THE EFL TEACHER

FREE INTRODUCTORY COURSE · PDF SERIES

Research Proposal

Made Simple

From choosing a research topic to writing a clear, organized proposal.

M. Khames

A Practical Guide for Master's Students in English Didactics

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7	1	4
Core units	Final practical application	Bonus toolkit resources

START HERE

Welcome to the Course

A practical, example-driven guide for Master's students in English Didactics

This course is designed to be **practical rather than purely theoretical**. By the end, you will be able to move from a simple research idea to an organized Research Proposal, understand the function of each part, know how to write it, and avoid the most common mistakes.

Every unit uses examples from real English teaching and learning contexts, academic terms explained in simple language, and applied models instead of abstract definitions.

Course objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1	Understand the purpose and structure of a research proposal.
2	Identify and narrow down a research topic in English Didactics.
3	Formulate a clear research problem.
4	Develop research questions, objectives, and hypotheses when appropriate.
5	Identify relevant literature and establish a theoretical framework.
6	Choose an appropriate research methodology.
7	Organize and present a coherent research proposal.

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Your course map

Seven independent units plus a final practical application.

01 Understanding the Research Proposal
What it is, why we write it, and what makes one good.

02 Choosing a Research Topic
From a broad idea to a focused, researchable topic.

03 Developing the Research Problem
Problem, gap, and a strong problem statement.

04 Questions, Objectives & Hypotheses
Three related elements, three different jobs.

05 Literature Review & Theory
Reading critically and building a framework.

06 Research Methodology
Approach, design, sample, instruments, ethics.

07 Writing & Organizing
Structure, timeline, academic style, referencing.

08 Your First Proposal
A worked example and your own planner.

Before you begin: three important notes

1 · EXAMPLES ARE ILLUSTRATIVE

The examples in this course are presented as illustrative examples, not as verified research findings.

2 · YOUR SUPERVISOR COMES FIRST

Always consult your supervisor and departmental guidelines. Proposal structures and requirements differ between universities.

3 · USE AI TOOLS RESPONSIBLY

Use AI for brainstorming, language revision, and organizing ideas, never for inventing references or research findings, and never to replace your own critical thinking.

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UNIT 01

Understanding the Research Proposal

What it is, why it matters, and what makes a good one

1.1 What is a Research Proposal?

A research proposal is an academic document that presents a planned research study. It explains what the researcher intends to investigate, why the topic is worth studying, and how the research will be conducted.

> IN SIMPLE WORDS
>
> A research proposal is a **plan for a research project** before actually carrying it out.

It answers five fundamental questions:

Question	What it means
What?	What do you want to investigate?
Why?	Why is this topic important?
What is missing?	What problem or gap do you want to address?
How?	How will you conduct your research?
Who?	Who or what will be involved in the study?

1.2 Why do we write a Research Proposal?

Planning
Organize your ideas before starting the research.

Clarity
Ensure the topic, problem, and objectives are clearly defined.

Feasibility
Check the research can be done with the available time and resources.

Academic approval
Let supervisors and committees evaluate relevance and quality.

Research direction
A roadmap that guides you throughout the research process.

1.3 Proposal vs. Paper vs. Dissertation

These three terms are related but refer to different academic documents.

Research Proposal	Research Paper	Dissertation
A plan for future research.	A report discussing research or an academic argument.	A complete academic research project.
Explains what the researcher intends to do.	Presents and discusses a specific topic or study.	Presents the research process, findings, and conclusions.

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Research Proposal	Research Paper	Dissertation
Written before conducting the proposed study.	May be based on existing literature or original research.	Written after conducting the research.

REMEMBER

A research proposal describes what you **plan** to investigate, whereas a dissertation presents what you **actually** investigated and discovered.

1.4 What makes a good Research Proposal?

A strong proposal demonstrates five important qualities:

Clarity

The reader can easily understand the research idea.

Relevance

Connected to a meaningful issue in English language teaching and learning.

Focus

Addresses a specific problem rather than a very broad subject.

Feasibility

Can be completed with the available participants, time, and resources.

Coherence

All sections are logically connected.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Which of the following topics is more suitable for a Master's research proposal?

A. Technology in Education.
B. The Impact of Digital Feedback on EFL Students' Writing Performance.

Suggested answer: B. It identifies a specific educational tool, a particular skill, and a target group.

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