis, writing, revision).

### **The research plan in linguistic and literary studies in Algerian universities:**

In Arabic language and literature, topics are often very wide. They may be about a rhetorical phenomenon, narrative structure, an image, or style.

Here, the plan becomes essential. It narrows the angle of study. For example, instead of “Rhetoric in pre-Islamic poetry,” the topic can become: metaphor in

selected Mu‘allaqat, based on a clear selection rule. Or instead of “Narration in the Algerian novel,” it can become: narrative time structure in two or three novels within a specific period.

This control affects everything. It affects the corpus, the method, the tools, and even the chapter structure.

It is also useful to link the plan to method choice. A method is not chosen by feeling. It is chosen based on the corpus and the research question. Al-Rashid expresses this awareness when he says: “The method is the path followed to study the research corpus, examine it, and make it speak.”<sup>34</sup>

A good plan makes this “path” visible. What will you do with the texts? How will you read them? What analysis steps will lead to defensible results?

A strong plan also shows the student’s readiness for serious academic work. It reflects scientific awareness and real engagement with correct methodology. This is why the plan is usually evaluated by the supervisor or a scientific committee before final approval to begin the full research.

Building a solid plan is not only technical ordering. It needs critical awareness. It needs knowledge of the field’s requirements. It also needs the ability to use previous knowledge to shape a complete project. So the research plan becomes the gate. It moves the student from theoretical learning to scientific production.

In Algerian universities, the research plan in linguistic and literary studies often functions as a contract of reading: it states in advance what the researcher will consider evidence, what concepts will guide interpretation, and how the

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<sup>34</sup> –Abdullah bin Salim Al-Rashid, *Writing Scientific Research: Principles, Insights, and Experiences* (digital edition), p. 100

analysis will proceed without slipping into general talk. Because texts can be approached from many angles (linguistic, stylistic, cultural, pragmatic), the plan helps the student justify the chosen entry point and clarify the analytical framework—terms, categories, and procedures—so the study remains consistent from introduction to results.

The plan also plays a practical role in academic follow-up: it helps supervisors and committees evaluate the feasibility of the project early. They can see whether the corpus is manageable, whether the chapters are logically sequenced, and whether the expected outcomes match the time and resources available. When these elements are balanced, the plan protects the student from later inflation of the topic, reduces methodological confusion, and makes the final writing stage smoother because the structure has already been tested and approved.

## **Elements of the research plan**

### **1) Research title:**

The title is not a decorative element. It is the “gate” of the academic text. It is the first thing that tells the reader what the work is about and where it stops.

Baligh Hamdi Ismail states clearly that an academic article—close to university research—starts with the title. He says: “The academic article consists of main components, the first of which is: the title.”<sup>35</sup>

### **A good title should do three connected jobs:**

It shows meaning: what does the research study?

It shows limits: where does the research stop?

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<sup>35</sup> – Ismail, Baligh Hamdi, *Academic Writing: A Guide to Developing Persuasive Argumentative Writing Skills*, p. 88

It signals the angle: how will the topic be studied (descriptive, analytical, stylistic, historical, etc.)?

The title must also match the internal structure of the study. Consistency between title, plan, and chapters is part of academic clarity. Ismail stresses the need for connected headings. He says the writer must ensure: “Main and subheadings, and all parts of the research, are connected in a tight logical and objective context.”<sup>36</sup>

**For precision and brevity, a useful title pattern is:**

**(Phenomenon / concept) in (corpus): (approach / study)**

Example: “Poetic imagery in the poetry of Mufdi Zakaria: a stylistic study.”

This works because it specifies the topic (poetic imagery), the corpus (Mufdi Zakaria’s poetry), and the methodological angle (stylistic).

The title should also fit the objectives. In literary research, it can reflect style, symbolism, or major themes. This helps the researcher stay inside the chosen methodological frame. So the title acts like a work frame. It keeps the study focused from start to finish.

Finally, the title should be balanced. It should give enough information without trapping the study in very narrow details. It should avoid vague wording that leaves the reader unsure about the topic. So the title is a key part of research communication and must be chosen carefully.

## **2) Introduction:**

The introduction is the entry point to the research. It prepares the reader to understand the topic. It helps them follow the path of the study.

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<sup>36</sup> – Ibid., p. 48

It usually starts with a general background. Then it moves gradually toward defining the problem and stating the central question briefly. Ismail confirms this when he says: “Often, the opening sentence, or what is known as the introduction, is the first step in drafting.”<sup>37</sup>

A good introduction follows a clear logic: from general to specific. It explains the scientific context. It shows why the topic matters and why it was chosen. It defines the angle and limits (corpus or sample, time frame, field). Then it states the problem as one main question, with sub-questions or hypotheses when needed.

It is also helpful to mention the method and tools briefly. It is helpful to give a quick look at the structure of the study (chapters and sections). This gives the reader a “route map” before details.

The introduction should also show the general frame the research belongs to. It should clarify the field, such as literature, language, or history. It should show the topic’s importance within that frame. It can also point to the theoretical background, like key theories or concepts used in earlier studies. This helps the reader see how the research connects to what came before.

The introduction should present the problem in a focused way. It is the “core” of the study. It tells the reader what the real question is and why it deserves analysis. Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim stresses turning the problem into a clear question. He says: “He must put it in the form of a specific question that needs a specific answer.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> – Ismail, Baligh Hamdi, *Academic Writing: A Guide to Developing Persuasive Argumentative Writing Skills*, p. 61

<sup>38</sup>– Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim, *Foundations of Scientific Research for Preparing University Theses*, Al-Warraq Foundation, Amman, Jordan, 1st ed., 2000, p. 30

**So the problem in the introduction should not be a vague title. It should be built through short steps:**

- Define the problem precisely, without confusing breadth or vagueness.
- Phrase it as a question or questions that can be answered within the study's limits.
- Break it into elements that show what data is needed and what sub-questions will be handled.
- Define key terms to avoid multiple interpretations<sup>39</sup>.

With this approach, the introduction becomes functional. It presents the issue. It shows the “gap” or the reason for the question. It hints briefly at how the study will be done (method and corpus). Then it gives the reader a clear thread to follow until the conclusion.

The introduction should be short but complete. It should balance necessary information without heavy details that confuse the reader. It should keep an objective academic tone, not an emotional one. It is not only to attract attention. It is a real map that guides the reader. A clear introduction strengthens the scientific value of the work.

### **3) The research problem (problematic):**

The problem statement is the heart of the plan. It turns a general topic into specific questions. These questions guide later decisions: objectives, method, tools, corpus or sample, and study limits.

Al-Ma‘ani and others stress that the start must be a clear problem definition. They say: “The researcher should begin with a clear definition of the research

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<sup>39</sup> – Ibid., pp. 29–30.

problem, then set hypotheses linked to the problem, then determine how to collect the required data and information and analyze it.”<sup>40</sup>

A good problem statement is clear and focused. It shows a real issue that can be studied. It is controlled by limits that prevent distraction. It specifies the corpus (which texts? which period?). It defines concepts (what do we mean by “poetic image”?). It sets the approach (stylistic, rhetorical, semiotic, etc.). Then it breaks the main question into doable sub-questions.

For example, instead of a broad topic like “poetic imagery,” the problem can be: What are the features of poetic imagery in Mufdi Zakaria’s poetry? How is it built aesthetically and linguistically? Then more precise questions follow: which patterns appear most (metaphor, simile, metonymy)? How do they form inside context? What meanings do they serve (mobilization, identity, resistance)? And which tools will reveal this? In this way, the problem becomes a real engine, not an opening phrase.

The problem should not be written in a vacuum. It should be placed in its research context. The reader needs to know what was said before, where the shortage is, and why the question matters now.

It helps to hint at main directions in earlier writing, then define the gap clearly. In this meaning, Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim links research value to filling gaps. He says it happens by “filling some gaps between information or facts.”<sup>41</sup>

So, if the issue is “poetic imagery,” it should connect to earlier debates. Did past studies focus on traditional rhetoric more than stylistic or linguistic approaches? Did they limit the sample to certain poets? Did they mention

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<sup>40</sup> – Ahmed Al-Ma‘ani, and others, *Scientific Research and Statistics Methods: How Do You Write a Scientific Paper?* , p. 33

<sup>41</sup> - Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim, *Foundations of Scientific Research for Preparing University Theses*, p. 28

mechanisms in description only, without tool-based analysis? When the gap is clear, the problem becomes scientifically justified. It shows research necessity.

This also connects to scientific accumulation. The researcher should not repeat what was done. They should start where others ended. Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim says: “It is the researcher’s duty to begin where other scholars ended.”<sup>42</sup>

Practically, you can show the context in one or two sentences, like:

- Although previous studies addressed poetic imagery, the aspect of (...) is still limited or unresolved.
- This study aims to fill this gap by (defining the corpus + method + analysis angle).

Finally, the problem should have some flexibility. Sometimes, new ideas appear during research. Some unexpected aspects emerge. This may require slight adjustment of questions. This does not mean the problem is vague at the start. It should remain a precise and well-designed starting point, with flexibility in adapting to what appears during scientific investigation.

A well-built problematic also works as a **filter** throughout the writing: it decides what enters the study and what stays outside it. When the researcher faces large amounts of texts, theories, or examples, the problem statement becomes the standard for selection—only what serves the central question and its sub-questions is included. This prevents the common weakness of literary and linguistic research: drifting into lengthy summaries of theory or scattered textual quotations without a clear analytical function. In this sense, the problematic is not only the “start” of the plan; it remains the reference point that

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<sup>42</sup> -Ibid., p. 28

keeps the argument focused, the chapters connected, and the conclusions directly tied to the original research need.

#### **4) Research objectives:**

This element shows the purpose of the study. It answers: what does the researcher want to achieve or add?

Objectives must match the problem statement. They must also be achievable within the study's limits.

**Example:** analyzing the structure of poetic imagery in Mufdi Zakaria's poetry. Or identifying stylistic features that shape his poetic discourse.

Objectives are central because they guide the whole work. Clear objectives keep the research organized. They should be specific and measurable. The researcher should be able to track progress toward them.

Objectives must also stay close to the main question. The problem guides the research, so objectives must fit it directly. They should not exceed the scope or require unrealistic time and resources.

Objectives should be realistic. Over-ambitious goals can make the project impossible within the available limits. Research needs consistent effort over time, so objectives must fit the time and place of the study.

In the end, objectives also define expected outputs. They shape the kind of results the research aims to reach. Clear objectives help the researcher stay on track. They also make it easier to evaluate success.

#### **5) Research significance:**

Significance explains why the topic was chosen and what it adds. It can show cognitive value, methodological value, or practical value.

Al-Rashid explains that research is, in essence, an addition offered to the scientific community. He says: “Research is a scientific work presented by the researcher to the scientific community, revealing something new, inventing it, or adding views or conclusions related to existing issues.”<sup>43</sup>

So significance is the face of contribution. It may be discovering something new. It may complete something missing. It may correct an error. It may clarify a difficult point. It may shorten a long discussion without losing meaning. It may collect scattered material. Or it may organize dispersed ideas.

**A researcher can justify significance through points like:**

- **Scientific significance:** filling a knowledge gap, rereading an issue with better data, expanding theoretical understanding.
- **Methodological significance:** applying a method or tool to an under-studied corpus, or building tighter analysis steps.
- **Practical significance:** using results in teaching, improving critique tools, guiding future research paths.

Methodological value appears clearly when a researcher applies a new approach to literary texts. For example, stylistic analysis supported by digital tools, or combining rhetoric with text statistics. It also appears when the researcher develops more controlled procedures, like clear corpus selection criteria or a coding model for analyzing poetic images. This kind of contribution can help future researchers. It gives them a usable tool that can be adopted and improved. Then “significance” becomes more than a “important topic.” It becomes a solid method that improves how we study the topic.

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<sup>43</sup> - Abdullah bin Salim Al-Rashid, *Writing Scientific Research: Principles, Insights, and Experiences* (digital edition), 1st ed., Riyadh, 2020, p. 13

## **6) Research hypotheses or questions:**

In theoretical or literary research, analysis is often exploratory. So researchers often use questions instead of hypotheses.

Research questions express what the researcher wants to check. For example: “What are the features of poetic imagery in Mufdi Zakaria’s poetry?” Or: “How does poetic imagery contribute to expressing national identity?” These questions frame the study and guide the researcher.

The available tools must be able to answer these questions. Literary research may rely on text analysis and comparison. It may also examine cultural and historical influences on style. The researcher must ensure that questions fit the chosen method. They must also ensure that evidence can answer them in a scientific way. Strong questions help research succeed. They also make results useful for future studies.

Well-formed research questions also act like a navigation system for the study: they determine what each chapter is supposed to achieve and what kind of evidence is needed at each step. When questions are too broad, the analysis becomes scattered; when they are too narrow, the study risks producing trivial results. So the best questions balance focus with depth: they are specific enough to be answered through the chosen corpus, yet rich enough to produce meaningful interpretation and discussion.

In linguistic and literary studies, it is also useful to organize questions in levels: a main question that defines the core aim, then sub-questions that break it into analyzable parts (tools, patterns, functions, context, comparison). This layered structure helps the researcher maintain a clear line of argument and makes the conclusion stronger, because the final results appear as direct answers gathered step by step rather than general impressions.

## 7) The chosen method:

Here the researcher states the method or methods used in analysis. Examples include descriptive, analytical, historical, structural, or pragmatic approaches. The choice must fit the topic and objectives.

Example: using the stylistic method to analyze rhetorical and aesthetic features in poetic texts.

Method is the procedural pillar that organizes the researcher's work. Results have no value if they do not rest on a clear path of presentation, analysis, and reasoning. Abdullah Mohammed Al-Shami summarizes the essence of method. He says: "Method represents the style of presentation, calm discussion, and full commitment to objectivity."<sup>44</sup>

So method choice must match the problem, data, and objectives. If the goal is description, the descriptive method fits. If the goal is interpretation and breaking down the phenomenon, analytical or critical methods fit. If the study deals with measurable relations between variables, quantitative methods are often needed.

In literary and linguistic studies, especially with texts, the researcher may use stylistic methods, structural methods, historical methods, reception approaches, or a combination. If combining, they must clarify the role and limits of each method.

The researcher should also explain why this method was chosen and how it helps achieve objectives. For example, if choosing stylistics for poetic imagery in Mufdi Zakaria, they should show how it reveals features and tools of aesthetic construction. They should also explain why another method may not fit the

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<sup>44</sup> – Abdullah Mohammed Al-Shami, *Principles of Scientific Research Methodology*, p. 30

proposed study. This strengthens credibility and shows methodological competence.

Stating the chosen method is not just listing a label; it is explaining the logic of approach. The researcher should show how the method will “operate” on the corpus: what will be examined first, what categories or concepts will guide reading, and what counts as evidence in the analysis. In text-based research, this often means clarifying the unit of analysis (word, image, narrative sequence, speech act), the steps of interpretation, and the criteria used to support claims so the study does not depend on personal taste.

When more than one method is used, the key is to define a division of labor between them. One approach may serve the contextual frame (historical or cultural), while another handles the internal structure of the text (stylistic or structural), and a third may address function and interaction (pragmatic or discourse-based). By specifying what each method contributes—and where it stops—the researcher avoids methodological overlap, keeps the chapters consistent, and makes the final conclusions easier to defend academically.

### **8) The corpus of the study (sample / texts):**

The corpus is the set of texts, poems, or works that the researcher will analyze. It is a decisive element because it sets practical limits and prevents uncontrolled expansion.

So the corpus must be defined precisely. Which texts? How many? From which collection or period? And why these texts? This keeps analysis connected to the research focus.

**When building the corpus, it helps to consider three points:**

1. **Representation and relevance:** chosen texts should represent the studied phenomenon convincingly.
2. **Achievable limits:** define time, type, and size so the topic does not branch out. Example: ten poems selected from a specific collection based on a clear rule.
3. **Availability of material:** success depends on access to texts and references. Al-Shami warns against topics where material is hard to find. He says: “Topics where the researcher finds it difficult to locate enough scientific material in local information centers... it is not wise to continue research whose sources are rare.”<sup>45</sup>

The corpus choice must be thoughtful. If the research studies poetic imagery, the researcher should choose enough poems to show variety. The corpus should connect directly to the research problem and objectives. It should not be chosen only because texts are famous or “beautiful.” It should be chosen because it offers real analytical opportunities.

The researcher should also explain selection criteria: time-based, thematic, or stylistic. They should define corpus limits: number, type, source. The size must be balanced. Too small may fail to represent the phenomenon. Too large may weaken analysis and push toward superficiality.

So the sample can be justified in practical language, like: “Ten poems were selected because they represent the most frequent imagery patterns in the collection, and they are enough to show repeated stylistic features without overloading the corpus.”

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<sup>45</sup> – Abdullah Mohammed Al-Shami, *Principles of Scientific Research Methodology and Rules of Editing Manuscripts*, Al-Dar Al-Namudhajiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 2012, p. 9

The corpus should also be treated as a **methodological decision**, not a neutral list of texts. Once it is fixed, the researcher needs to explain how it will be handled: whether the analysis will cover the whole corpus equally or focus on representative excerpts, and whether the study will rely on a complete reading or a structured sampling within the texts. Defining these details early strengthens the plan, because it clarifies the workload, protects the study from random selection during analysis, and makes the results more convincing—since the reader can see that conclusions come from a corpus chosen and treated according to explicit, defensible criteria.

### **9) Previous studies:**

Previous studies means presenting the most important works written on the topic, or part of it. The goal is not to collect many references. The goal is to see what was done and what still needs work. Then the researcher shows where the current study stands within this accumulation.

Writing this part depends on an important researcher quality: continuous reading in the field. Al-Rashid says clearly: “The researcher is an organized reader, knows the foundations of the specialization, widely informed, passionate about what is new, and follows what is new in the field.”<sup>46</sup>

Previous studies should be written briefly and critically through simple steps:

- Select, do not absorb everything: choose the closest studies to your problem.
- Analyze, do not only summarize: state each study’s idea, method, results, and limits in a few lines.
- Compare clearly: where do studies agree and where do they differ (concepts, sample, tools)?

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<sup>46</sup>– Abdullah bin Salim Al-Rashid, *Writing Scientific Research: Principles, Insights, and Experiences* (digital edition) , p. 36

- Define the gap precisely: what was not studied enough? then state that your research comes to address it.

In this way, previous studies become a justification tool. They show the topic is not repetition. They show your study adds something specific in knowledge, method, or application.

In literary research, this part guides the researcher toward deeper reading. For example, if the study is “poetic imagery in Mufdi Zakaria,” the researcher can review studies about his national poetry or his symbolism. If a study focused on symbolism, the researcher can refer to it, then show what remains under-studied. For instance, images may also carry political and social layers that were not examined enough.

Previous studies also help the researcher build a conceptual map of the field. They reveal the main terms that scholars use, the dominant theoretical frames, and the recurring debates around the topic. This prevents the current study from working in isolation or using concepts loosely. When the researcher shows how key notions were defined and applied before, they can adopt a clear position: they may follow a definition, refine it, or argue for a different one—based on reason, not preference.

They also function as a methodological guide. By reviewing how earlier researchers selected their corpora, what tools they used, and where their analyses were strong or weak, the student learns what should be repeated and what should be improved. This is where the “gap” becomes concrete: not a vague claim that “few studies exist,” but a precise statement such as “previous work focused on theme and history, while the stylistic mechanisms of imagery were not analyzed with clear criteria.” That precision makes the new study more defensible from the beginning.

## 10) Expected research difficulties:

Here, the researcher points to challenges they may face while completing the study. Examples include: few references, difficulty collecting material, unclear concepts, or the need to analyze complex texts.

Anticipating difficulties is part of a researcher's "craft." Research does not always move smoothly. A researcher may face obstacles, such as rare references, scattered sources, or difficulty accessing certain materials.

In this sense, Al-Rashid describes the serious researcher as someone who "knows the ways to reach the sources of knowledge, and keeps searching without stopping."<sup>47</sup>

For example, if the topic is "The impact of Palestinian literature on national identity in contemporary Arabic poetry," it is normal to struggle to find studies that address the topic with the exact same wording. This is where proactive planning matters. The researcher can widen the search to "nearby" sources, such as studies on identity, national literature, resistance poetry, or reception. They can also search in university theses and peer-reviewed articles. They can benefit from bibliographies and journal indexes. And they can support the work with parallel sources when needed, like the poet's texts, historical data, interviews, or digital archives.

The researcher should also state these limits in the methodology section. They should explain how they dealt with scarcity, so results remain accurate and justified. This prevents conclusions from being built on uncontrolled, scattered sources.

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<sup>47</sup> – Abdullah bin Salim Al-Rashid, *Writing Scientific Research: Principles, Insights, and Experiences* (digital edition), p. 40

Another difficulty may come from unclear concepts and terms, such as “symbolism” in literary research. Different methodological backgrounds can change the meaning and limits of the term. For this reason, the author stresses precision in terminology. He says: “He must use terms with specific meanings, with no confusion and no ambiguity.”<sup>48</sup>

So the researcher should define terms operationally inside the study. They should explain what “symbolism” means in this research specifically. They should set textual indicators for identifying it. They should also clarify what will not be included in the concept. This makes analysis clearer. It prevents different readings by the audience. It also makes results open to checking and scientific debate.

Analyzing complex texts can be another challenge. This is common when texts are linguistically dense or aesthetically layered. In literary research, like studying “poetic imagery in contemporary Arabic poetry,” the researcher may struggle with complex structures or multiple symbols that need deep interpretation.

Solving this requires careful analytical methods. For example, structural analysis or semiotic analysis. These approaches help break down images and interpret meanings within literary and social context.

Finally, the researcher may face difficulty when drawing future directions from results. This can happen when findings do not match the original expectations. For example, the researcher may expect symbolism in Mufdi Zakaria’s poetry to be directly tied to national issues. But they may discover a personal or emotional

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<sup>48</sup> – Marwan Abdul Majid Ibrahim, *Foundations of Scientific Research for Preparing University Theses*, Al-Warraaq Foundation for Publishing and Distribution, p. 30

layer as well. Then the challenge becomes interpretation and linking results to earlier literature.

In this case, the researcher must stay flexible. They should adjust ideas based on evidence. They should also admit that scientific research can lead to unexpected outcomes.

Another expected difficulty is maintaining balance between breadth and depth. In linguistic and literary topics, the researcher may feel tempted to include every relevant theory, historical detail, or textual example. But expanding too much can weaken analysis and turn the study into compilation. A realistic plan helps here: selecting only what directly serves the research questions, distributing examples strategically across chapters, and setting clear criteria for what counts as “necessary evidence” versus background information.

A further challenge is methodological consistency during analysis. The researcher may begin with clear categories, then drift into mixed criteria when facing rich or ambiguous passages—especially in symbolic or stylistically complex texts. To avoid this, the researcher needs an explicit analytic grid (coding sheet, stylistic indicators, discourse categories, etc.) and must apply it steadily across the corpus. Consistency does not eliminate interpretation, but it makes interpretation accountable and comparable.

There is also the practical difficulty of time management and academic writing pressure. Research often expands during reading, revisions multiply, and documenting sources can consume more time than expected. Anticipating this means setting a realistic schedule for collection, analysis, and writing, and keeping systematic notes from the start (bibliography manager, annotated reading summaries, organized excerpts). With this discipline, obstacles become

manageable, and the study is less likely to be delayed or lose coherence near the final stages.

### **11) Preliminary reference list:**

This list includes the main books, articles, and sources the researcher plans to rely on. These may be theoretical references, previous studies, or original literary sources.

A preliminary reference list is a foundational step in any research. It shows the “knowledge base” the researcher will start from. It helps set the theoretical frame. It also guides reading toward what serves the research problem.

This is why research success is linked to having enough scientific material. It is stated that success requires: “the availability of sufficient sources and information about the topic and field of research.”<sup>49</sup>

So the “preliminary list” is not a final closed list. It is a starting core. It grows and becomes more accurate as work advances. It is useful to organize it into:

(Primary sources / original texts)

and (Secondary references / critical studies)

and (Methodological references / methods and tools).

For example, in a study on “Poetic imagery in the poetry of Mufdi Zakaria,” the preliminary list may include: the poet’s collections (as the main corpus), critical books on the concept of poetic imagery and its development in Arabic criticism, stylistic and rhetorical references that support analysis, and articles or theses about Mufdi Zakaria’s poetry or resistance poetry and identity.

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<sup>49</sup> – Ahmed Al-Ma‘ani, and others, *Scientific Research and Statistics Methods: How Do You Write a Scientific Paper?*, p. 34

It is also best to record full bibliographic details from the beginning for each reference. This includes: author, title, edition, place, publisher, year, and page numbers. This prevents citation problems later.

It also helps to add a short note next to each reference explaining its direct use for the study, such as: definition, method, evidence, or results.

A preliminary reference list also works as a research compass: it helps the student avoid random reading by ranking sources according to their role in the project. Some references will define core concepts, others will provide methodological guidance, and others will supply historical or critical context. When this hierarchy is clear from the start, the researcher can build the theoretical framework faster and ensure that every citation serves a function, not just decoration.

It is equally important that the list reflects variety and balance. In linguistic and literary studies, relying on one type of source only (for example, general textbooks or one critical school) can narrow interpretation. A strong preliminary list usually mixes foundational works with recent peer-reviewed articles, local and international scholarship when available, and both classical and modern references when the topic requires it. This balance strengthens the study's credibility and reduces the risk of missing key debates in the field.

### **Lecture 3: The Research Preparation Stage**

1. Initial preparation of sources and references (bibliography).
2. Recording references on cards.
3. The reading stage.
4. The material-collection stage (gathering notes).
5. Organizing the cards.

## **The research preparation stage:**

This stage is one of the most important early steps in any research project. It is the moment of “putting the scientific house in order” before writing begins. The researcher defines the problem carefully. Then they collect suitable sources. Then they read, sort, analyze, and select what supports the theoretical and practical parts of the study.

This stage protects the research from chaos later. It also helps the study stay coherent. And it supports stronger, safer results. The authors confirm this idea. They explain that planning here means building a full picture of how the work will be done, how data will be collected, how it will be analyzed, and why the chosen methodology makes sense.

The research preparation stage is also the time to make early methodological decisions that will shape the entire project. The researcher clarifies the type of study, the suitable approach (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed), and the practical limits of the work—time frame, corpus or sample, and available resources. When these choices are made early and written down clearly, the project becomes easier to manage, and later stages (data collection, analysis, and writing) follow a stable direction instead of constant changes.

It is equally a stage of building research discipline and workflow. The researcher sets a realistic schedule, creates an organized system for notes and references, and defines standards for documentation from the start. This reduces common risks such as losing sources, mixing quotations, or forgetting page numbers. With a strong preparation routine, the researcher enters the writing phase with ready material, clear structure, and a more confident sense of what they are trying to prove and how they will prove it.

Below is a detailed explanation of the main steps in this stage:

## **1) Initial preparation of sources and references (preliminary bibliography):**

The preliminary bibliography is a foundational step at the start of the project. It gives the researcher an early “map” of what has been written on the topic, before the final reference list is ready.

In this step, the researcher makes a first inventory of what may be useful. This includes books, articles, theses, journals, and online sources. The researcher should also separate sources from references. Sources are original texts, like poetry collections and primary corpora. References are secondary works, like critical, theoretical, or historical studies.

Collecting research material does not succeed without a clear plan. Without a plan, the researcher can feel more confused, not less. That is why the researcher usually follows practical routes, such as: searching libraries, reading and scanning, using databases, consulting experts (especially the supervisor), and recording quotations and summaries.

Here, the preliminary bibliography becomes an organizing practice. It helps the researcher see past approaches. It helps them choose reliable material. It also helps them notice gaps where the new study can add something.

The process often starts with searching for relevant sources. The researcher can use university libraries. They can use academic databases. They can use platforms like Google Scholar. They can also use online catalogs and journal indexes.

For example, if the topic is “Poetic imagery in the poetry of Mufdi Zakaria,” the researcher should look for:

- books on rhetorical and stylistic analysis of imagery,
- studies on poetic imagery in Arabic criticism,

- and studies focused on Mufdi Zakaria's poetry in particular.

After collecting references, the researcher begins sorting them by relevance.

They can create groups, such as:

- **Theoretical references:** works that explain concepts and critical frameworks.
- **Applied references:** works that analyze Mufdi Zakaria, or analyze similar poets and periods.

This sorting saves time later. It also helps the researcher focus on what matters most for the research question.

Another useful step is distinguishing between core references and supporting references.

- Core references build the main framework of the study. They are used frequently. For example, Mufdi Zakaria's poetry collections are core if they form the main corpus.
- Supporting references help explain, compare, or expand. They may discuss related topics, similar movements, or similar techniques.

The value of the preliminary bibliography is that it gives the researcher a first picture of the field. It shows trends in previous studies. It shows common methods and tools. This early discovery helps the researcher decide their direction.

For instance, if most studies on Mufdi Zakaria use a structural method, the researcher has two clear options.

They can use the same method but ask a new question, use a wider corpus,

or define concepts more precisely.

Or they can choose a different method to fill a gap.

In short, the preliminary bibliography is not just collecting titles. It is an organized process. It shapes the research idea. It clarifies the research path. And it protects the researcher from drifting away from the main problem.

The preliminary bibliography stage is also where the researcher should begin building a system of documentation and note-taking, not just a list of titles. Recording full bibliographic data from the first encounter, saving PDFs or scans with clear file names, and writing short annotated notes (what the source adds, how it relates to the problem, key quotations) prevents later confusion and reduces the risk of citation gaps. This early organization turns reading into usable research material rather than scattered pages and forgotten references.

It also helps to treat preliminary collection as an iterative cycle: search → read selectively → refine keywords → search again. As the researcher's understanding grows, they discover better terms, closer debates, and more specialized sources, especially in theses, journal indexes, and bibliographies at the end of major books. By repeating this cycle, the preliminary bibliography gradually shifts from "everything that might help" to a focused set of core and supporting works that directly serve the research questions and the chosen method.

## **2) Recording references on cards:**

After preparing the preliminary bibliography, the researcher moves to a practical organizing step. They write each reference on a separate card. Cards can be paper or digital.

This turns a simple "list of titles" into a working archive that can be used during writing. Each card includes key bibliographic data: author, title, publisher,

place, year, and pages. The researcher can also add a short summary and one key idea or concept. Then cards can be arranged by topic, method, or time period.

Good writing is strongly linked to good organization. As Ismail states: “Skilled writing is evidence of good thinking, planning, organization, and careful revision.”<sup>50</sup>

So reference cards become a practical tool. They reduce random back-and-forth between books. They make later citation easier. They also build a personal database that grows as the research progresses.

A card usually contains:

- Author’s name.
- Title of the book or article.
- Publisher, place, and year.
- Page numbers.

Recording references on cards gives the researcher a simple but powerful way to control sources from the beginning. Instead of keeping citations scattered in notebooks or files, each reference becomes a separate unit with complete details, making it easy to return to the source and use it correctly during writing.

These cards also support accuracy and speed. When each card includes the author, title, publication data, and page numbers—plus a brief note about the main idea—the researcher can cite quickly, avoid missing information,

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<sup>50</sup> – Ismail, Baligh Hamdi, *Academic Writing: A Guide to Developing Persuasive Argumentative Writing Skills*, p. 34)

and reduce the risk of confusing sources, especially when the number of references grows.

Example: if the researcher studies Mufdi Zakaria, a card can include the poetry collection details, plus the exact page where the line appears.

It is also very useful to add a short content note. One or two lines can be enough. For example: “This study explains rhetorical devices used to build imagery in resistance poetry.” These notes help the researcher remember quickly what each source offers.

Cards can also include personal remarks. The researcher can note gaps, strengths, or weaknesses in the source. They can also note where the source might fit inside the future chapters. This helps the researcher think critically, not only collect information.

When cards are sorted by topic or chapter, writing becomes much faster. The researcher can open one folder and find everything needed for that section, with ready citation details.

Recording references on cards also helps the researcher build a retrieval system that matches the structure of the study. When each card carries not only bibliographic details but also tags (concepts, methods, chapter number, key terms), the researcher can quickly pull what they need during drafting without rereading entire sources. Over time, the cards become a living research map: they show which areas are well covered, where evidence is still thin, and which chapters need more support—so organization directly improves both writing speed and analytical depth.

Reference cards function like an external memory for the researcher. Instead of keeping ideas scattered in margins or relying on recall, information becomes

small, manageable units that can be sorted, moved, and reused. As reading expands, repeatedly returning to the same books becomes time-consuming, while a well-made card gives you a ready snapshot—full details plus the key point—so you can retrieve the source and its value in seconds rather than hours.

Practically, a card works best when it follows a stable format: complete bibliographic data + central idea + intended use. You record publication details, then add one sentence answering “What does this source contribute?” and another answering “Where will I use it?” (definition, theoretical frame, comparison, textual evidence, counter-argument). In literary research, the card can also include a specific textual example with the exact page number, followed by a short note on its rhetorical or stylistic significance. This turns the card from simple documentation into a ready building block for a chapter.

Most importantly, a card system supports critical thinking and synthesis, not organization alone. When you add brief remarks about a source’s strengths, limits, or the questions it raises, you start forming your own research position early instead of merely collecting quotations. Over time, grouping cards around one concept (such as symbolism or stylistics) quickly reveals agreements and disagreements across studies and highlights where your work can contribute—sometimes not by a completely new idea, but by tighter argumentation, clearer evidence arrangement, and a more convincing analytical angle drawn from material that was previously scattered.

One practical upgrade is to give each card a **unique ID** and a small “context strip” beside the quotation (one or two lines before/after the cited line). This prevents misquoting and keeps the meaning tied to its original setting—especially important in poetry, where one line may shift meaning across the stanza. It also helps to note any special details that affect use later, such as: *original wording*

*vs. your translation, variant editions, or different page numbers across prints.*

These small checks save a lot of correction time when drafting and revising.

Cards can also be used as a **mini-workshop for building arguments**. After you collect enough cards, you can lay them out (physically or digitally) and group them into “claim → evidence → interpretation” chains. Some cards will support a point, others will complicate it, and a few may even challenge it—keeping them visible helps you avoid one-sided reading. This way, the writing phase becomes easier because you already see how your chapters will move: not as piles of citations, but as connected reasoning supported by carefully chosen textual proof.

### **3) The reading stage:**

Reading is not a casual step. It is a planned stage for understanding and building scientific material. Research begins with a question. Then it requires enough information about the problem and what previous researchers have reached.

Ahmed Hassan and others describe research as a process that seeks solutions to a problem. They explain that after defining the problem, the researcher begins gathering more information about it and about what researchers have reached.<sup>51</sup>

This means reading in this stage should be critical and aware. It often starts with broad reading to understand the field. Then it moves to selective deep reading as the problem becomes clearer. The researcher should write notes, questions, and quotations during reading. This turns “browsing” into organized material that supports later chapters and improves accuracy.

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<sup>51</sup> – Ahmed Hassan and others, *Fundamentals of Scientific Research*, Egypt’s Scholars Foundation, Egypt, 1st ed., 2016, p. 42

A practical way to read is to use levels:

- **First level:** general reading to understand the topic and its main debates.
- **Second level:** focused reading for the most relevant works.
- **Third level:** deep reading for key texts that will shape definitions, concepts, and analysis.

Reading at this stage should be active, not passive. The researcher reads with a clear purpose: to understand how the problem was discussed before, what concepts were used, and what questions remain unanswered. This makes reading a tool for shaping the study, not just collecting information.

Using reading levels also keeps the process efficient. General reading builds a broad background, focused reading selects the most relevant works, and deep reading strengthens the core framework of the research. When notes and key quotations are recorded during each level, the researcher gradually builds organized material that supports later analysis and writing.

For example, in a study on poetic imagery, the researcher may first read general books on imagery in Arabic criticism. Then they focus on works about modern poetry and resistance poetry. Then they read closely the works that directly discuss Mufdi Zakaria.

During the reading stage, the researcher should read with a purpose-driven lens: every text is approached with specific questions in mind—What definition does it offer? What method does it use? What evidence does it rely on? What can be reused as a concept, and what must be debated or corrected? This kind of reading prevents the common problem of turning the literature review into a long summary, because the researcher is constantly evaluating how each source serves the research problem and where it fits within the argument.

It is also useful to convert reading into structured outputs rather than scattered notes. For instance, the researcher can produce brief annotated summaries, concept sheets for key terms, and comparison tables that track differences between studies (corpus, tools, results, limits). These outputs make later writing more coherent: definitions become consistent, citations become ready, and the theoretical framework grows as an organized system instead of a collection of isolated quotations.

#### **4) The material–collection stage (gathering notes / “taqmeesh”):**

This stage is the practical extension of reading. Here, understanding becomes recorded material. The researcher extracts information and quotations directly linked to the research problem. They write them on cards or in files. They must always record the source and page number. They can also add a short note about how the quotation will be used later.

The goal is not collecting a huge amount. The goal is choosing well and preparing material for analysis and writing. This matches Ahmed Shalabi’s advice. He says the student should support their opinion with enough material, and present it with accuracy and clarity: “If the student forms an opinion through reading, they should gather enough material to show it, and they should present it beautifully, accurately, and clearly.”<sup>52</sup>

So note–gathering becomes a ready “stock.” It reduces repeated return to books during writing. It also supports academic honesty because every quotation is linked to a precise reference.

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<sup>52</sup> – Ahmed Shalabi, *How Do You Write a Research Paper or a Thesis?*, 6th ed., Al–Nahda Al–Misriyya Library, Cairo, 1968, p. 9

A key point here is strict documentation. The researcher must record author, title, publication details, and page number. This protects the work from citation mistakes and plagiarism issues.

Another key point is selection. The researcher should collect what serves the question directly. If the study focuses on national imagery, the researcher should not waste time gathering material unrelated to that focus.

It is also important to add the researcher's own short comment. This is not extra. It shows the researcher's voice and thinking. Muwafaq bin Abdullah stresses the need to separate quoted text from the researcher's own conclusions and remarks: "When writing, one must distinguish between quoted texts from sources and the conclusions and notes that reflect the writer's personality."<sup>53</sup>

So, if the researcher finds a quotation about symbolism in Mufdi Zakaria, it helps to add a note like: "This supports my idea that symbolism functions as a tool for raising national awareness." These notes turn collecting into thinking. They also make later analysis easier.

Organizing material early also speeds up writing. When notes are arranged by themes, chapters, or axes, the researcher can retrieve evidence quickly. Ammar Bouhouche explains that training in research includes using documents, arranging information, analyzing it, and drawing results.<sup>54</sup>

So early organization saves time and increases credibility. Each idea can be supported by a clear citation.

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<sup>53</sup> –Muwafaq bin Abdullah bin Abdulqadir, *Scientific Research Methodology and Writing Academic Theses*, Dar Al-Tawhid Publishing, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1st ed., 2011, p. 100

<sup>54</sup> – Ammar Bouhouche, *A Researcher's Guide to Preparing Academic Research and Studies*, Al-Hindawi Press, Amman, Jordan, 1981, p. 20

The material-collection stage (“taqmeesh”) is where the researcher turns reading into a usable evidence bank: selected quotations, paraphrased ideas, and factual notes are extracted only when they serve the research questions, and each item is stored with complete citation details and a brief purpose tag (definition, theoretical support, example, counter-argument). When this stock is organized by themes or chapter headings from the start, writing becomes smoother, argumentation becomes stronger, and the researcher can prove every claim quickly without returning repeatedly to the same sources.

Another practical rule in this stage is to separate direct quotations from paraphrased notes in a clear way. The researcher should record the quotation exactly as it appears, keep it inside quotation marks, and add a short context line so the meaning is not taken out of place. When paraphrasing, they should still cite the source, but write the idea in their own words with accuracy, avoiding distortion. This careful distinction makes later writing cleaner and reduces the risk of accidental misquotation.

It is also useful to write brief analysis memos while gathering notes. After collecting a set of cards or files, the researcher can add a short paragraph explaining what the material suggests so far: emerging patterns, contradictions, possible explanations, and questions that need more evidence. These memos keep the project intellectually active, not mechanical, and they help the researcher move smoothly from collection to interpretation when the analysis and drafting stages begin.

#### **5) Organizing the cards:**

After collecting many cards and notes, the researcher needs to organize them. This can follow the expected plan. Or it can follow a topic-based classification.

Cards can be organized by:

- chapters,
- themes,
- key concepts,
- or type of information (definition, example, opinion, critique, personal note).

This organization prevents chaos when material becomes large. It also makes writing faster later. It shows the researcher's ability to manage the project and control its stages. This is a sign of scientific and methodological maturity.

For example, in a study on poetic imagery in Mufdi Zakaria, the researcher can create folders like:

- national images,
- symbolic images,
- emotional images,
- rhetorical tools,
- stylistic indicators,
- previous critical opinions.

Organizing cards by chapters is also very helpful. It turns scattered material into a clear structure ready for writing. It reduces the risk of mixing evidence between sections.

Organizing the cards helps you see your material as a clear structure instead of scattered notes. When cards are grouped by chapters or themes, you can quickly find the exact definition, example, or critique you need while writing, without wasting time searching through many sources.

It also helps you keep your argument consistent. By separating cards by key concepts and types of information, you avoid mixing evidence between sections and you notice early if a chapter is missing support or has too many repeated points. This makes drafting smoother and the final research more coherent.

Ahmed Shalabi notes that innovation does not always mean discovering something completely new. Sometimes it appears in “arranging known material in a useful new order, or forming an organized topic from scattered material.”<sup>55</sup>

This is exactly what card organization does. It turns scattered notes into an organized body of material. It becomes easier to use, expand, and develop without confusion.

Cards can also be organized by concepts. For example: symbolism, stylistics, political function. Or by information type: definitions, examples, critical views, and personal notes. This helps the researcher place the right material in the right place during writing.

In the end, strong card organization makes the research process smoother. It makes evidence easy to access. It supports accurate citation. And it reflects the researcher’s professional handling of information and academic work.

Organizing the cards also helps the researcher create a clear argumentative flow. When evidence, definitions, and critical opinions are grouped in the right place, the researcher can see what each section needs: where a concept requires a stronger definition, where an example is missing, or where a counter-view should be added to make the discussion balanced. In this way, organization

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<sup>55</sup> – Ahmed Shalabi, *How Do You Write a Research Paper or a Thesis?*, 6th ed., Al-Nahda Al-Misriyya Library, Cairo, 1968, p.25

does not serve writing speed only; it directly improves the logic and completeness of the analysis.

It also makes revision easier later. As the study develops, the researcher may adjust chapter titles, merge themes, or change the order of sections. If the cards are well sorted—with consistent labels and cross-references—it becomes simple to move material from one section to another without losing citations or mixing sources. This flexibility keeps the project controlled even when the plan evolves during analysis and drafting.

## **Conclusion:**

Scientific research methodology is the backbone of serious academic work. No scientific study gains real value unless it rests on clear methods, disciplined steps, and ethical rules from start to finish. For this reason, this teaching booklet presented an integrated view. It covered the concept of research, its types, its conditions, its stages, and the researcher's qualities and skills. It also combined theory with practical guidance, in a way that supports students in Algerian universities.

This booklet stressed one key point. Research is not a temporary school task. It is not only for grades or for a degree. It is deep training in systematic thinking. It teaches how to build an argument. It teaches respect for evidence. It also teaches the difference between opinion and proven knowledge. Research moves us from impression to proof. From general talk to clear focus. From receiving knowledge to producing it. It helps build a critical mind that can analyze phenomena and understand their relations, instead of only consuming ready-made ideas.

The booklet also showed how research quality is measured. It is not about many pages or many quotations. It is about a clear problem statement, precise concepts, a coherent plan, a suitable method, sound analysis, and honest results. Method is not a label written in the introduction. It is a real working path. It guides observation and controls reasoning. The research problem is not a broad rhetorical question. It is a precise scientific construction that sets scope, limits, and justification.

By presenting research types and academic levels, the booklet clarified an important idea. Each university stage has its own requirements. The Bachelor's

project is a first training in organized research. The Master's thesis moves toward deeper analysis and more independence. The PhD dissertation is the space for original contribution and real addition to knowledge. Understanding these differences helps students know what is expected. It also prevents mixing levels.

The booklet also emphasized ethics. Research is ethical practice as much as it is knowledge work. There is no method without honesty. There is no analysis without integrity. Respecting previous researchers' rights, citing sources correctly, avoiding plagiarism, and admitting study limits all build a responsible scientific culture. Scientific honesty is not a formal item in the reference list. It is an ethical position. It reflects the researcher's responsibility toward knowledge and the academic community.

The booklet also highlighted the central role of the researcher. A method, no matter how precise, will not work without a competent researcher. The researcher needs knowledge, analytical skill, clear academic language, and perseverance. Research is not mechanical collecting. It is organizing, interpreting, and reasoning. A successful researcher chooses the topic well, controls concepts, engages with previous studies, uses suitable tools, and presents results clearly, without exaggeration or empty claims.

This booklet explained procedural steps too. It discussed building the research plan, writing the title and introduction, and structuring chapters. But the goal was not to offer a ready-made recipe. The goal was to train the student to think in an organized way. The research plan is not only a document for approval. It is a work map. It prevents distraction and keeps the study coherent from beginning to end. The stronger the plan, the more consistent and convincing the results.

It should also be remembered that research is cumulative. It does not appear from nothing. And it does not end when the study is finished. Every study is part of a longer chain of scientific effort. So the value of research is not only in its results. It is also in its ability to open new questions, propose future paths, and enrich scientific discussion within the field.

This booklet aimed to be a simple methodological guide, without losing depth. It aimed to be organized, without complexity. It respects students' level, while still meeting academic quality standards. It does not claim to cover everything, because research methodology is wide and always developing. But it offers a solid base that students can build on later.

Students should also know this. Mastering methodology does not come from reading alone. It comes through continuous practice. It comes through real research work. It also comes through benefiting from teachers' and supervisors' feedback. Methodology is a skill. It improves through training, experience, critique, and revision. Each research project is one more step in building the student's scientific identity.

So the purpose of this booklet goes beyond a single module. It aims to build lasting scientific awareness. It teaches students to treat knowledge with responsible critical thinking. It reminds them that every idea needs evidence, every result needs justification, and every scientific position is open to discussion and development. Research is not the end of the road. It is the beginning of a continuous journey of questioning and learning.

At the end, we stress this. Applying the methodological principles presented here with awareness and discipline will raise the quality of students' research work. It will also strengthen the student's confidence in their ability to produce

knowledge. We hope this material supports every student who seeks serious research and wants to take a real place within the knowledge community.

We ask God for success and guidance in serving knowledge and its people. We also hope this work becomes a useful brick in learning and research, and a step toward a stronger university and better scientific research, with wider horizons of quality and creativity.

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