Course Code	**PHL 372**
Course Title	**Research Methodology**

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ABUJA

Course Guide for PHL 372: Research Method in Philosophy

Course Developer: Prof. Francis Offor

Introduction

Welcome to **PHL 372: Research Method in Philosophy**. PHL 372 is a three-credit unit course that has a minimum duration of one semester. The course is compulsory for all B.A. philosophy degree students in the university. The course is meant to provide an in-depth study of the purpose, method, style, features and tools of research in philosophy. By tools of research in philosophy, we mean the techniques of language, logic and arguments employed in inquiries in philosophy. Features expected of research in philosophy include rigour, coherence, clarity, concision, critical analysis, conceptual analysis and criticism. Philosophical research admits of various style sheets, notably among which are the MLA (Modern Language Association) and the APA (American Psychological Association) research and reference methods as well as the Chicago Manual of Style. What makes a research uniquely philosophical depends much on the methods employed in the research. Such methods may be Expository, Dialectical, Appraisive, Phenomenological, Socratic, Hermeneutical, Comparative or Contrastive. In employing any of these methods, certain steps are very cardinal to research and writing in Philosophy. The first is to identify an area of interest, read a good number of texts in the area, locate within this area, a subject you are interested in, after which you identify a research problem. An area of interest is however different from area of competence and area of specialisation in the sense that the area of interest creates a base for building an area of competence, for the ultimate realisation of the area of specialisation. This is followed by clarification and interpretation of concepts and ideas. Next, you develop your thesis, followed by your research findings and contributions to knowledge. These steps are meant to show the extent to which a researcher has mastered the techniques of the discipline of philosophy.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand the purpose of philosophical research, which includes the search for truth; the pursuit for the ideal and the desire to improve the human condition.
- Have a good knowledge of basic methods of research in philosophy like the dialectical method and the phenomenological method.
- Understand and be acquainted with relevant research and reference methods like the MLA (Modern Language Association), the APA (American Psychological Association) and the Chicago Manual of Style.
- Master the basic features and tools of research in philosophy.
- Have a good knowledge of the forms, approaches, and steps of research and writing in philosophy and
- Understand the structure of a research or writing in philosophy.

Working through this Course

To successfully complete this course, read the study units, do all assessments, participate in discussion forums, read the recommended books/texts and other materials provided and participate in online facilitation.

Each study unit has an introduction, intended learning outcomes, the main content, conclusion, summary, self-assessment exercise and references/further readings. The introduction will give an insight into what you should expect in the study unit. The intended learning outcomes pose questions that will prepare you for what you should be able to do at the completion of each study unit. The main content provides a deeper analysis of issues discussed in each unit, while the summary is a recap of the issues discussed in the unit. The self-assessment exercises contain questions meant to test your understanding of topics taught in each unit. These questions will assist you to evaluate your learning at the end of each unit and to establish the extent to which you have achieved the intended learning outcomes. To meet the intended learning outcomes, knowledge is presented in text, arranged into modules and units. Click on the links as may be directed, but where you are reading the text offline, you will have to copy and paste the link address into a browser. You can also print and download the texts and save on your computer or external drive. Do not also forget to consult the texts recommended for further reading.

Study Modules and Units

Module 1: Modern Style Sheets and Reference Methods
Unit 1: History and purpose of style sheets
Unit 2: The MLA (Modern Language Association) style sheet
Unit 3: The APA (American Psychological Association) style sheet
Unit 4: The Chicago Manual of Style

Module 2: Methods of Research in Philosophy
Unit 1: The Phenomenological method
Unit 2: The Hermeneutical method
Unit 3: The Dialectical method
Unit 4: The Analytical method

Module 3: Features and Tools of Research in Philosophy
Unit 1: Features: Rigour and coherence
Unit 2: Features: Clarity and concision
Unit 3: Tools: Language
Unit 4: Tools: Logic

Module 4: Forms, Approaches and Steps of Research and Writing in Philosophy
Unit 1: Forms of Research
Research paper, Summary paper and Review essay.
Unit 2: Approaches to research and writing in philosophy
Comparative and Contrastive approaches
Appraissive and Expository approaches
Reconstructive approach
Unit 3: Steps in research and writing in philosophy
Sourcing materials
Identifying an area of research interest
Identifying a research problem
Identifying a research thesis

Module 5: Structure of Research and Writing in Philosophy
Unit 1: Structure of summary paper and review essay
Unit 2: Structure of Long Essay and Project
Unit 3: Structure of Dissertation and Thesis

References for Further Readings

Chatalian, G. 1983. *Philosophy, the world and man: a global conception*. Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press.

Hospers, J. 1973. *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Isaac E. Ukpokolo, 2015. *Methodology of Research and Writing in Philosophy: A Guide*, Ibadan: Kairos Publishing.

Isaiah Berlin, 1978. "The Purpose of Philosophy," in his *Concepts and Categories*. London: The Hogarth Press.

Joseph Margolis, 1968. *An Introduction to Philosophical Inquiry*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Martinich, A. P. 2005, *Philosophical Writing: An Introduction*, 3rd Edition, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Massecar, A. 2010. *How to write a philosophy paper.* The Learning: Commons.

Noam Chomsky, 1979. *Language and Responsibility*, trans. by John Viertel. New York: Pantheon Books.

Offor, F. 2012, *Essentials of Logic*, *Ibadan:* Book Wright Publishers.

Olusegun Oladipo, 2008. *Thinking About Philosophy, A General Guide*. Ibadan: Hope Publications.

Rippon, S. 2008. *A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper,* Harvard: Harvard College Writing Centre Brief Guide Series.

Seech, Z. 2009. *Writing philosophy papers.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Centage Learning.

Wagaman, J. 2014. How to write a critical review essay. Retrieved Mar. 10, 2014, from www.classroorn.synonym.com.

The following links can be used to access materials online:

- https://www.ajol.info
- https://www.jstor.org
- https://www.intechopen.com
- https://www.iosrjournals.org

- https://www.dohainstitute.edu.qa
- https://www.researchgate.net
- https://www.fikpani.wordpress.com
- https://www.goodfellowpublishers.com
- https://ecommons.iuc.edu
- https://www.edugyan.in
- https://www.ukessays.com
- https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com

Presentation Schedule and Assessment

Candidates taking this course must make a presentation on an approved topic and write two term papers. The presentation comes up at the middle of the semester and is received during forum discussions where the presenter is allotted 15 minutes (10 minutes for presentation and 5 minutes for questions and answers), while the term papers are submitted via the recommended medium towards the end of the semester. Topics for presentation and term papers are usually assigned by the course facilitator at the beginning of the semester. The term papers should be between 6 and 8 pages (including references) and should be typewritten in 12 fonts, double line spacing on Times New Roman. The preferred reference is the MLA (Modern Language Association) 9th edition. A copy of this edition can be downloaded online at https://libguides.csudh.edu. The presentation carries 10 marks while the term papers carry 10 marks each, making a total of 30 marks.
To avoid plagiarism, students should use the following links to test run their papers before final submission:

- http://plagiarism.org
- http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html

The final part of the course is the examination which every student must take. The examination attracts 70% of the total marks.

Getting the Most Out of the Course

For students to get the most out of this course, he/she must fulfil the following conditions:

- Have 75% attendance through active participation in both forum discussion and facilitation.
- Read each topic in the course manual before it is being discussed in the class.
- Submit every assignment as at when due.
- Discuss and share ideas with peers.

- Download, where necessary, videos, podcasts and summary of group discussions for personal consumption.
- Attempt each self-assessment exercises in the main course material.
- Approach the course facilitator when having any challenge with the course.
- Take the final examination.

Facilitation

The course operates a friendly learner-centred online facilitation. To support the student's learning process, the course facilitator will amongst other things:

- Introduce each topic under discussion and open the floor for discussion. Each student is expected to read the course manual as well as related literatures and identify critical issues which can be brought up for further interrogation during forum discussion.
- Summarise forum discussion and upload videos, podcasts and summary of group discussions to the forum, and
- Disseminate other relevant information to students via email, WhatsApp and SMS where necessary.

Course Code: PHL 372
Course Title: Research Method in Philosophy
Course Unit: 3

Course Developer: Prof. Francis Offor

MODULE 1: MODERN STYLE SHEETS AND REFERENCE METHODS

Unit 1: History and Purpose of Style Sheets

Contents

1.0 Introduction

Welcome to this unit, where we discuss the history and purpose of style sheets and reference methods. Style sheets and reference methods are ways writers and researchers communicate to their readers that certain material in their work came from another source. References also give readers the information necessary to trace and locate sources of any information on the materials they consult such as;

i. The author the work
ii. The date the work was published
iii. The title of the work
iv. The name and location of the publisher

v. The page numbers of the aspect of the work you are interested in
vi. The web address where you downloaded it from if online

Academics are united on the fact that there is the need to reference borrowed information properly rather than dishonestly take information, knowledge and ideas from sources without acknowledgement. The word “research” originated from the old French word *recerchier*, which means to search and search again. It literally means repeating an experiment or a search for something and implicitly assumes that the earlier experiment or search was not exhaustive and complete in the sense that there is still room for improvement. Research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge, and since knowledge is always about something, research, therefore, is always a search about knowledge of something. According to Syed & Kabir (2018), research may be defined as “a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic or area”. The Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English lays down the meaning of research as “a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge”. It is also described as, a movement from known to unknown.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to;

- explain what reference is all about
- give a brief history of referencing
- state the different purposes of referencing
- mention the types of information that require references

3.0 Main Content

This unit will give a brief history of style sheets and reference methods, explain the different purposes of referencing and list those information and items that require referencing. References give the list of consulted sources by a researcher and this enable the reader to identify with the original source of information. Referencing gives validation, support and strength to the ideas used in the research, it shows the scope and depth of a research work as well as acknowledges the works of original contributors as a way of avoiding plagiarism. In a properly researched essay, all borrowed ideas from published and unpublished sources should be acknowledged and referenced properly.

3.1: A Brief History of Referencing

When an author cites an earlier work, he or she usually gives a detailed bibliographic description of the work according to accepted conventions or style of the periodical. This may include the author or authors of the cited work, the title, journal or book title, volume, page and year. These can be grouped at the end of the document, or interspersed as footnotes at the bottom of each page. But because references are embedded in an author's text, references also characterise or comment on the prior text. Thus, references usually convey who authored the text, the source or where we can find it, and what it signifies to the citing author.

Anthony Grafton is considered the first person to have carried out a history of academic footnoting as used in history. He sees footnotes as the rough equivalent of the scientist's report on data. He is of the opinion that footnotes offer the empirical support for stories told and without them, there will be no way of verifying the arguments being presented. He however stressed that the practise did not originate from science but from the ancient Christian tradition of documenting church history, as well as dating back to the ancient Greeks too. Grafton also noted that during the Enlightenment, also known as the Age of Reason, the footnote was particularly popular amongst writers of fiction as well as historians (Grafton, 1997: 168).

Eli Chernin noted that the first parenthetical reference occurred in an 1881 paper about slugs written by Harvard zoologist Edward Laurens Mark. Mark, he said, was recognised for this innovation during a 1903 festschrift book and/or event which honours the work of an academic while they are still alive. Although Mark's use of the system was new, it appears to have been an adaptation of a cataloguing system at Harvard's Ernst Mayr Library of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, founded in 1861 by Louis Agassiz (Chernin, 1988).

Henry Small noted that the collected works of Aristotle comprise some 40 or so books covering over 2,000 pages. He acknowledged that, although there is no way of knowing for certain all the books or treatises he wrote, however, the study of these texts provides insights into what might be considered early reference practice. He stated that Aristotle's writings were influential in the subsequent centuries and were critical for the development of science in Europe. A tally of the indexing entries in the revised Oxford translation of Aristotle's works in 1985 shows that numerous authors are mentioned in the texts and the frequency of entries follow the familiar skewed distribution. In the work, it was noted that there was the predominance of what we now refer to as self-citations, or in this case more properly self-mentions. Only his mentor Plato receives a comparable number. Usually, these self-references are simply pointers to other places in his writings where some issue is discussed in greater detail, as in: 'this has been done with great precision elsewhere (Small, 2010).

Henry Small also noted that by the 17th century and what has been called the scientific revolution, we find the beginnings of the modern scientific ethos, with the formation of scientific societies, the invention of scholarly journals, priority disputes, and claims of intellectual ownership. During this period, Isaac Newton was the main figure and was someone who had an extremely strict sense of ownership of ideas as he was becoming entangled in several bitter priority disputes. But, by the time of Charles Darwin, referencing had been transformed from having authors names mentioned and occasional sources embedded in the text, to footnotes at the bottom of the page with complete source information and pagination. However, we do not find a single footnote in Darwin's magnum opus *The Origin of Species* published in 1859. In fact, *Origin* is his only publication that did not contain footnotes (Small, 2010).

3.2 The Different Purposes of Referencing

A research without references or with inadequate ones, falls below the required standard for scholarship and will not be taken seriously. So, references are meant to serve different purposes such as;

i. Persuading the reader that sufficient work has been done by the writer to make their case.
ii. Giving credit where credit is due, that is, acknowledging where ideas and information have come from. This is necessary because, new ideas, theories, and discourses do not emerge from nowhere but, from somewhere.
iii. Providing roadmaps to the relevant literature.

Referencing a research work is an indication that the researcher is not the first person to engage in that project or subject matter, and that he or she is using other people's ideas to build a new one. Therefore, people could track those references to learn more about a particular point you have made.

Murali Prasad is of the view that references clearly distinguish a researcher's ideas and arguments from existing research. References give the list of consulted sources by a researcher and enable the reader to refer to the original source of information. They give validation, support and strength to the ideas of present research and show the scope and depth of a research work as well as acknowledge the works of original contributors as a way of avoiding plagiarism (Prasad, 2017).

Other purposes of references include;

i. Being seen within particular scholarly communities for the purposes of networking.
ii. Establishing the validity of research claims
iii. Providing a methodology for working with data,
iv. Providing sources and ways of working with data
v. Building credibility and reputation for the author,
vi. Providing support and rebuttal,
vii. Establishing proprietary claims on ideas and discoveries,
viii. Building coalitions and oppositions among colleagues
ix. Securing institutional and political support of their opponents
x. Accurate references enable the reader to go back and check the exact sources and the evidence that led you to your conclusions.

Giving credit to the original author by citing sources is the only way to use other peoples' work without plagiarizing. But there are a number of other reasons to cite sources such as:

i. They are helpful to anyone who wants to find out more about your ideas
ii. Proper citation saves a person from taking the blame for someone else's bad ideas
iii. It shows the amount of research that have gone into the work
iv. It strengthens your work by lending outside support to your ideas

3.3 Information that Require References

Sometimes, people get confused about the kind of information they need to reference. As have been said earlier in this unit, any idea that is not yours must be acknowledged by way of referencing. These ideas are not only found in printed books, they are documented in several other means such as;

i. Books and journal articles
ii. Newspapers and magazines
iii. Pamphlets or brochures
iv. Films, documentaries, television programs or advertisements
v. Websites or electronic resources
vi. Letters, emails, online discussion forums
vii. Personal interviews
viii. Lecture Notes in some cases
ix. Reports
x. Government publications
xi. Gazetteers
xii. web pages
xiii. e-publications

It should be noted as well that reference is required for unpublished information sources like;

i. Thesis
ii. Dissertations
iii. Monographs
iv. project reports
v. Copied or quoted exact words or phrases of others
vi. Figures

vii. Tables
viii. Diagrams
ix. Pictures
x. Paraphrased or summarized ideas, facts or works of others (Prasad, 2017).

It should be noted as well that there are instances where referencing may not be required. Examples of such include;

i. When writing your own observations or experiment results
ii. When writing about your own experiences
iii. When writing your own thoughts, comments or conclusions
iv. When evaluating or offering your own analysis
v. When using common knowledge, that is, facts that can be found in numerous places and are likely to be known by a lot of people
vi. When using generally accepted facts or information.

4.0 Conclusion

Since information gathering and use have become very complex as a result of the enormous growth of information, a researcher requires complete information whenever they want to fulfil their research objectives. For this, the researcher requires different types of information management tools to preserve, organize and access information needed to carry out their research tasks. A reference is information that is helpful to the reader in identifying and finding used sources. The basic rule when listing the sources used is that references must be accurate, complete and should be consistently applied. A quotation could either be written verbatim or it could be a verbal repetition of parts of the text or words written by others that can be checked in their original texts. Referencing as we stated earlier is very important because authors of every new research article need to explain how their study or research fits with previous ones in the same or similar fields.

5.0 Summary

So far in this unit, we have been able to show that style sheets and reference methods are ways writers and researchers communicate to their readers that certain material in their work comes from another source. We mentioned that research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge and that it is never done in isolation because to search is to search for something and knowledge is always the knowledge of something. For this reason, we defined research as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic or area. References give the list of consulted sources by a researcher and this enables the reader to identify with the original source of information. Referencing gives validation, support and strength to the ideas used in the research, it shows the scope and depth of research work as well as acknowledges the works of original contributors as a way of avoiding plagiarism. We examined the different purposes of referencing and listed some information and items that may or may not require referencing. Ultimately, however, all borrowed ideas from published and unpublished sources should be acknowledged and referenced properly.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What do you understand by the term reference?
2. Give a brief summary of the history of referencing
3. What are the different purposes of referencing?
4. Mention some information that require referencing

7.0 References/Further Reading

Anthony Grafton.1997. *The Footnote: A Curious History*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Eli Chernin. 1988. *The 'Harvard system: a mystery dispelled. BMJ* 297.

Henry Small. 2010. Referencing through history: how the analysis of landmark scholarly texts can inform citation theory. *Research Evaluation*. Beech Tree Publishing. Retrieved from http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/beech/rev.

Murali Prasad. 2017. *Usage of References and Its Management in Research*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312001267_Usage_of_References_and_Its_Management_in_Research?

Syed Muhammad and Sajjad Kabir. 2018. *Introduction to Research*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325846733_introduction_to_research

Unit 2: The MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet

Contents

1.0: Introduction

As was stated in Unit 1 of this Module, style sheets and reference methods are ways writers and researchers communicate to their readers that certain material in their work came from another source. We also mentioned that references give readers the information necessary to trace and locate sources of any information on the materials they consult. The 'MLA' which stands for 'Modern Language Association' establishes values for acknowledging sources used in a research paper. The MLA citation style uses a simple two-part parenthetical documentation system for citing sources, where citations in the text of a paper point to the Work Cited List in alphabetical order at the end of the paper. The ninth edition of the MLA Handbook, published in 2021, builds on the MLA's unique approach to documenting sources using a template of core elements which include facts that are common to most sources, like author, title, and publication date. This allows writers to cite any type of work, from books, e-books, and journal articles in databases to song lyrics, online images, social media posts, dissertations, and more. With this focus on source evaluation as the cornerstone of citation, the MLA style promotes the skills of information and digital literacy that has become very important today (MLA Handbook, 2021).

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to;

- Give a Brief History of MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet
- Analyse the MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet
- List the contents of the 9th Edition of the MLA Style Sheet template

3.0: Main Content

This unit gives a brief history of the MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet and explains some variations in the MLA from the 8th Edition to the 9th Edition. It concludes with a detailed explanation of how the MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet is used.

3.1 A Brief History of MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet

The Modern Language Association of America is often called the Modern Language Association (MLA). It is the principal professional association in the United States for scholars of language and literature. It began as a gathering of professors rebelling against the traditional college curriculum, which centred on classical languages such as Greek and Latin. The Modern Language Association was founded in 1883 and Aaron Marshall Elliott, an American novelist and professor at Johns Hopkins University who lived from 1844-1910, is considered the founder of the Modern Language Association. The MLA was founded as a discussion and advocacy group for the study of literature and modern languages, that is, all but classical languages, such as ancient Latin and Greek. According to its profile featured by the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), The Modern Language Association is formed for educational, scientific, literary, and social objects and purposes, and more specifically for the promotion of the academic and scientific study of English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, and other so-called modern languages and literature.

The MLA being steered by its membership, the Executive Council, and the Executive Director, supports the humanities community through engaging programmes, publications, the annual convention, and advocacy work. Its aim is basically to strengthen the study and teaching of language and literature. Initially, MLA members established a journal for the publication of research in the field and organised an annual meeting to discuss scholarly and pedagogical issues. As the study of the modern languages grew increasingly important in both higher education and the schools, the MLA also grew.

3.2 Some Variations in the MLA from the 8th Edition to the 9th Edition

The Modern Language Association (MLA) establishes values for acknowledging sources used in a research paper. MLA citation style uses a simple two-part parenthetical documentation system for citing sources. Citations in the text of a paper point to the alphabetical 'works cited' list that appears at the end of the paper. Together, these references identify and credit the sources used in the paper and allow others to access and retrieve these materials.

The MLA has advanced from the 8th edition to the 9th edition with some variations on grammar, inclusive language especially racial or gender sensitive ones, expansion on endnotes and footnotes as well as new guidelines for annotated bibliographies. With reference to surnames when they are composed of more than one element, they can now be typically shortened to the last element. For example;

	Full name Surname	**Used alone**
i.	James Fenimore Cooper	Cooper
ii.	Daniel Defoe	Defoe
iii.	Walter de la Mare	de la Mare
iv.	Don DeLillo	DeLillo
v.	Thomas De Quincey	De Quincey

vi. W. E. B. Du Bois Du Bois

This 9th edition does not encourage the use of an apostrophe to form the plural of an abbreviation or a number such as:

i. PhDs
ii. 1960s
iii. fours
iv. TVs

The 9th edition of the MLA Handbook mentioned that the use of italics for emphasis should be sparingly since italics are used in prose to indicate when words and letters are referred to as ‘words and letters’ and to distinguish words in languages other than English. For example; the word *albatross* probably derives from the Spanish and Portuguese word *Alcatraz* (MLA Handbook, 2021).

On the use of capital letters for English-language terms, the Handbook emphasised capitalizing the following;

i. The first letter of the first word of a sentence
ii. The subject pronoun ‘I’
iii. The names and initials of persons (except for some particles)
iv. The names of months of the year and days of the week
v. Titles that immediately precede personal names (Senator McCain) but not a person’s title used alone (the senator, a professor of English)
vi. Proper nouns (Canada)
vii. Most adjectives derived from proper nouns (Canadian wildlife)
viii. Musical notes (middle C)
ix. Academic grades (I got a B in algebra)

Lowercase should be used for generic forms of proper nouns like;

i. The United States Army, (the army)
ii. President Kennedy, (the president)
iii. The Brooklyn Bridge, (the bridge)
iv. The Housatonic River, (the river)

The Handbook also stated that, in general, most persons' names should be stated in full when they first appear in your prose and surnames alone given thereafter. Common sense sometimes dictates exceptions to this rule. Very famous persons, such as Cervantes and Shakespeare, may be referred to by their surnames only. Some full names are very long and, by convention, rarely used- Hegel, for example, is rarely called Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Dante Alighieri is conventionally referred to by his given name only. Considerations like clarity, consistency, the relative prominence of names in disciplines, and the desire to avoid the appearance of discrimination may argue for the inclusion or exclusion of first names in certain contexts.

When you state someone's name fully, write the name as it appears in your source or in a reference work, including any suffixes, accent marks, and initials such as;

Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Ramón del Valle-Inclán

Do not change the name Henry Louis Gates, Jr., to Henry Louis Gates, or drop the hyphen or omit the accents in the name Ramón del Valle-Inclán. In subsequent uses, you may refer to a person by the surname only such as; Gates and del Valle-Inclán unless, of course, you refer to two or more persons with the same surname.

3.4 The MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet

The MLA has a template for referencing as listed below. To use the template, record the publication information given by the version of the work you consult by first evaluating the work you are citing to see which elements apply to the source. Then, list each element relevant to your source in the order given on the template. Omit any element that does not apply except 'Title of Source'. If no title is given, use your own description of the work as the title. Conclude each element with the punctuation mark shown in the template, but always end your entry with a period (full stop).

Template

1. Author.
2. Title of Source,
3. Title of Container,
4. Contributor,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication Date,
9. Location.

1. AUTHOR

In the Author element, list the primary creator of the work you are citing. In the example below, Toni Morrison wrote the novel *Song of Solomon* and is therefore its author: Morrison, Toni. *Song of Solomon*. Vintage, 2004. The author of a work can be a writer, artist, or any other type of creator. The author can be an individual, a group of persons, an organisation, or a government. Some examples of authors are the author of a play, such as Euripides; the author of an essay, such as Benjamin Franklin; a painter, such as Berthe Morisot; a music group, such as the Beatles; and an intergovernmental body, such as the United Nations. Include pseudonyms, stage names, online usernames, and the like in the Author element, especially if the person is well known by that form of the name (e.g., Stendhal, Mark Twain, and Lady Gaga). Sometimes a label must be used to describe the role of the person or persons listed in the Author element. This most often occurs when the person is not the primary creator, such as for editors of collections of essays written by various authors, since editors shape the content of the volume. In the example below, Olusegun Oladipo is the editor of the book, not the writer of all the essays, so his name is followed by the label editor: Olusegun Oladipo, editor. Core Issues in African Philosophy. Hope Publications, 2006.

Single Author

Baron, Naomi S. “Redefining Reading: The Impact of Digital Communication Media.” PMLA, vol. 128, no. 1, Jan. 2013, pp. 193–200.

Two Authors

Dorris, Michael, and Louise Erdrich. The Crown of Columbus. HarperCollins Publishers, 1999.

Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar, editors. The Female Imagination and the Modernist Aesthetic. Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1986.

Three or More Authors

Charon, Rita, et al. The Principles and Practice of Narrative Medicine. Oxford UP, 2017.

Government Authors

U.S. Department of Labor. Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2014–2015. Skyhorse Publishing, 2014.

Online Handles

Fogarty, Mignon [@GrammarGirl]. “Every once in a while, that Gmail notice asking if you meant to reply to a 5-day-old message is quite helpful.” Twitter, 13 Feb. 2019, twitter.com/GrammarGirl/status/1095734401550303232.

2. TITLE OF SOURCE

In the Title of Source element, list the title of the work you are citing. In the example below, Insurrecto is the title of a novel by Gina Apostol.

Apostol, Gina. Insurrecto. Soho Press, 2018.

If the work does not have a title, provide a concise but informative description of the work. For example;

Advertisement for Upton Tea Imports. Smithsonian, Oct. 2018, p. 84.

A Tweet

Chaucer Doth Tweet [@LeVostreGC]. “A daye wythout anachronism ys lyke Emily Dickinson wythout her lightsaber.” Twitter, 7 Apr. 2018, twitter.com/LeVostreGC/status/982829987286827009.

A Non-textual Part of the Post such as a Photograph

Hughes, Langston. “I look at the world.” Poetry Foundation, www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/52005/i-look-at-the-world. MacLeod, Michael.

A Video

Cover of Space Cat and the Kittens, by Ruthven Todd. Pinterest, 2020, www.pinterest.com/pin/565412928193207246/. Wilson, Rebel. Video of tire-flipping exercise. Snapchat, 14 July 2020, www.snapchat.com/add/rebelwilsonsnap.

Quoted Text in Place of a Title

When using text from the work itself to identify an untitled work, use the first line of the work (as for a poem), the full text (exactly as it appears in the source) if it is very short, or a short introductory fragment. Enclose the quoted text in quotation marks and conclude it with a period, placed inside the final quotation mark. Reproduce the text as written, styled, and capitalised in the source. For example;

- Dickinson, Emily. “I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—.” The Poems of Emily Dickinson, edited by R. W. Franklin, Harvard UP, 1999, pp. 265–66.
- Persiankiwi. “We have report of large street battles in east & west of Tehran now - #Iranelection.” Twitter, 23 June 2009, twitter.com/persiankiwi/status/2298106072.
- Wyatt, Thomas. “They flee from me, that sometime did me seek.” The Columbia Anthology of British Poetry, edited by Carl Woodring and James Shapiro, Columbia UP, 1995, p. 30.

3. PUBLISHER

The publisher is the entity primarily responsible for producing the work or making it available to the public. In the example below, Oxford University Press is the publisher of the book “Who Set You Flowin’?” The African-American Migration Narrative.

Griffin, Farah Jasmine. “Who Set You Flowin’?” The African-American Migration Narrative. Oxford UP, 1996.

4. PUBLICATION DATE

The Publication Date element tells your reader when the version of the work you are citing was published. In the example below, 2018 is the publication date of the novel *There There*.

Orange, Tommy. There There. Alfred A. Knopf, 2018.

In addition to an actual date of publication, this element may include the following;

- The date of composition for unpublished material (such as letters)
- The date of revision or upload if that is more pertinent (e.g., the date a wiki post was last updated rather than the date it was started)
- The label forthcoming for works not yet published
- The date on which a source was viewed or heard firsthand (e.g., the date that you attended the performance of a play)

The Publication Date element may include one or more of the following components:

- A year
- A day and month
- A season
- A time stamp
- A range of dates or years

Works may be associated with more than one publication date. You should record the publication date provided by the version of the source you consult.

Journal Articles

If you are citing a print article, you can usually find the date on the title page of the journal or in the header or footer of the article. For example;

Riddle, Julie. “Shadow Animals.” The Georgia Review, vol. 67, no. 3, fall 2013, pp. 424–47.

If you access a digitised version of the print article online, you can usually find the date in the publication information supplied by the website or on a cover sheet accompanying the PDF download. Such as;

Riddle, Julie. “Shadow Animals.” The Georgia Review, vol. 67, no. 3, fall 2013, pp. 424–47. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/43492249.

Dissertations and theses

The institution conferring the degree and the type of thesis or dissertation (BA, MA, or PhD) are essential to defining the work and should appear as a final supplemental element.

Njus, Jesse. Performing the Passion: A Study on the Nature of Medieval Acting. 2010. Northwestern University, PhD dissertation.

Television Episodes

The publication date for a television episode you access through a streaming service or website can generally be found on the page from which you download the episode. For example;

- “The Final Problem.” Sherlock, created by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss, season 4, episode 3, BBC, 15 Jan. 2017. Masterpiece, WGBH Educational Foundation, 2019, www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/episodes/sherlock-s4-e3/.
- “Manhattan Vigil.” Directed by Jean de Segonzac. Law and Order: Special Victims Unit, created by Dick Wolf, season 14, episode 5, Wolf Films, 24 Oct. 2012. Netflix, www.netflix.com.

Attention should also be given to the following;

Year

If your source presents roman numerals for the year, convert them to arabic numerals (e.g., MCMXCII in the credits of a television show should appear as 1992 in your entry). If a range is needed, style it as you would in prose.

Season

Lowercase seasons of the year when they are part of a publication date in the works-cited list, just as you would in prose. Example is;

Belton, John. “Painting by the Numbers: The Digital Intermediate.” Film Quarterly, vol. 61, no. 3, spring 2008, pp. 58–65.

Time

When a time is given and helps define and locate the work, include it. Times should be expressed in whatever form you find them in the source: the twelve-hour-clock form (2:00 p.m.) or the twenty-four-hour-clock form (14:00). Include time zone information when provided and pertinent.

Max the Pen. Comment on “Why They’re Wrong.” The Economist, 29 Sept. 2016, 6:06 p.m., www.economist.com/node/21707926/comments.

Location

How to specify a work’s location depends on the format of the work. For paginated print or similar fixed-format works (like PDFs) that are contained in another work (e.g., an essay in a print anthology or the PDF of an article in a journal), the location is the page range.

- Copeland, Edward. “Money.” The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen, edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster, Cambridge UP, 1997, pp. 131–48.
- Soyinka, Wole. “Twice Bitten: The Fate of Africa’s Culture Producers.” PMLA, vol. 105, no. 1, Jan. 1990, pp. 110–20.

Numerals for Page Numbers

Use the same numeric symbols for page numbers that your source does (e.g., arabic, roman, alphanumeric) and the same case, whether lowercase roman numerals (i, ii, iii), uppercase roman numerals (I, II, III), or upper- or lowercase alphabetic letters (A1, 89d). Such as;

- Felstiner, John. Preface. Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan, translated by Felstiner, W. W. Norton, 2001, pp. xix–xxxvi.
- Magra, Iliana, and Andrea Zaratemay. “Hikers’ Love of a Rarity in the Andes Takes a Toll.” The New York Times, 3 May 2018, p. A7.

4.0: Conclusion

The examples of MLA style and format listed in this unit include many of the most common types of sources used in academic research. For additional examples and more

detailed information about MLA citation style, you may refer to the 9th edition of the MLA Handbook available at :
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_Language_Association

5.0: Summary

This unit has given a brief history of the MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet and some variations in the MLA from the 8th Edition to the 9th Edition. It also gave a detailed explanation of how the MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet is used. In the MLA style, the reference list is called 'works cited'; however other titles may also be acceptable. A 'works cited' list includes details of the sources cited in your article. It starts on a separate page at the end of your paper. Each item in the 'works cited' list must have been cited in your paper. All sources appearing in the 'works cited' list must be ordered alphabetically by surname or by title if there is no author. Authors' names should be provided as they appear on the source, therefore include first names and initials when available. As mentioned in the unit, also note that abbreviations may be used for some words in publisher names.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Write a brief history of MLA (Modern Language Association) Style Sheet
1. Mention some variations in the MLA from the 8th Edition to the 9th Edition
2. List the contents of the 9th Edition of the MLA Style Sheet template

7.0: Reference/Further Reading

The Modern Language Association of America. 2021. MLA Handbook. 9th ed. New York: MLA: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_Language_Association

https://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2242/Modern-Language-Association-America.html#ixzz73ECS6z1E

Unit 3: The APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this unit, where we discuss the APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet. To avoid plagiarism when preparing a research paper, it is imperative to reference where you found the information you are using. Depending on the type of paper or research you are doing, you may be asked to follow a specific manuscript and citation style when preparing your paper. This unit will be based on the APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet which is used by the Social Sciences and other related disciplines like; psychology, nursing, business, communications and engineering. It specifically addresses the preparation of draft manuscripts being submitted for publication in a journal and the preparation of student papers being submitted for a course assignment. The APA Style originated in 1929, when a group of psychologists, anthropologists, and business managers convened and sought to establish a simple set of procedures, or style that would codify the many components of scientific writing to increase the ease of reading and comprehension. The APA Style provides a foundation for effective scholarly communication because it helps writers present their ideas in a clear, concise, and inclusive manner. When style works best, ideas flow logically, sources are credited appropriately, and papers are organised predictably. People are described using language that affirms their worth and dignity. Authors plan for ethical compliance and report critical details of their research protocol to allow readers to evaluate findings and other researchers to potentially replicate the studies.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to;

- give a brief history of APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet
- analyse the APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet
- list the contents of APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet

3.0: Main Content

This unit will give a brief history of the APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet, identify some features of the APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet and give a detailed explanation of how the APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet is used.

3.1: A Brief History of APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet

Several studies have shown that citations in scientific works do far more than identify the originators of ideas and the sources of data. Grafton noted that citations reflect the intellectual styles of different national scientific communities, the pedagogical methods of different graduate programs, and the literary preferences of different journal editors. He is of the view that citations in scientific works regularly refer not only to the precise sources of scientists' data, but also to larger theories and theoretical schools with which the authors wish or hope to be associated (Grafton, 1999: 12-13; See also https://www.academia.edu/799204).

Paul Price et.al noted that, APA style is a set of guidelines for writing in psychology and related fields, insisting that the guidelines are set down in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. This Publication Manual as we stated in the introduction of this unit, originated in 1929 as a short journal article that provided basic standards for preparing manuscripts to be submitted for publication. It was later expanded and published as a book by the association. The primary purpose of the APA style is to facilitate scientific communication by promoting clarity of expression and by standardising the organisation and content of research articles and book chapters. It is easier to write about research when you know what information to present, the order in which to present it, and even the style in which to present it (See: https://www.crumplab.com/ResearchMethods/single.subject-research.html). Likewise, it is easier to read about research when it is presented in familiar and expected ways (Price, Jhangiani, and Chiang).

The APA format uses relatively loose language in describing the circumstances for including the page numbers in in-text citations. In particular, the incorporation of page numbers in in-text citations is limited to direct quotations alone. However, it lacks the documentation of page numbers for summaries and paraphrases in the APA referencing. In this case, the wording of this guideline suggests that the inclusion or exclusion of page numbers for summaries and paraphrases is not mandatory. Besides direct quoting, people do not practice the provision of page numbers in other instances of in-text citations.

3.2 Some Features of APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet

It is understandable that in referencing, not every sentence has to be cited. Nevertheless, we cannot lift someone's ideas without proper acknowledgment of the author. As a fact, if a person fails to do so, such will be accused of plagiarism. Therefore, one has to understand what has to be cited first. Also, the APA citation format provides the exact guidelines on how the APA citation has to acknowledge the author. In like manner, when you summarise someone's ideas, it is advisable to always put the parenthesis at the end of the sentences with full acknowledgment of the author. People usually mistakenly think that when they read something and then write a summary of what they read, it must not be cited. However, the summary assumes that you provide zero personal analysis and just state a summary of ideas you had not to deal with. Therefore, you must cite such ideas. Some examples of APA In-Text Citations as adapted from ‘APA Style Reference Citations Library’ are listed below:

Samples of APA In-Text Citations

1. If author's name occurs in the text, follow it with year of publication in parentheses. Example:
   Piaget (1970) compared reaction times...

2. If author's name is not in the text, insert last name, comma, year in parenthesis. Example:
   In a recent study of reaction times (Piaget, 1978)…

3. If author's name and the date of publication have been mentioned in the text of your paper, they should not be repeated within parentheses. Example:
   In 1978, Piaget compared reaction times...

4. Because material within a book or on a web page is often difficult to locate, authors should, whenever possible, give page numbers for books or paragraph numbers for web pages in body to assist readers. Page numbers (preceded by p. or pp.) or paragraph numbers (preceded by ¶ or para.) follow the year of publication, and are separated from it by a comma. For websites with neither page numbers nor paragraph numbers, cite the heading and the number of the paragraph following it. Examples:

   Hunt (1974, pp. 25-69) confirms the hypothesis... (Myers, 2000 ¶ 5) (Beutler, 2000, Conclusion section, para. 1)

5. If a work has two authors, always cite both names every time the reference occurs in the text. Connect both names by using the word "and." Examples:
   Piaget and Smith (1972) recognize... Finberg and Skipp (1973, pp. 37-52) discuss...

6. If a work has two authors and they are not included in the text, insert within parentheses, the last names of the authors joined by an ampersand (&), and the year separated from the authors by a comma. Examples:

   ...to organise accumulated knowledge and order sequences of operations (Piaget & Smith, 1973) ...to organise accumulated knowledge and order sequences of operations (Piaget & Smith,1973, p. 410)

7. If a work has more than two authors (but fewer than six), cite all authors the first time the reference occurs; include the last name of the first author followed by "et al." and the year in subsequent citations of the same reference. Example:

   First occurrence: Williams, French and Joseph (1962) found... Subsequent citations: Williams et al. (1962) recommended...

8. Quotations: Cite the source of direct quotations by enclosing it in parentheses. Include author, year, and page number. Punctuation differs according to where the quotation falls.

i. If the quoted passage is in the middle of a sentence, end the passage with quotation marks, cite the source in parentheses immediately, and continue the sentence. Example:

   Many inexperienced writers are unsure about "the actual boundaries of the grammatical abstraction called a sentence" (Shaughnessy, 1977, p. 24) or about which form of punctuation they should use.

ii. If the quotation falls at the end of a sentence, close the quotation with quotation marks, and cite the source in parentheses after the quotation marks. End with the period outside the parentheses. Example:
   Fifty percent "of spontaneous speech is estimated to be non-speech" (Shaughnessy, 1977, p. 24).

iii. If the quotation is longer than forty words, it is set off without quotations marks in an indented block (double spaced). The source is cited in parentheses after the final period. Example:

   This is further explained by Shaughnessy's (1977) following statements: In speech, pauses mark rates of respiration, set off certain words for rhetorical emphasis, facilitate phonological maneuvers, regulate the rhythms of thought and articulation and suggest grammatical structure. Modern punctuation, however, does not provide a score for such a complex orchestration. (p. 24)

iv. If citing a work discussed in a secondary source, name the original work and give a citation for the secondary source. The reference list should contain the secondary source, not the unread primary source. Example:

Seidenberg and McClelland’s study (as cited in Coltheart, Curtis, Atkins, & Haller, 1993)

3.3: The APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet

Examples of Items in a Reference List

Although the format for books, journal articles, magazine articles and other media is similar, there are some slight differences. Items in a reference list should be double-spaced. Also, when using hanging indents, entries should begin flush left with subsequent lines indented. Reference formats as adapted from ‘APA Style Reference Citations Library’ are listed below.

BOOKS:

One Author:

Castle, E. B. (1970). The teacher. London: Oxford University Press.

Two Authors:

McCandless, B. R., & Evans, E. D. (1973). Children and youth: Psychosocial development. Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press.

Three or More Authors:

(list each author) Smith, V., Barr, R., & Burke, D. (1976). Alternatives in education: Freedom to choose. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa, Educational Foundation.

Society, association, or institution as author and publisher:

American Psychiatric Association. (1980). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (3rd ed.). Washington, D.C.: Author.

Editor or Compiler as Author:

Rich, J. M. (Ed.). (1972). Readings in the philosophy of education (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Chapter, essay, or article by one author in a book or encyclopedia edited by another:

Medley, D. M. (1983). Teacher effectiveness. In H. E. Mitzel (Ed.), Encyclopedia of educational research (Vol. 4, pp. 1894-1903). New York: The Free Press.

JOURNAL ARTICLES:

One Author:

Herrington, A. J. (1985). Classrooms as forums for reasoning and writing. College Composition and Communication, 36(4), 404-413.

Two Authors:

Horowitz, L. M., & Post, D. L. (1981). The prototype as a construct in abnormal psychology. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 90(6), 575-585.

Society, Association, or Institution as Author:

Institute on Rehabilitation Issues. (1975). Critical issues in rehabilitating the severely handicapped. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 18(4), 205-213.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES:

No Author:

More jobs waiting for college grads. (1986, June 17). Detroit Free Press, pp. 1A, 3A.

MAGAZINES:

One Author:

Powledge, T. M. (1983, July). The importance of being twins. Psychology Today, 19, 20-27.

No Author:

CBS invades Cuba, returns with Irakere: Havana jam. (1979, May 3). Down Beat, 10.

MICROFORMS:

ERIC report:

Plantes, Mary Kay. (1979). The effect of work experience on young men's earnings. (Report No. IRP-DP-567-79). Madison: Wisconsin University. Madison Institute for Research on Poverty. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED183687)

ERIC Paper Presented at a Meeting:

Whipple, W. S. (1977, January). Changing attitude through behaviour modification. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, New Orleans, LA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED146500)

AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA AND SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

This category includes the following types of non-book materials:

Audio record, Flashcard, Motion picture, Video recording, Slide, Kit, Chart, Game Picture, Transparency, Realia, Filmstrip.

A bibliographic/reference format for these non-print materials is as follows:

Author's name (inverted.----Author's function, i.e., Producer, Director, Speaker, etc. in parentheses.----Date of publication in parentheses----Title.----Medium in brackets after title, [Filmstrip]. HOWEVER, if it is necessary to use a number after a medium for identification or retrieval purposes, use parentheses instead of brackets, e.g., (Audio record No. 4321).----Place of publication: Publisher.

Maas, J. B. (Producer), & Gluck, D. H. (Director). (1979). Deeper in hypnosis [Motion Picture]. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA:

Materials available via the Internet include journals, newspapers, research papers, government reports, web pages, etc. When citing an Internet source, one should:

1. Provide as much information as possible that will help readers relocate the information. Also try to reference specific documents rather than web pages when possible.

2. Give accurate, working addresses (URLs) or Digital Object Identifiers.

References to Internet sources should include at least the following four items:

1. A title or description

2. A date (either date of publication or date of retrieval)

3. An address (URL) or Digital Object Identifier

4. An author's name, if available

In an effort to solve the problem of changed addresses and broken links, publishers have begun to assign Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) to documents, particularly to scholarly journal articles. DOIs should be used in reference lists when they are available. A DOI may be pasted into the DOI Resolver at http://www.crossref.org/ to confirm a citation. For journal articles, if no DOI is available, a database name or URL may be added to make it particularly easy to find publications. Since journal articles, unlike many web pages, are unlikely to change, a retrieval date is not necessary. Electronic book citations only need source information when the book is difficult to find or only available electronically.

Internet article based on a print source (exact duplicate) with DOI assigned:

Stultz, J. (2006). Integrating exposure therapy and analytic therapy in trauma treatment. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 76(4), 482-488. doi:10.1037/0002-9432.76.4.482

Article in an Internet only Journal with no DOI Assigned:

Sillick, T. J., & Schutte, N. S. (2006). Emotional intelligence and self-esteem mediate between perceived early parental love and adult happiness. E-Journal of Applied Psychology, 2(2), 38-48. Retrieved from http://ojs.lib.swin.edu.au/index.php/ejap/article/view/71/100

Daily newspaper article, electronic version available by search:

Botha, T. (1999, February 21). The Statue of Liberty, Central Park and me. The New York Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

Webpage:

Raymon H. Mulford Library, The University of Toledo Health Science Campus. (2008). Instructions to authors in the health sciences. Retrieved June 17, 2008, from http://mulford.mco.edu/instr/

Annual report:

Pearson PLC. (2005). Reading allowed: Annual review and summary financial statements 2004. Retrieved from http://www.pearson.com/investor/ar2004/pdfs/summary_report_2004.pdf

4.0 Conclusion

The APA style is a set of guidelines for writing in psychology and related disciplines. It is the genre of writing that psychologists and related professionals use to communicate about their research with other researchers and practitioners. The APA style can be seen as having three levels. There is the organisation of a research article, the high-level style that includes writing in a formal and straightforward way, and the low-level style that consists of many specific rules of grammar, spelling, formatting of references, and so on. References and reference citations are an important part of APA style. There are specific rules for formatting references and for citing them in the text of an article.

5.0 Summary

When you refer to another researcher's idea, you must include a reference citation (in the text) to the work in which that idea originally appeared and a full reference to that work in the reference list. What counts as an idea that must be cited? In general, this includes phenomena discovered by other researchers, theories they have developed, hypotheses they have derived, and specific methods they have used (e.g., specific questionnaires or stimulus materials). Citations should also appear for factual information that is not common knowledge so that other researchers can check that information for themselves. For example, in an article on the effect of cell phone usage on driving ability, the writer might cite official statistics on the number of cell phone–related accidents that occur each year. Among the ideas that do not need citations are widely shared methodological and statistical concepts (e.g., between-subjects design, *t* test) and statements that are so broad that they would be difficult for anyone to argue with (e.g., "Working memory plays a role in many daily activities."). Be careful, though, because "common knowledge" about human behaviour is often incorrect. Therefore, when in doubt, find an appropriate reference to cite or remove the questionable assertion.

When you cite a work in the text of your manuscript, there are two ways to do it. Both include only the last names of the authors and the year of publication. The method is to use the authors' last names in the sentence (with no first names or initials) followed immediately by the year of publication in parentheses. Here are some examples:

Burger (2008) conducted a replication of Milgram's (1963) original obedience study.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Give a brief history of the APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet
2. Mention some features of APA (American Psychological Association) Style Sheet
3. Explain how the APA (American Psychological Association) Referencing Style is cited in edited book, book chapters and journal articles involving one, two and six authors.

7.0 References/Further Reading

APA Handbook. https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines

APA Style Reference Citations Library. Resource Guide. Available at http://www.apastyle.org/

Grafton, A. 1999. The footnote: A curious history. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Paul C. Price, Rajiv Jhangiani, & I-Chant A. Chiang. 2017. Research Methods in Psychology - 2nd Canadian Edition. Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License. https://opentextbc.ca/researchmethods/chapter/american-psychological-association-apa-style/

The Modern Language Association of America. 2021. MLA Handbook. 9th ed. New York: MLA

Unit 4: The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS)

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to the last unit of this module where we discuss the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS). The Chicago Manual of Style was developed and published by the University of Chicago Press. This referencing style is a standardised format used in writing and it provides guidelines used to format and structure a document, cite other authors and works as well as create a bibliography. It is commonly used for citing sources in the Humanities, Sciences, and Social Sciences. The Chicago Manual of Style has two formats, which are; the Notes and the Bibliography style mostly preferred by many in humanities disciplines, especially history, literature, and the arts.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to;

- give a brief history of the Chicago Manual of Style

- list some Features of the Chicago Manual of Style
- Give an analysis of the Chicago Manual of Style and how it is employed.

3.0: Main Content

This unit will give a brief history of the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), identify some features of the Chicago Manual of Style and give a detailed explanation of how the Chicago Manual of Style is used.

3.1: A Brief History of the Chicago Manual of Style

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) as mentioned above is used primarily for academic writing in history and the humanities and uses a system of a bibliography and either endnotes or footnotes. The history of 'The Chicago Manual of Style' spans more than one hundred years, beginning in 1891 when the University of Chicago Press was founded. At that time, the Press had its own composing room with experienced typesetters who were required to set complex scientific materials as well as works in exotic fonts as Hebrew and Ethiopic. Researchers brought their handwritten manuscripts directly to the compositors, who did their best to decipher them. The compositors then passed the proofs to the "brainery" who were the proof-readers and responsible for correcting typographical errors and edited for stylistic inconsistencies. To bring a common set of rules to the process, the staff of the composing room drew up a style sheet, which was then passed on to the rest of the university community. That sheet grew into a pamphlet, and by 1906 the pamphlet had become a book, 'Manual of Style'.

3.2 Some Features of the Chicago Manual of Style

Footnotes are notes that appear in the footer section of the page. In Chicago Manual, notes and bibliography style are used to tell the reader the source of ideas or language in the text. To cite an outside source, a superscript number is placed after a quote, summary, or paraphrase. The superscript number must correspond to a numbered footnote containing source information. Below are some more of the features.

Book with Single Author or Editor

For a book with a single author, the Chicago Manual inverts the name in the bibliography but not in the notes. It punctuates and capitalises as shown below. Note the shortened form in the second note. Note also that page numbers are included in a note but not in a bibliography entry, unless the entry is for a chapter. The first note cites two consecutive pages while the second note cites two non-consecutive pages as follows:

1. Cheryl Strayed, Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), 87-88.

2. Strayed, Wild, 261, 265.

Strayed, Cheryl. Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012.

A book with an editor in place of an author includes the abbreviation ed. (editor; for more than one editor, use eds.).

1. Meghan Daum, ed., Selfish, Shallow, and Self-Absorbed: Sixteen Writers on the Decision Not to Have Kids (New York: Picador, 2015), 32.
2. Daum, Selfish, 134-35.
3. Daum, Meghan, ed. Selfish, Shallow, and Self-Absorbed: Sixteen Writers on the Decision Not to Have Kids. New York: Picador, 2015.

Book with Multiple Authors

For a book with two authors, note that only the first-listed name is inverted in the bibliography entry.

1. Brian Grazer and Charles Fishman, A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger Life (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015), 188.
2. Grazer and Fishman, Curious Mind, 190.
3. Grazer, Brian, and Charles Fishman. A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger Life. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015.

For a book with three authors, adapt as follows:

1. Alexander Berkman, Henry Bauer, and Carl Nold, Prison Blossoms: Anarchist Voices from Within (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015), 155.

2. Berkman, Bauer, and Nold, Prison Blossoms, 180.

3. Berkman, Alexander, Henry Bauer, and Carl Nold. Prison Blossoms: Anarchist Voices from Within. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015.

For a book with four or more authors, list all the authors in the bibliography entry. Word order and punctuation are the same as for two or three authors. In the note, however, cite only the name of the first-listed author, followed by et al.

1. Claire Hacek et al., Mediated Lives: Reflections on Wearable Technologies (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2019), 155.

2. Hacek et al., Mediated Lives, 125.

Book with Author plus Editor or Translator

In a book with an editor or translator in addition to the author, ed. or trans. in the note becomes Edited by or Translated by in the bibliography entry.

1. Gabriel García Márquez, Love in the Time of Cholera, trans. Edith Grossman (London: Cape, 1988), 242-55.

2. Gabriel García Márquez, Love in the Time of Cholera, ed. Edith Grossman (London: Cape, 1988), 242-55.

3. García Márquez, Cholera, 33.

4. García Márquez, Gabriel. Love in the Time of Cholera. Translated by Edith Grossman. London: Cape, 1988.

5. Gabriel García Márquez, Love in the Time of Cholera, Edited by Edith Grossman (London: Cape, 1988), 242-55.

3.3: The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS)

A number of elements are required for the Chicago Manual of Style. Since not all of the elements listed below will be applicable to every book, it is advisable, according to the

17th edition of Chicago Style Guide to skip elements that do not apply to the source being cited.

1. Author(s) or name of institution standing as author
2. Title
3. Editor or translator
4. Edition, if not the first
5. Volume
6. Series title
7. Facts of publication: city, state: publisher, date
8. Page number(s)
9. URL or DOI for electronic books

Print Book (Footnote Template)

First-name Last-name, Title of Work: Subtitle, # ed. (City, State: Publisher, year), page.

Footnote Entry

Scott D. Wurdinger and Julie A. Carlson, Teaching for Experiential Learning: Five Approaches that Work , (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2010), 45.

Bibliography Template

Last-name, First-name. Title. # ed. City , State: Publisher, year.

Bibliography Entry

Wurdinger, Scott D. and Julie A. Carlson. Teaching for Experiential Learning: Five Approaches that Work . Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2010.

Article or Chapter in an Edited Collection or Anthology (Footnote Template)

Author of chapter, “Chapter or article title,” in Book Title, ed. Editor Name(s) (City: Publisher, year), page number.

Footnote Entry

Judith Ortiz Cofer, “The Myth of the Latin Woman,” in The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Readings, 4t h ed., ed. Richard Bullock and Maureen Daly Goggin (New York: W.W. Norton , 2016), 876.

Bibliography Template

Author of chapter. “Chapter Title.” In Book Title , edited by name(s), page range. City: Publisher, year.

Bibliography Entry

Cofer, Judith Ortiz. “The Myth of the Latin Woman.” In The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Readings, edited by Richard Bullock an d Maureen Daly Goggin, 876 -83. New York: W.W. Norton, 2016.

Journal Article Formatting Notes

- The author’s name is inverted in the bibliography but not in the footnote.
- Elements are often separated by commas in the footnote and by a period in the bibliography.
- No retrieval date is necessary for electronic resources unless requested by your instructor. If an access date is required by your instructor, it should be included immediately prior to the URL or DOI.
- The journal title is italicized.
- Use title case capitalisation for journal and article titles. Do not capitalize articles (a, an, the), prepositions less than four letters long (of, on, in, by, etc.), or coordinating conjunctions (and, or) unless one of these is the first word of the journal title.
- The volume number is not italicized like it is in APA style. The abbreviation for volume, or vol., is not included. Only give the number.
- The issue number, if available, follows the volume number with a comma and is preceded by “ no.” The publication year may be preceded by a season or month.

1. **Footnote Template**
   First-name Last-name, “Title of Article,” Title of Journal volume #, issue # (publication year): page number, doi:number.

2. **Footnote Entry**
   Gueorg Kossinets and Duncan Watts, “Origins of Homophily in an Evolving Social Network,” The American Journal of Sociology 115, no. 2 (September 2009): 406, doi:10.1086/599247
3. **Bibliography Entry**
   Kossinets, Gueorgi and Duncan Watts. “Origins of Homophily in an Ev olving Social Network.” The American Journal of Sociology 115, no. 2 (September 2009): 405 –450. doi:10.1086/599247

Magazine or Newspaper Articles (Online & Print)

Include as much information about the publishing date as possible. Provide the day and month if available. If citing a print copy of a newspaper or magazine, end the citation after the page number in the footnote entry or year in the bibliography entry. If no author is given for the article, begin with the article's title instead.

Footnote Template

First-name Last-name, "Article Title," Magazine or Newspaper Title, Month Year, page number, URL/Database.

Footnote Entry

- Michelle Cortez, " Fewer American Kids Die in States with Tougher Gun Laws, According to this New Study," Time, July 15, 2019, https://time.com/5626352/gun-laws-fewer-child-deaths/.

- Gintautas Dumcius, "State Receiving $5.6M in Auto Settlement," The Post-Standard, January 11, 2019, A4, Newsbank .

Bibliography Entry Template

Last-name, First-name. "Article Title." Magazine or Newspaper Title . Day Month, Year. URL/Database.

Bibliography Entry

- Cortez, Michelle. " Fewer American Kids Die in States with Tougher Gun Laws, According to this New Study ." Time. July 15, 2019. https://time.com/5626352/gun-laws-fewer-child-deaths/.

- Dumcius, Gintautas. "State Receiv ing $5.6M in Auto Settlement." The Post-Standard. January 11, 2019. Newsbank .

Webpage Organization (With or Without an Author)

Often, webpages that appear to have no author are authored by corporate entity or organisation. List the organisation or entity in place of the author. If the organisation is also the name of the website, do not repeat that information. If there is no author, no organisation and no website owner listed, start the entry with the title of the webpage. If no publication date is given, include the date the material was accessed. Accessed dates are not necessary if a publication date is given.

Footnote Template

Organisation or owner of the ENTIRE website, “Webpage title,” Title of Website or publisher of the ENTIRE website (if different than organisation), last modified/accessed/updated date, URL.

Footnote Entry

- Biography.com Editors, “Barack Obama Biography ,” A&E Television Networks, last updated July 17, 2019, https://www.biography.com/us-president/barack-obama.

- “Bulgaria Country Profile,” BBC News, May 22, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world -europe17202996.

Bibliography Entry

- Biography.com Editors. “Barack Obama Biography.” A&E Telev ision Networks. Last updated July 17, 2019. https://www.biography.com/us-president/barack - obama.

- “Bulgaria Country Profile.” BBC News. May 22, 2018. https://www.bbc.com/news/world -europe-17202996.

4.0 Conclusion

A Bibliography is a list of the full details of all the sources you cited in your paper. In the Chicago Manual of style, the bibliography starts on a separate page at the end of your assignment paper and is titled Bibliography. The Bibliography contains details of the sources used in writing your paper and can include works not cited in your paper that you consulted in your research. All sources appearing in the Bibliography must be ordered alphabetically by surname of the first author or title if no author is identified. Works by the same author or authors are listed alphabetically by title. Bibliographies with more than one author are ordered chronologically. The name of the first author as mentioned earlier in this unit is inverted thus; Margot Broadman to Broadman, Margot. Subsequent author's names are given in the form in which they appear in the original source publication.

In the Chicago style, newspaper articles are more commonly cited in notes than in a Bibliography. Therefore, all details in the footnote should be included. Chicago Manual does not recommend using page numbers for newspaper articles but a section number or edition could be included. For an article available on the internet, include the URL. If the online content is subject to change such as breaking news provide a time stamp.

5.0 Summary

In referencing using the Chicago Manual of Style, we list the elements clearly by identifying the work's author and title, its publisher, and date of publication. For online publications, we add elements stating where we retrieved the document and the date accessed, if required. Periods (full stops) are generally used between elements in references in bibliographies and reference lists. A colon separates titles from subtitles, the place of publication from the publisher name, and volume information from page numbers for journal articles. Quotation marks are used around article and chapter titles. While in bibliographies and notes, we capitalize the first letter of all significant words in titles and subtitles of works and parts of works such as articles or chapters, in reference lists, we capitalize the first letter of all significant words only in titles of periodicals, and capitalize only the first letter of the first word (and any proper nouns) of titles and subtitles of articles, books, and chapters, and corporate authors. We also italicize titles of periodicals and books.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Give a Brief History of the Chicago Manual of Style
2. List some Features of the Chicago Manual of Style
3. Give an analysis of the Chicago Manual of Style and how it is used in references and bibliography

7.0 References/Further Reading

The Chicago Manual of Style Online. https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/

Chicago Style Guide. 17th Ed. https://www.mvcc.edu/learningcommons/pdf/Chicago_Manual_of_Style_17_Notes_and_Bibliography.pdf

MODULE 2: METHODS OF RESEARCH IN PHILOSOPHY

Unit 1: The Phenomenological Method

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this discussion on the Phenomenological method as a method of research in philosophy. Basically, a method of research in philosophy deals with the ways in which data should be collected, analysed and used in philosophical research (Qutosh, 2018). Our emphasis in this unit shall be on philosophy as a unique form of inquiry that involves conceptual and logical analysis, positing and explaining distinctions, and evoking shared ideas and values. To achieve this, we shall first, briefly consider the distinction between 'method of research' and 'research methodology'. Afterwards, we shall examine the phenomenological method as one of the known methods of philosophical research. Others are the hermeneutical method, the dialectical method and the analytical method. Phenomenology, as a philosophical discourse and method, provides a theoretical guideline to researchers to understand phenomena at the level of subjective reality. As a philosophical framework or theory of subjective reality, it plays a key role in the individual being able to understand the actor or the subject regarding a particular event or phenomena. It implies that phenomenology is an approach to educate our own vision, to define our position, to broaden how we see the world around, and to study the lived experience at deeper level. Our examination of the phenomenological method shall make reference to illustrative examples of how this philosophical method can be used in carrying out philosophical researches.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- to define a method of research
- explain the difference between a method of research and research methodology and
- identify some basic features of philosophical research.
- define phenomenology.
- state the key aspects of the phenomenological method.

3.0: Main Content

The content of this unit will dwell on the distinction between 'method of research' and 'research methodology'. This is important because researchers use the terms interchangeably, even though some difference exists between them. The unit will also discuss some important characteristic of research methods in philosophy. Finally the unit will examine phenomenology, both as a philosophical discourse or movement and as a method of research in philosophy

3.1: Method of Research and Research Methodology

A method of research deals with the ways in which data should be collected, analysed and used in the study of a particular subject matter. In the specific case of philosophy, a method of research deals with the ways in which data should be collected, analysed and used in philosophical research. A difference exists between a method of research and research methodology, even though researchers use them interchangeably. A method of research refers to the various procedures, schemes and steps used by a researcher to collect data to conduct research on a particular research topic or problem, while a research methodology is the systematic study of the methods by which knowledge is gained in other to solve the research problem and reach a new conclusion. The research methodology provides the foundation for understanding the role of the methods in engaging with the search for knowledge about a given subject matter. In the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary,* Barber defines methodology as “a body of methods” and as “the branch of knowledge that deals with method” (Barber, 1998: 912). In the view of Laverty, methodology is a “creative approach to understanding” that can draw on various approaches (Laverty, 2003: 16). Carter and Little place methodology as the foundation of method, and as the justification for techniques and procedures of research (Carter and Little, 2007). In a similar vein, Koch argues that methodology “describes the process by which insights about the world and the human condition are generated, interpreted and communicated” (Koch, 1996: 174).

An important characteristic of research methods in philosophy is that it is largely individual-based. In other disciplines, the team approach is rather uncommon (Jain, 2019: 180). It is common to find research projects that have been conducted by teams of researchers in other disciplines such as the natural and social sciences. In philosophy, research is usually conducted by individuals. Another important characteristic of research in philosophy is that researchers are always focused on criticizing existing beliefs, claims or knowledge, rather than creating entirely new forms of knowledge. This means that researchers are usually focused on identifying faults and weaknesses as well as strengths in the knowledge that has already been developed, as opposed to attempting to develop new forms of knowledge in the process (Jain, 2019: 180-181). What this comes to is that the criticisms leveled against existing forms of knowledge result in new ways of seeing old solutions to problems in the world.

Another key feature of research in philosophy is that it focuses on addressing the needs of society. This is borne out of the fact that philosophy, much like the rest of the disciplines in the humanities, is a discipline that is devoted to understanding the condition of humans in society. Thus, the focus of the study that is conducted in philosophy addresses the needs and concerns of people in society. Researchers in the discipline of philosophy, therefore, have to identify the problems that affect society and develop concrete solutions to the problems (Jain, 2019: 181). By the very reason of focusing on the human condition, research programmes in philosophy could be rather non-lineal, navigating the corridors of history back and forth, as well as cultural antecedents of thematic issues (Jain, 2019: 181). In sum, research activities in philosophy are qualitative and not-quantitative, humanistic and not-positivistic, associative and not-replicative, interpretive and not-applicative, and finally, non-lineal.

There are several methods of research in philosophy. These include the Socratic dialectical method, the Cartesian method, the positivist method, the analytic method, the phenomenological method, the hermeneutic method and the speculative method. But for all practical purposes, these methods cannot be exhaustively discussed in this module. However, this unit will discuss the phenomenological method, while the remaining units of this module will discuss the hermeneutical method, the dialectical method and the analytical method.

3.2: The Meaning of Phenomenology

A rather useful point to begin is to attempt a definition of phenomenology. It may be instructive to note that it is quite a task to provide a definition of phenomenology that will be acceptable to all experts or scholars of the discipline. In line with this, for instance, Spiegelberg (1969) argues that there is no one style of phenomenology. One probable explanation for this is that every phenomenologist appears to come up with diverse styles of phenomenology. Therefore, it is difficult to claim one single definition of phenomenology. In a similar vein, Giorgi and Giorgi observe that “a consensual, univocal interpretation of phenomenology is hard to find” (Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003: 23-24). Literally, phenomenology is the study of “phenomena”, that is, appearances of things or things as they appear in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view. The central structure of an experience is its intentionality, its being directed toward something, as it is an experience of or about some object. An experience is directed toward an object by virtue of its content or meaning (which represents the object) together with appropriate enabling conditions. This field of philosophy is then to be distinguished from, and related to, the other main fields of philosophy like ontology (the study of being or what is), epistemology (the study of knowledge), logic (the study of valid reasoning) and ethics (the study of right and wrong action). The Latin term "Phenomenologia" was introduced by Christoph Friedrich Oetinger in 1736. Subsequently, the term was used in their various writings by Johann Heinrich Lambert, Immanuel Kant and Johann Gottlieb Fichte. In 1807, G. W. F. Hegel wrote a book titled *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (usually translated as *Phenomenology of Spirit*). By 1889 Franz Brentano used the term to characterize what he called "descriptive psychology". It was from Brentano that Edmund Husserl took up the term for his new science of consciousness. Thus, Phenomenology has been practiced in various guises for centuries, but it gained much prominence in the early 20th century in the works of Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and others. Basically, therefore, phenomenology studies the structure of various types of experience ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity, including linguistic activity. The structure of these forms of experience typically involves what Husserl called "intentionality", that is, the directedness of experience toward things in the world, the property of consciousness that it is a consciousness of or about something. Throughout its history, the methods and characterization of phenomenology have been widely debated. This notwithstanding, the definition of phenomenology offered above still remains the starting point in effectively characterizing the discipline.

3.3: The Phenomenological Method

The phenomenological method of philosophical research aims to describe, understand and interpret the meanings of experiences of human life. It argues for a detached approach to reality by advocating for intentional study of reality in which the mind gets to things in themselves (Oyeshile and Ugwuanyi, 2006). In other words, the phenomenological method is an approach to research that seeks to describe the essence of a phenomenon by exploring it from the perspective of those who have experienced it. According to Husserl, "each type of object has its special structure, its own typology of appearance", meaning that reality appears in different forms. In other to capture reality, therefore, phenomenology insists that we explore it from the perspective of those who have experienced it.

Following Giorgi and Giorgi (2003), one can equally say that the phenomenological method is descriptive because its point of departure consists of concrete descriptions of experienced events from the perspective of everyday life by participants. As a result of such a description, the researcher engages with describing the "structure of the phenomenon" (Giorgi and Giorgi 2003: 251). Thus, the classical phenomenological research method with Husserlian framework of descriptive research focuses on 'seeking realities and not pursuing truth' in the form of manifestation of phenomena as it is in the form of concrete life-world experiences made of interconnected, lived experiences subjectively (Crotty, 1998). This method of inquiry is based on the philosophical framework embedded in Husserl's transcendental method with core emphasis on phenomenological description of the 'invariant aspects of phenomena as they appear to conscious awareness (Husserl, 1913 & 1962).

The theoretical point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value and one which sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience, has been central in phenomenological studies. Even though phenomenologists seem to have different views on particular issues, there is fairly a general agreement on their core philosophical viewpoints as a belief that consciousness is central and understanding the subjective consciousness is important. This view posits that consciousness has some specific structures which are gate ways to gain direct knowledge through reflections. Perhaps, these philosophical standpoints guide the researchers in understanding the phenomena at conscious level of its appearance that how things appear directly to us rather than through the media of cultural and symbolic structures (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Therefore, description of events as they appear as a method of knowing in phenomenology is fundamental because it is a matter of describing, not of explaining or analyzing. Arriving at this point of argument from both the philosophical and methodological stance, phenomenology is the study of a phenomenon perceived by human beings at a deeper level of understanding in a specific situation.

Phenomenology as a philosophy and a method of inquiry is not simply an approach to knowing, but also an intellectual engagement in interpretations and meaning-making, used to understand human experiences as a subjective occurrence. Historically, while Edmund Husserl's perspective of phenomenology is a science of understanding human beings at a deeper level by gazing at the phenomenon (Husserl, 1913 & 1962), Martin Heidegger's view of interpretive-hermeneutic phenomenology gives wider meaning to the lived experiences of the subject. Using the phenomenological method, a subject uses what phenomenologists refer to as 'bracketing'. Bracketing refers to the act of preventing one's previous knowledge from affecting how one encounters that phenomenon in concrete experience. Bracketing provides for a description and interpretation of lived experiences (Gearing, 2004). Perhaps, the use of bracketing strategy, according to Husserl, is essential for the subject to gain insights into lived experiences. Speziale and Carpenter (2007) add that bracketing is an effective way to ensure validity of what is gotten in conscious awareness. The concept of bracketing seems similar to what Husserl (1939 & 1954) discusses about two negative procedures: (a) the *epoché of the natural sciences* and (b) the *epoché of the natural attitude*. While the *epoché of the natural sciences* refers to the return from concepts and theories to the things themselves, implying the avoidance of explanations, the *epoché of the natural attitude*, which is the stage of phenomenological reduction, implies the subject becoming unaware of the presumptions and presupposition that the subject keeps in mind and concentrating on original phenomena the way they manifest rather than involving in them. Probably, these procedures allow subjects to focus on lived experience as it is itself given rather explain or analyze them.

Furthermore, there are two main positive procedures Husserl developed with respect to the phenomenological method. These are the *intentional analysis* and *eidetic analysis*. Whereas the *intentional analysis* describes how experiential processes proceed and what is experienced, the *eidetic analysis*, which is intuition of essences, helps the subject to understand the lived experiences of not only how experience is experienced, but also how the role of intuition of essences adds meaning to that experience. In this way, the subject must be well aware of being fundamentally descriptive in encountering phenomena while using the procedures of intentional analysis and eidetic analysis, on one hand, and using the epoché of the natural sciences and the epoché of the natural attitude, on the other, in order to gain a wider meaning attached to the phenomena. Moreover, Spiegelberg claims that the aspect of “emancipation and preconception as a method of phenomenology is a great contribution to philosophy… to use in understanding the phenomena under study with its fullest breadth and depth” (Spiegelberg 1969: 680). However, to gain meaningful understanding of the phenomena under study, interpretive element adds more meaning to the descriptive nature of the phenomenology.

From the foregoing, it could be said that the phenomenological method enables the subject or individual to describe the natural way of appearance of phenomena so as to gain insights into ones lived experiences. The outcomes of a phenomenological study broaden the mind, improves the ways of thinking or seeing a phenomenon. It implies that phenomenology is an approach to educate our own vision, to define our position, to broaden how we see the world around, and to study our lived experiences at a deeper level. It, therefore, holds both the characteristics of philosophy as well as a method of inquiry.

It may be stated that the phenomenological method, which can also be referred to as ‘qualitative’, ‘subjectivist’, ‘humanistic’, or ‘interpretative’, involves examining and reflecting on the web of a research subjects such as values, attitudes and perceptions. This method considers research from the perspective that human behaviour, for instance, is not as easily measured as phenomena in the natural sciences. This is so partly because human motivation is shaped by factors that are not always observable, such as inner thought processes. In addition, people impose their own meanings on events and realities; meanings that do not always coincide with the way others have interpreted these realities. By its nature, the phenomenological method assumes that the subject (people) would always influence the object (events) and act in unpredictable ways that could upset any constructed rules or identifiable norms – they are often ‘actors’ on a human stage and shape their ‘performance’ according to a wide range of variables. The phenomenological method, therefore, is particularly concerned with understanding the object of study from the participants' own frames of reference. In other words, this research method is usually employed in describing, translating, explaining and interpreting realities from the perspectives of the researcher.

Conclusion

A distinction exists between a method of research and research methodology. Whereas the former refers to the various procedures, schemes and steps used by a researcher to collect data for conducting research on a particular research topic or problem, the latter denotes the systematic study of the methods by which knowledge is gained in other to solve the research problem and reach a new conclusion. There are many methods of research in philosophy. They include the Dialectical method, the Cartesian method, the Positivist method, the Analytic method, the Hermeneutic method, the Speculative method and the Phenomenological method. As a method of philosophical research, the Phenomenological method advocates for a detached approach to reality in which the mind is attuned to ‘things in themselves’ rather than to the various appearances of things.

Summary

In this unit, we have explained the distinction between a method of research and research methodology. A method of research refers to the various procedures, schemes and steps used by a researcher to collect data for conducting research on a particular research topic or problem, while a research methodology is the systematic study of the methods by which knowledge is gained in other to solve the research problem and reach a new conclusion. We also examined phenomenology both as a philosophical movement or discourse and as a method of philosophical research. Phenomenology, as a philosophical discourse and method, provides a theoretical guideline to researchers to understand phenomena at the level of subjective reality.

Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is the difference between a method of research and research methodology?

2. Identify some key features of a philosophical research.
3. What do you understand by the term, ‘phenomenology’?

4. Name two key features of the phenomenological method.

References/Further Reading

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. 2007. *Research methods in education.* New York: Routledge.

Crotty, M. 1998. *The foundation of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process.* London: Sage.

Gearing, R. 2004. Bracketing in research: A typology. *Qualitative Health Research, 14*(10): 1429-1452.

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Unit 2: The Hermeneutical Method

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this discussion on hermeneutics both as a philosophical movement or discourse and as a method of philosophical research. In philosophy, hermeneutics typically deals with the meaning, basic nature, scope and validity of interpretation, as well as its place and implications for human existence. Interpretation in hermeneutics has to do with entering into a 'dialogue' between the worldview of the self and that of the other. This process usually starts somewhere, somehow, from a position which is more often than not based on insufficient knowledge of the phenomenon studied. Hermeneutics as a method portrays the interpreter's relation to the interpreted and the understanding that arises out of that relation. In this vein, hermeneutics as a method emphasises the act of mediation between an interpreter and the interpreted.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the term hermeneutics.
- trace the historical development of the hermeneutic movement
- explain hermeneutics as a method of research.

3.0: Main Contents

The content of this unit examines the meaning of hermeneutics and hermeneutics as a method in philosophy. The first, that is, the meaning of hermeneutics, will help us understand what hermeneutics is all about. This will provide an understanding of how hermeneutics functions as a method in philosophical research.

3.1: The Meaning of Hermeneutics

From its semantic history, the word, 'hermeneutics,' derives from the name of the Greek god, 'Hermes', who is considered in Greek mythology to be the messenger of the gods. In this vein, it was the practice that to correctly discern a divine message, one needed is to clearly understand Hermes' words. Hermeneutics, in this sense, would therefore refer to proper interpretation and understanding. By this, reference is made to the interpretation of phenomena as signs (Noorderhaven 2008: 8). "Signs can be understood if we can reconstruct, make our own, and appropriate the meaning that the signs have to its author" (Noorderhaven 2008: 8). This, essentially speaking, means that effort is made to integrate the sign that we want to understand within our own semiotic horizon; that is, the general, more or less coherent system of signs that form our worldview (Grondin 1994: 5). Interpretation in hermeneutics, therefore, has to do with entering into a 'dialogue' between the worldview of the self and that of the other. This process usually starts somewhere, somehow, from a position that is more often than not, based on insufficient knowledge of the phenomenon studied (Noorderhaven 2008: 9). Gadamer uses the word 'prejudice', but not in the conventional pejorative sense. A prejudice, for Gadamer, is nothing more or less than a prejudgment made at the beginning of the dialogue. As our prejudices are confronted in more and more depth with the phenomenon we try to understand, we see which of them are misguided and have to be altered (How 1995: 47-48). Interpreting the product of the human mind involves a fusion of horizons – the horizon of the interpreter and that of the individual whose product we try to understand. This fusion is made possible only if, from the start, there is some overlap, some common ground (Noorderhaven 2008: 9). The possibility that different horizons can be fused lies in the fact that they are implicitly joined "in the depth of tradition" (Shusterman 1989: 217). What we are led to from the foregoing is that we always start from prejudices. And the fact that we always start from prejudices implies that we are always subjective. It is this subjectivism that creates in the complexity of the human mind the challenge that the science of hermeneutics is meant to resolve.

Hermeneutics, therefore, as the study of interpretation, plays a crucial role in a number of disciplines whose subject-matter demands interpretative approaches. That is, disciplines whose subject-matter concerns issues like the meaning of human intentions, beliefs, and actions, or the meaning of human experience, as it is preserved in the arts and literature, historical testimony, and other artefacts (See: https://critical-inference.com/statistical-hermeneutics). Among such disciplines are Theology, Jurisprudence, Medicine, as well as some of the human sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Little wonder Grondin (1994: 1) described hermeneutics as an "auxiliary" study of the arts, methods, and foundations of research appropriate to a respective disciplinary subject-matter. For example, in theology, Biblical hermeneutics concerns the general principles for the proper interpretation of the Bible.

Within philosophy, however, hermeneutics typically signifies, first, a disciplinary area and, second, the historical movement in which this area has been developed. As a disciplinary area, and on analogy with the designations of other disciplinary areas (such as 'the philosophy of mind' or 'the philosophy of art'), hermeneutics might have been named 'the philosophy of interpretation.' Hermeneutics thus treats interpretation itself as its subject-matter and not as an auxiliary to the study of something else. Philosophically, hermeneutics, therefore, concerns the meaning of interpretation – its basic nature, scope and validity, as well as its place within and implications for human existence; and it treats interpretation in the context of fundamental philosophical questions about being and knowing language and history, art and aesthetic experience, and practical life (See: https://colors-newyork.com/what-are-the-main-concerns-of-hermeneutics).

3.2: Hermeneutics as a Philosophical Method

In its historical perspective, the reference to hermeneutics as a method for interpreting the text, especially biblical texts, dates back, at least, to some 300 years (Grondin 1994: 2). Hermeneutics understood as a methodology which is usually referred to as “philosophical hermeneutics”, is of much recent origin, and is identified with the work of 20th century philosophers Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Paul Ricoeur (Noorderhaven 2008: 8). In its original understanding, hermeneutics is meant to offer the sciences of the human mind (the humanities, such as philosophy, art, history) an alternative to the logical empiricism of the natural sciences. In the natural sciences, hypotheses are known to be arrived at by means of the rules of logical inferences and tested against relevant data. This is with the aim of identifying general regularities or what is referred to as ‘covering laws’. This model was understood as unfit for the science of the human mind (Noorderhaven 2008: 9). In the study of history, for example, the aim is not to discover general laws, which is seen as impossible given the overt unpredictability of historical events and circumstances, but rather to interpret history in such a way that it can be understood.

The primary function of hermeneutics as a method is to stress the interpreter’s relation to the interpreted and the understanding that arises out of that relation. In this vein, hermeneutics emphasises the act of mediation between an interpreter and the interpreted. Interpretation is an act, that if successful, produces understanding. In other words, the task of interpretation is to understand that, which is to be interpreted. To produce an interpretation is to come up with an understanding of the interpreted (Silverman 1994: 11). Interpretation itself is a new and unique production of work; it is not merely a specular reproduction of what is being interpreted. According to Gallagher (1992), interpretations never simply repeat, copy, reproduce or restore the interpreted in its originality. Interpretation produces something new and this original insight gives meaning and understanding to the interpreter. A unique characteristic of hermeneutical inquiry is that it accords priority to questioning, which results in a persistent search for questioning about meaning. These questions resist easy answers or solutions. There is a search for finding the genuine question, but in finding the genuine question it must be recognised that there may be genuine questions but never final or closed ones. A distinctive feature of hermeneutics is that this form of inquiry remains open-ended and ambiguous. “A genuine question is more important than settling finally on solutions or answers” (Smits 2001).

Hermeneutics as a research method, if it is to remain true to its philosophical origins, involves reappraisal and reinterpretation in relation to its cultural contexts. What is distinctive about philosophical hermeneutics, however, is the ontological grounding of interpretation that calls into play, in Gadamer’s (1960/2004) terms, our prejudices and historically-effected consciousness. By the fact of our being-in-the-world, we are already seeing the world *as* something – we have a perspective. The task in the use of hermeneutics as a method is to align this perspective with the appropriate cultural resources to enable us to “see what is going on” in the world (Caputo 2006: 57). This requires an understanding of the role of interpretation as a method in research. It is instructive to note, in this vein, that interpretation in the hermeneutic tradition also draws on a profound sense of the place of language as mediating our being-in-the-world. Gadamer wrote that, “the light that causes everything to emerge in such a way that it is evident and comprehensible in itself is the light of the word [language]” (Gadamer 1960/2004: 478). This view of language as inherently interpretive and self-expressive presses back against the objectification of words as entities to be counted, and means that forms of thematic analysis have to be approached with care. For philosophical hermeneutics, language is interpretive.

The challenge of research inspired by the hermeneutical method is to articulate a meaningful and useful alignment of the infinite possibilities of individual experiences and cultural and historical interconnections on which a particular research focuses. A way to address this is that hermeneutics proposes “a return to the essential generativity of human life, a sense of life in which there is always something left to say, with all the difficulty, risk, and ambiguity that such generativity entails” (Jardine 2000: 120). In this sense, hermeneutics as a research approach grants a hearing to those living in important, complicated relationships and offers possibilities of reinvention. Likewise, it is open to the voices of other strands of thought, other cultures and ways of viewing the world, and seeks to do them justice in understanding and, ending where it begins, in practice. It is important to note in this regard that hermeneutics developed from a philosophical practice into a research practice and has proven to be of value in disciplines whose research involves practical questioning and applicability. Indeed, the attendant complexities surrounding its status as a method and its functioning as a methodology, far from being arguments against its application in research, are testament to its vitality. From its tradition, hermeneutics in its various iterations has brought much to the table regarding understanding and meaning which is constructed in the quest for truth. From ancient times, hermeneutics has allowed scholars to more fully understand the world which we inhabit. It provides a fuller, richer meaning to the questions that emerge from honest inquiries into what is true.

4.0: Conclusion

Hermeneutics is the theory and methodology of interpretation, which includes the art of understanding and communication. The method of philosophical hermeneutics has its “critical procedures” with a “clear style and a discernible signature” (Davey 2006: 18). These procedures generally include the address of a topic or subject-matter, collection of pertinent information by engaging with the texts, and then an interpretive analysis of the topic or subject-matter (Moules 2002). These generalised procedures all involve reflexivity and decision-making on the part of the individual making use of the hermeneutical method. One can take the hermeneutical approach and with it, weave a more complete narrative that brings meaning to the questions being examined, especially those that arise out of the human sciences. The promise of a more complete understanding allows the hermeneutical approach to research stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the other methods of research.

5.0: Summary

In this unit, we began by explaining the meaning of hermeneutics, after which we examined hermeneutics as a method for research in philosophy. Within philosophy, we noted that hermeneutics typically concerns the meaning, basic nature, scope and validity of interpretation, as well as its place and implications for human existence. In the light of this, we further stated that interpretation in hermeneutics has to do with entering into a 'dialogue' between the worldview of the self and that of the other. This process usually starts somewhere, somehow, from a position which is more often than not based on insufficient knowledge of the phenomenon studied. This takes us to the understanding that hermeneutics as a method portrays the interpreter's relation to the interpreted and the understanding that arises out of that relation. In this vein, hermeneutics emphasises the act of mediation between an interpreter and the interpreted and as a science of interpretation, hermeneutics as an act produces understanding if successful.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What do you understand by the term 'hermeneutics'?
2. What do you consider the major contribution(s) of Georg Gadamer, and Paul Ricoeur to the development of hermeneutics?
3. Explain how hermeneutics is a method of research in philosophy

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Unit 3: The Dialectical Method

Contents

1.0: Introduction

You are welcome to this discussion on dialectics and the dialectical method in philosophy. As stated earlier, a method of research in philosophy deals with the ways in which data/information should be collected, analysed, used and reported in philosophical research. As a method of research in philosophy, dialectics is used to describe a philosophical analysis that involves some sort of contradictory process between opposing claims and propositions. One aim of the dialectical method is that it helps to differentiate the necessary proposition or propositions from those that are contingent or dependent on the necessary one(s).

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of dialectics
- trace the history of the dialectical method

- explain the differences between the Socratic, Hegelian and Marxian variants of the dialectical method.

3.0: Main Content

The content of this unit examines the meaning of dialectics as a concept and as a method in philosophy. The first, that is, the meaning of dialectics, will help us understand what dialectics is all about. This knowledge will now aid our understanding of how dialectics functions as a method in philosophical research and writing.

3.1: The Meaning of Dialectics

The term ‘dialectic’ is said to have originated with the Greek philosopher Plato who wrote dialogues featuring his famous teacher Socrates. These dialogues introduce a conception of dialectic as a method of question-and-answer argumentation. Plato may have invented the term dialectic as we said earlier, but it is important to note that it was his student, Aristotle, who first presented a theory and methodology of dialectic in an organised form. According to Amber, in Aristotle’s time, argumentative competitions or what Kullmann refers to as ‘academic gymnastical disputes’ were commonplace among the intellectual elites of ancient Greece. For Aristotle, dialectic is simply the skilful argumentation of contrary opinions represented by a thesis and antithesis (Samson, 2019). The German philosopher Immanuel Kant was one of those who later resurrected the term with his Transcendental Dialectic, which later became a great inspiration to Fichte and Hegel who developed the three-stage dialectical movement from thesis to antithesis to synthesis. Hence, Karl Popper’s definition of dialectic as a theory maintains that something – for instance, human thought – develops in a way characterised by the so-called (dialectic) triad of thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis (Popper, 2002: 421). When related to the history of ideas, dialectics is a method that refers to the process where history moves forward to a particular end goal. This movement happens in two ways: negating the negativity and uniting the oppositions. Throughout history, ideas and ideas interact with each other to form differences and conflicts, which constitute a development of history from on stage to another. In order to resolve a conflict, a synthesis emerges to combine the best parts of these contradictory ideas and also abandon the worst parts. As a result, history elevates to meet new levels through the process of negating the negativity between two or more conflicting concepts and uniting them into a more complete one. From this understanding of dialectics, the definition or meaning we give to concepts and ideas are merely useful as an initial starting point. The processes of re-conceptualisation of such concepts and ideas are the kernel or more important aspects of a dialectical process. In what follows, we shall examine the dialectics of Socrates, Hegel and Marx, after first looking at dialectics as a philosophical method.

3.2: Dialectics as a Philosophical Method

Dialectics as a philosophical method is a term that is used to describe a system philosophical argument that involves some kind of contradictory process between opposing sides. Dialectics as a philosophical method is used to study things in their own being and movement via the connection of opposites. In other words, dialectics involves an *interplay of opposites* and a study of complex types of connections. It is closely connected to the ideas of Socrates and Plato where Plato's famous dialogues often presented Socrates playing a leading role in conversations. Conversation or dialogue was at the heart of the Socratic dialectical method. Through this method, Socrates would ask probing questions that cumulatively revealed his students' unsupported assumptions and misconceptions. The goal was to elicit a clear and consistent expression of something supposed to be implicitly known by all rational beings. The dialectical method, in the modern sense, derives from the work of Hegel (1770-1831), who aimed at critically synthesising rationalism and empiricism. Both rationalism and empiricism conceive the world in terms of a subject–object or thought–reality dualism, and both reduced the foundation of knowledge to one of these poles. Hegel's project was to transcend the one-sidedness of these philosophies; that is, to overcome the dichotomy between rationalism and empiricism without losing sight of them. It is pertinent to state the Hegel shares this aim of reconciling rationalism and empiricism with another German philosopher, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). However, Kant's philosophy in this regard, is considered insufficient in dealing with the dichotomy of rationalism and empiricism, because it does not overcome dualism. Rather, it separates the form of knowledge from the content of knowledge, as it postulates a 'thing in itself' which we cannot know and a 'thing as it appears to us' which is knowable.

In present times, dialectics is in fact a family name for a variety of strands. The two main strands are *historical dialectic* and *systematic dialectic*. The first, which applies to the study of society and its philosophy, arts and science – or, more specifically, society and its historical emergence, is most popularly stressed by scholars, partly because of Marx's historical materialist view of society, and Hegel's work on the philosophy of history (Hegel, 1837).

3.2.1: Socratic Dialectical Method

In what is perhaps the most classic version of 'dialectics,' the Socratic dialogues are a particular form of dialectic known as the method of elenchus (literally given as 'refutation' and 'scrutiny'), whereby a series of questions are used to clarify a more precise statement of a vague belief, followed by the exploration of the logical consequences of that statement, and the discovery of a contradiction. Asking a series of questions was considered by Socrates a method of 'giving birth' to the truth. He believed that everyone is pregnant with knowledge and as it takes a midwife to deliver a woman of a baby, it takes a philosophical midwife to help an individual deliver knowledge (Merriam-Webster, 2021). This Method, according to Socrates, is meant to aid knowledge production. This is why, even though Socrates professed to be ignorant of the answers to his questions, his questioning and testing of the answers given were designed to expose the weakness of the opinions held by his interlocutors and to refine those opinions. The method is both destructive and constructive, since false beliefs are exposed (destructive) and that the exposure may lead to further search for truth (constructive) (Wyss, 2014). The principal aim of Socratic dialectics may be understood as directed at improving the perspective of the interlocutors, by freeing them from unrecognized errors; or indeed, by teaching them the spirit of inquiry.

Much of what we known about Socratic dialectics, however, come from Plato, who is credited to have written his dialogues with Socrates as the protagonist. Plato, for instance, presented philosophical argument as a back-and-forth dialogue or debate, generally between the character of Socrates, on one side, and some person or group of people to whom Socrates was talking (his interlocutors), on the other. In the course of the dialogues, Socrates' interlocutors propose definitions of philosophical concepts or express views that Socrates challenges or opposes (Corbett and Connors 1999). The debate goes back-and-forth between the opposing sides, producing in the process, a kind of linear progression in philosophical views or positions, for as the dialogues go along, Socrates' interlocutors refine their views in response to Socrates' challenges and come to adopt more sophisticated views. This back-and-forth dialectic between Socrates and his interlocutors provides Plato with the platform for arguing against the earlier, less sophisticated views or positions and for the more sophisticated ones later on. (See: https://www.coursehero.com/file/114520296/Ber-joshua-Medil-Dialectic-Methodpdf)

In common cases, Socrates used enthymemes as the foundation of his argument. For clarity, an enthymeme is a rhetorical syllogism used in oratorical practice employed to quiz an interlocutor in the search for knowledge. For example, in the *Euthyphro*, Socrates asks Euthyphro to provide a definition of piety. Euthyphro replies that the pious is that which is loved by the gods. But Socrates also has Euthyphro agreeing that the gods are quarrelsome and their quarrels, like human quarrels, concern objects of love or hatred. Therefore, Socrates reasons, at least one thing exists that certain gods love but other gods hate. Again, Euthyphro agrees (Adler 2000). Socrates concludes that if Euthyphro's definition of piety is acceptable, then there must exist at least one thing that is both pious and impious (as it is both loved and hated by the gods), which Euthyphro admits is absurd. (See: https://www.academickids.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Dialectics). Thus, Euthyphro is brought to a realisation by this dialectical method that his definition of piety is not sufficiently meaningful. In another example, in Plato's *Gorgias*, dialectic occurs between Socrates, the Sophist Gorgias, and two men, Polus and Callicles. Because Socrates' ultimate goal was to reach true knowledge, he was even willing to change his own views in order to arrive at the truth (Corbett and Connors 1999). The fundamental goal of dialectic, in this instance, was to establish a precise definition of the subject (in this case, rhetoric) and with the use of argumentation and questioning, make the subject even more precise. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates reaches the truth by asking a series of questions and in return, receiving short, clear answers. It is pertinent to state here that the detection of error in a proposition does not amount to a proof of the antithesis; for example, a contradiction in the consequences of a definition of *piety* does not provide a correct definition (Reale 1990).

In all, the dialectics of Socratic is a form of argumentative dialogue involving individuals, in which questions are asked and responses elicited in a manner that would stimulate critical thinking and draw out ideas and underlying presuppositions. It is aimed at the midwifery of knowledge because it is employed to bring out definitions implicit in the interlocutors' beliefs, or to help them further their understanding (Reale 1990). Dialectics, in the instance of Socrates, is a method of hypothesis elimination, in that better hypotheses are found by steadily identifying and eliminating those that lead to contradictions. It searches for general, commonly held truths that shape beliefs and scrutinises them to determine their consistency with other beliefs. The basic form is a series of questions formulated as tests of logic and fact intended to help a person or group discover their beliefs about some topic; exploring definitions, and seeking to characterize general characteristics shared by various particular instances (Adler 2000).

The Socratic elenchus or cross examination usually ends up by showing that a general claim made by an interlocutor has exceptions or conceals hidden assumptions that the interlocutor cannot accept. This philosophical method may not be popular for directly solving problems, but it is known for opening new ground for further inquiry into knowledge claims. In all of the dialogues, Plato is seen to be offering a philosophical challenge and training to his readers to come to their own solutions to the problems he raised (Encyclopedia.com, 2019).

3.2.2: Hegelian Dialectical Method

Hegelian dialectics refers to the particular dialectical method of argument employed by the 19th Century German philosopher, G.W.F. Hegel, which, like other 'dialectical' methods, relies on a contradictory process between opposing sides. Whereas the 'opposing sides' of Socratic dialectics, as we see in Plato's dialogues, were people

(Socrates and his interlocutors), what the ‘opposing sides’ are in Hegel’s work depends on the subject matter he discusses. In his work on logic, for instance, the ‘opposing sides’ are different definitions of logical concepts that are opposed to one another. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* which presents Hegel’s epistemology or philosophy of knowledge, the ‘opposing sides’ are different definitions of consciousness and of the object that consciousness is aware of or claims to have knowledge of (See: https://www.gertitashkomd,com/blog/2017/6/5/better-with-dialectisc).

As in Plato’s dialogues, a contradictory process between ‘opposing sides’ in Hegel’s dialectics leads to a linear evolution or development from less sophisticated definitions or views to more sophisticated ones. Just like in Plato’s dialogues, the dialectical process also constitutes Hegel’s method for arguing against earlier, less sophisticated definitions or views and for the more sophisticated ones later. Hegel regarded the dialectical method as the hallmark of his philosophy, as he employed this method not only in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, but in all of his later works like the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*, the *Science of Logic*, and the *Philosophy of Right*. Hegel’s conception of dialectic as a progression of ideas from thesis to antithesis to synthesis makes use of three main dialectical formats to arrive at conceptual synthesis:

i. The first format achieves synthesis by recognising the antithesis as really the thesis in disguise. This means that, if the thesis is A and the antithesis is B, then the synthesis is A = B.
ii. The second format arrives at synthesis by acknowledging the thesis as a composition of the antithesis. This means that, if the thesis is A and the antithesis is B, then the synthesis is A composed of B.
iii. The third dialectical format involves a thesis and antithesis that oppose each other along two dimensions. This creates double opposition between the thesis and antithesis. The synthesis in this dialectical format integrates or reconciles the thesis and antithesis by combining an element from both. This dialectical format features a thesis, antithesis, and synthesis composed of two concepts each. Such that, if the thesis is A + B and the antithesis is C + D where C is the opposite of A

and D is the opposite of B, then the synthesis is either A + D or B + C. Take note that, the synthesis cannot consist of the pairs of opposites A + C or B + D.

It is important to note that though Hegel acknowledged that his dialectical method was part of a philosophical tradition stretching back to Plato, he criticised Plato's version of dialectics. He argued that Plato's dialectics deals only with limited philosophical claims and is unable to get beyond skepticism or nothingness (Hegel 1977b: 55-6). Hegel's point may be understood following the thinking in the logic of a traditional *reductio ad absurdum* argument. In this vein, if the premises of an argument lead to a contradiction, we must conclude that the premises are false, which leaves us with no premises or with nothing. We must then wait around for new premises to spring up arbitrarily from somewhere else, and then see whether those new premises put us back into nothingness or emptiness once again; that is, if they too lead to a contradiction. And because Hegel believed that reason necessarily generates contradictions, he thought new premises will indeed produce further contradictions (McTaggart 1964). As he puts the argument, then, the scepticism that ends up with the bare abstraction of nothingness or emptiness cannot get any further from there, but must wait to see whether something new comes along and what it is, in order to throw it too into the same empty abyss (Hegel 2018: §79). Thus, Hegel argues that because the dialectics of Socrates (as we read in Plato's dialogues) cannot get beyond arbitrariness and scepticism, it generates only approximate truths, and falls short of being a genuine science (Hegel 1977b: 55-6).

The *Stanford Encyclopaedia* gives an extensive and detailed account of Hegel's dialectical method as contained in Part I of his *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*, which is often called the *Encyclopaedia Logic*. In this text, Hegel argues that the form or presentation of logic has three sides or moments (Hegel 1991: §79). The first moment, also referred to as the moment of the understanding, is the moment of fixity in which concepts or forms have a seemingly stable definition or determination (Hegel 1991: §80). The second moment – the "*dialectical*" or "*negatively rational*" moment – is the moment of instability. In this moment, a one-sidedness or restrictedness in the determination from the moment of understanding comes to the fore, and the determination that was fixed in the first moment passes into its opposite. Hegel describes this process as a process of "self-sublation" (Hegel 1991: §81). The English verb "to sublate" translates Hegel's technical use of the German verb *aufheben*, which for Hegel means both to cancel (or negate) and to preserve at the same time (Hegel 2018: §113). The moment of understanding sublates *itself* because its own character or nature – its one-sidedness or restrictedness – destabilizes its definition and leads it to pass into its opposite. The dialectical moment thus involves a process of *self*-sublation, or a process in which the determination from the moment of understanding sublates *itself*, or both cancels and preserves *itself*, as it pushes on to or passes into its opposite. The third moment – the "*speculative*" or "*positively rational*" moment – grasps the unity of the opposition between the first two determinations (Hegel 1991: §§79, 82). Here, Hegel rejects the traditional *reductio ad absurdum* argument, which says that when the premises of an argument lead to a contradiction, then the premises must be discarded altogether, leaving nothing. As Hegel suggests in the *Phenomenology*, such an argument is just the scepticism which only ever sees pure nothingness in its result and abstracts from the fact that this nothingness is specifically the nothingness of that from which it results (Hegel 1977: §79).

3.3.3: Marxian Dialectical Method

Marxian dialectics is a form of Hegelian dialectics which applies to the study of historical materialism. It purports to be a reflection of the real world created by man. In this assumption, dialectics would thus be a robust method under which one could examine personal, social, and economic behaviours. Marxian dialectics is the core foundation of the philosophy of dialectical materialism, which forms the basis of the ideas behind historical materialism. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, writing several decades after Hegel's death, supposed that Hegel's dialectic is too abstract. Their argument was that the dialectics suffers a mystification in the writings of Hegel. With Hegel, they supposed that dialectics was standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if the rational kernel within dialectics would be discovered again (Marx 1873).

Thus, in contradiction to Hegelian dialects – which he coupled with his idealism – Marx presented his own dialectical method, which he claims to be the ‘direct opposite’ of Hegel’s method:

> My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i.e. the process of thinking, which, under the name of ‘the Idea’, he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of ‘the Idea’. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought (Marx 1873).

In Marxism, the dialectical method of historical study became intertwined with historical materialism, the school of thought exemplified by the works of Marx, Engels, and Vladimir Lenin. As such, Marxist dialectics became a theory emphasizing the primacy of the material way of life; social ‘praxis’ over all forms of social consciousness; and the secondary, dependent character of the ‘ideal’.

The term ‘dialectical materialism’ was coined by the 19th-century social theorist Joseph Dietzgen, who used the theory to explain the nature of socialism and social development. For Lenin, the primary feature of Marx’s ‘dialectical materialism’ was its application of materialist philosophy to history and social sciences. Lenin’s main input in the philosophy of dialectical materialism was his theory of reflection, which presented human consciousness as a dynamic reflection of the objective material world that fully shapes its contents and structure. Marxist dialectics is exemplified in *Das Kapital* (Capital), which outlines two central theories: (i) surplus value and (ii) the materialist conception of history. Marx explains dialectical materialism by stating that it is a scandal and abomination to elitism and its doctrinaire professors in its rational form, because it includes in its comprehension, an affirmative recognition of the existing state of oppression of the masses by the elites, and at the same time, also, the recognition of the negation of this state, and of its inevitable breaking up. Another reason, Marx gives is that it (dialectical materialism) regards every historically developed social form to be in fluid movement, and therefore takes into account its transient nature not less than its momentary existence (Marx 1873).

From the foregoing, and in taking dialectics as a method in philosophy, nothing is final, absolute, or sacred. It reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything; nothing can endure *ad infinitum*, except the uninterrupted process of becoming and of passing away, of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher. And dialectical philosophy, itself, is nothing more than the mere reflection of this process in the thinking brain. Thus, according to Marx, dialectics is "the science of the general laws of motion both of the external world and of human thought" (Lenin 1980). In a similar vein, Lenin describes his dialectical understanding as a doctrine of *development*. He sees dialectics as a development that repeats, as it were, stages that have already been passed, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher basis. Dialectics is a development, so to speak, that proceeds in spirals, not in a straight line; a development by leaps, catastrophes, and revolutions; 'breaks in continuity'. It is the transformation of quantity into quality; inner impulses towards development, imparted by the contradiction and conflict of the various forces and tendencies acting on a given body, or within a given phenomenon, or within a given society; the interdependence and the closest and indissoluble connection between all aspects of any phenomenon (history constantly revealing ever new aspects), a connection that provides a uniform, and universal process of motion, one that follows definite laws – these are some of the features of dialectics as a doctrine of development that is richer than the conventional understanding of dialectics in Hegel. It is worthy of note to state that an example of the influence of Marxist dialectics in the European tradition is Jean Paul-Sartre's 1960 book, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. In the book, Sartre stated that existentialism, like Marxism, addresses itself to experience in order to discover with experience, concrete syntheses. It can conceive of these syntheses only within a moving, dialectical totalisation (Sartre 1960).

4.0: Conclusion

To conclude this unit, dialectics represents rather diverse conceptions of the nature of the interface of opposing claims and assertion that eventually result in new understandings within the context of the search for truth. In the light of this, it can be seen that though the dialectical approaches studied are different, the connection of these approaches to understanding dialectics is that there is a triad of movement that begins with a claim, a counter-claim and finally to a new claim. In light of the implication of this for research in philosophy, it becomes obvious that philosophy is to be taken as the on-going examination of claims, by comparing and contrasting such claims with others, with the intent to arrive at new broadened claims that are then subjected to further examination. This may smack off the assumption that there are no accepted positions or claims in philosophy. In response, however, the practice in philosophy is that philosophical positions and claims are taken as heuristics. This means that a position or claim is only accepted as a tentative answer to puzzling questions, until new information is discovered.

5.0: Summary

In this unit, we began by explaining the meaning of dialectics, after which we examined dialectics as a method of research in philosophy. In this vein, it was noted that dialectics describes a variety of approaches that include those of Socrates, Hegel and Marx in terms of how claims and proposition compare and contrast in the search for truth. As such, though the dialectical methods studied, particularly those of Hegel and Marx, offered critique of the preceding one (Hegel criticized Socrates dialectics and Marx criticized that of Hegel), their proposals emphasised the point that dialectics is an important method in philosophical research, which is directed as the search for truth.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What do you understand by the term ‘dialectics’?
2. Name two basic components of dialectics.
3. What is/are the major difference(s) between the Socratic, Hegelian and Marxian versions of the dialectical method?

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Unit 4: The Analytic Method

Contents

1.0: Introduction

We begin this discussion by welcoming you to a study of analysis as a research method in philosophy. We would like to state quickly that analysis is better understood within the tradition of philosophy known as analytic philosophy. Analytic philosophy, which is also called linguistic philosophy, refers to a loosely related set of approaches to philosophical problems, dominant in Anglo-American philosophy from the early 20th century, which emphasises the study of language and the logical analysis of concepts. Although most works in analytic philosophy have been done in Great Britain and the United States, significant contributions also have been made in other countries, notably Australia, New Zealand, and the countries of Scandinavia

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of analysis
- trace the history of the analytic movement
- highlight the essential features of analysis as a method of philosophical research.

3.0: Main Contents

The unit examines the meaning of analysis as a method in philosophy. The first section traces the history of the analytic movement, as a prelude to the second section where we discuss what analysis as a method of philosophical research is all about.

3.1: The Analytic Movement in Philosophy

It is common knowledge that philosophical problems are addressed through argumentations using the best logical resources available for constructing those arguments which lead to conclusions that are mostly impossible to deny without running into contradiction. The analytic movement embodied this tradition. The main founders of the analytic movement were the Cambridge philosophers George Edward Moore and Bertrand Russell. The movement was birthed as a result of their reaction against British Idealism, and their rejection of Hegel and Hegelianism. However, both Moore and Russell, especially Russell, were heavily influenced by the German philosopher and mathematician Gottlob Frege, and many of analytic philosophy's leading proponents, such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, Rudolf Carnap and the others. Over the course of the twentieth century, analytic philosophy developed into the dominant philosophical tradition in the English-speaking world, and grew steadily in the non-English-speaking world, ramifying into all areas of philosophy and diversifying in its methodology and ideas. Analytic philosophy is characterised by the goal of clarity, the insistence on explicit argumentation in philosophy, and the demand that any view expressed be exposed to the rigours of critical evaluation and discussion by peers (Urmson 1956). According to Beaney (2013: 19), while it would be wrong to deny that analytic philosophy places emphasis on argumentation, clarity, and rigour, the most that could really be claimed is that analytic philosophy, on the whole, places more emphasis on these virtues than other traditions of philosophy.

The chief change in the history of philosophy that brought about the rise of analytic tradition was the turn to logical and linguistic analysis as the means to achieve the resolution of perennial problems in philosophy. This tradition was motivated initially by two questions: "What are numbers?" and "What is the basis of mathematical knowledge?” It was Gottlob Frege who led the way in answering these questions (Kenny 2000). Convinced that the highest certainty belongs to elementary, self-evident principles of logic – without which thought itself might prove impossible – he believed that the sublime certainty of arithmetic and higher mathematics, must be deductively based on logic itself. It was to demonstrate this that he developed modern symbolic logic in his 1879 *Begriffsschrift.* The key step after that was to derive arithmetic from logic by (i) specifying a small set of logical truths of the highest certainty to serve as axioms, (ii) defining all arithmetical concepts in terms of purely logical ones, and (iii) producing formal proofs of all arithmetical axioms from these definitions plus the axioms of logic (Kenny 2000).

An important strand in the development of the analytic movement goes back to a group of philosophers in early 20th century in Vienna, Austria. Influenced by the *phenomenalism* of August Comte and the *positivism* of Ernst Mach, members of the Vienna Circle, who were also called the logical positivists, or more accurately speaking the logical empiricists, such as Moritz Schlick, Hans Hahn, Otto Neurath and Rudolf Carnap, believed that all scientifically meaningful claims can be stated in an ideal language of mathematics and thought and that all sciences may be unified given such superior observational language (Urmson 1956).

Another, related line of the origin of the analytic movement goes back to the early linguistic philosophy, which was taken up, among others, by G. E. Moore and Bertrand Russell at Cambridge. Underlying much of this movement/development was a reaction to the prevailing Oxbridge idealism. Russell, having just broken off with Charles Peirce and Victoria Welby, had rediscovered Gottlob Frege and began promoting the philosopher, who hardly anybody knew at that time. Then, Wittgenstein, who, in his youth, also had an encounter with Frege, but who soon realised that Frege had nothing to offer him, came to Cambridge to study under Russell in the autumn of 1911. According to some, this event marks the year analytic philosophy kicked off (Urmson 1956; Irvine 2021). But it all depends on what we take analytic philosophy to be. Analytic philosophy is not described by a body of propositions nor is it in any sense a school of thought. Michael Dummett, who clearly overstates the influence Frege exerted on Wittgenstein's formation, has suggested that "the only route to the analysis of thought goes through the analysis of language" (Dummett 1993, p. 128).

It is pertinent to state here that what made logicism, which is integral to the analytic method, feasible was the creation of modern logic, the system of propositional and predicate logic whose use has been a major force in the development of analytic philosophy. It is here that Frege comes into the story and obliges us to acknowledge him as one of the co-founders of analytic philosophy. For it was Frege who created quantificational logic, and although Russell learnt of this logic through Giuseppe Peano (1858-1932), and adapted Peano's notation rather than Frege's, there is no doubt that once Russell properly studied Frege's writings, after completing *The Principles of Mathematics* in May 1902, he both learnt from them and developed his own position in critique of some of Frege's key ideas (Stevens 2005). Frege was also an influence on Wittgenstein, whose early thinking was prompted by the problems he found in Frege's and Russell's work, taking over some of their ideas and assumptions but criticising others. So on this score, too, Frege must be counted as one of the co-founders of analytic philosophy. Moore's and Russell's rebellion against British idealism occurred independently of Frege, but both Russell's subsequent work and Wittgenstein's thinking were inextricably linked to Frege's ideas (Stevens 2005; Irvine 2021).

Before we go on to look at analysis as a method in philosophy, it is instructive to note that there are different senses in which analysis has been conceived within the analytic tradition. It may be helpful here to point a few of such senses to aid our understanding. Early analytic philosophers' notion of analysis was focused on *conceptual* and *logical* analysis (sometimes referred to as decompositional analysis, as concepts were broken into their constituent parts) with a focus on linguistic concerns and the search for meaning. Russell's understanding of analysis typifies this. In his book on Leibniz, he asserts as an 'evident' truth that 'all sound philosophy should begin with an analysis of propositions' (Russell 1900, p. 8). For Moore, such analysis consists in decomposing propositions into their constituent concepts, and this decompositional conception is also in play in the first chapter of *Principia Ethica*, where he argues that ‘good’ is indefinable, that is, that what ‘good’ denotes has no parts into which it can be decomposed. From this, it can be stated that there is a clear sense in which Russell’s and Moore’s philosophy is ‘analytic.’ That is, at the core of their method is the decompositional analysis of propositions. For Moore, this is *conceptual* analysis, while Russell understood this within a broader programme of *logical* analysis. Both Moore and Russell agreed that the aim of philosophical analysis is to uncover the fundamental constituents of propositions. This involved the identification, first, of the logical constituents of propositions, that is, the logical constants, but second, more importantly, of the logical propositions themselves, and in particular, of the fundamental propositions or logical principles from which all other logical propositions can be derived (Griffin 1991).

The decompositional approach to analysis was later on superseded by ‘quasi-analysis’ that did not concern itself with the methods of decomposition but sought the relationships between concepts that can be used to define or construct things in ways that were thought to aid better understanding. This explicative, or reconstructive approach was described by Rudolf Carnap as a *rational reconstruction*, which he explained as “the task of making more exact a vague or not quite exact concept used in everyday life or in an earlier stage of scientific or logical development, or rather replacing it by a newly constructed, more exact concept” (Carnap 1947, p. 8). The current-day practise in analytic philosophy that focuses on various *acts of construction*, with its roots in Carnap’s rational reconstruction, is targeted to find alternative expressions, statements, or paraphrases which need not be exactly synonymous to the *analysandum* (the object or idea being analyzed) but which are nevertheless exact, simple and fruitful for some purpose, and that are intended to serve these purposes equally well, or sufficiently equally well, as the original expressions do.

To conclude, analysis is a way of seeking to understand any subject matter by becoming aware of the simple elements it is composed of. This is why in the resolution of problems, analysis describes a breakdown of compound or complex issues to their individual units. Although, Hacker presented three different phases in the development of analytic philosophy on the basis of the kind of analysis that was in question in the following way:

i. Metaphysical analysis which was popular among early Russell and Moore
ii. Reductive analysis which was visible in early Wittgenstein, Russell's logical atomism, and logical positivism
iii. Connective or conceptual analysis which was common among ordinary language philosophers (Hans-Johann, 2013: 14).

However, the methodological program of analytic philosophy has some distinguishing features such as:

i. The thinkers of analytic philosophy do not apply all forms of analysis; rather, they primarily apply logical and linguistic analysis.
ii. They do not think that it is necessary to use other methods that are popular within the framework of continental philosophy.
iii. There is also a difference between analytic philosophy and continental philosophy when it comes to understanding the proper approach to constructing philosophical reflections.
iv. Analytic philosophers not only interpret philosophising as a process of constructing theoretical reasoning as rational, logically consistent, and clearly and rigorously argued but also practice it in this way.

3.2: Analysis as a Philosophical Method

The analytic method in philosophy is a generalised approach to philosophy which was originally associated with the projects of logical analysis. It emphasises a clear, precise approach with particular emphasis being placed on argumentation and evidence, avoidance of ambiguity, and attention to detail. Philosophising, according to Niekerk is, therefore, analytic when it follows a procedural approach that is "defined by a characteristic procedural focus … understood as prioritising some objects of analysis over others and, in so doing, of picking out certain kinds of question as particularly valuable" (Niekerk 2015:517). In recent times, analytic philosophy has become "not a philosophical program or a set of substantive views, but a *style* of doing philosophy" (Brogaard & Leiter 2014-15). Analysis meaningfully distinguishes a specific style of doing philosophy that consists of some distinctive characteristics. For instance, it tests propositional claims in ordinary language, and pursues parsimonious explanations.

Testing propositional claims imply ensuring the coherence, validity, and truth-aptness of specific claims to explicitly articulate the propositions' justifications and entailment. Consequently, participants in a discourse strive to make their terms clear by way of proper definitions, which entails the formulation of propositions in 'ordinary language' to avoid obscurity of terms. By parsimonious explanations, we mean the departmentalisation of issues. For example, categorising issues of discourse into ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological, and treating them as distinct concerns to avoid unnecessary multiple explanatory entities (Niekerk 2015:518). To be analytic therefore, is to adopt "a procedural preference for making the justifications and entailments of concepts at issue as clear as possible, making it a goal to be accessible to interlocutors, and favouring parsimonious explanations" (Niekerk 2015:519).

The analytic method implies that we separate constituent elements of a given phenomenon into its various components. This is atomizing phenomenon for holistic and comprehensive understanding. It entails argumentative clarity and precision through adopting the methodology of formal logic and conceptual clarification or analysis, which is historically tied to the Vienna Circle and the Berlin Circle. These Circles posit very strict principle of verification that excludes metaphysics because it is considered to be cognitively meaningless. However, contemporary understanding of "analytic" transcends this parochial approach of verificationism. Timothy Williamson captures this fact when he avers that "recent decades have seen the growth and flourishing of a boldly speculative metaphysics within the analytic tradition" (Williamson 2014:7). Furthermore, the analytic method has to do with, among other things, conceptual clarifications, definitions and explanations. By this, the tradition focuses on the examination of terms, notions and concepts, which are broken down into understandable units of connected ideas. Thus, a very central aspect of the analytic method is explanableness. For, if an experience, phenomenon or condition is not explainable such that it is intersubjectively understood or verifiable or referred to, it does not qualify for intelligibility and rationality.

4.0: Conclusion

So far, we have seen that analytic philosophers interpret philosophical ideas through a process of constructing theoretical reasoning in a rational, logically consistent, rigorous and clearly argued manner. These very peculiarities of philosophising have enabled analytic philosophy to be the dominant tradition in Western philosophy for quite some time now. The analytic line of thinking is typically attributed with such characteristics as striving for an increase in knowledge, clearness of ideas, rigorousness in style, and the cogency of arguments. As a method of research, its aim is to make philosophical problems plain and understandable by examining and clarifying the language used to express them.

5.0: Summary

In this unit, we began by highlighting key stages in the development of the analytic movement. In this regard, we saw that the key figures in the development of analytic philosophy include Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, G.E. Moore and Ludwig Wittgenstein. It was also stated that the development of analytic philosophy was occasioned by the rise of quantificational logic, linguistic analysis and the activities of the members of the Vienna circle, who developed their principle of meaningfulness in response to idealism. After noting these key developments, we turned attention to analysis as a method in philosophy. In this vein, we indicated the essential features of the method of analysis to include clarification (decomposition) of concepts and explainableness that ensures inter-subjective understanding, among others.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What do you understand by the term ‘analysis’?
2. Briefly trace the history of the analytic movement in philosophy
3. Discuss the contributions of Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, George Edward Moore and Ludwig Wittgenstein to the development of analytic philosophy?
4. What is the significance of the Vienna Circle to the development of analytic philosophy?

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MODULE 3: FEATURES AND TOOLS OF RESEARCH IN PHILOSOPHY

UNIT 1: Features: Rigour and Coherence

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this discussion on the features of a good philosophical research or writing. Before a good work of research can be effectively carried out in philosophy, it is important to be familiar with the features expected of a good research in philosophy, as these are the indices any examiner or independent observer is going to look out for. A good work of research in philosophy needs, among other things, to be clear and precise, rigorous and coherent. And so, this unit focuses its attention on the features of a good research in philosophy. The features of philosophical research and writing are many. According to A. P. Martinich, "Three of the most important ways to make your essay intelligible are to make sure that it is clear, concise, and coherent. Philosophers also strive for what they call 'rigour'" (Martinich, 2005: 140). However, for our purposes in this unit, we will discuss Rigour and Coherence as two of the very core features of philosophical research and writing, while the remaining two features of Clarity and Concision or 'Conciseness' will be dealt with in the next unit. Our aim here is to make clear the requirements of a standard research in philosophy.

2.0: Intended learning outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the features of philosophical research and writing
- explain the features of rigour and coherence
- appreciate the implication of these features on a research paper and
- apply these features when you write a research paper.

3.0: Main Content

This unit treats rigour and coherence as features of research and writing in philosophy. It examines them, considers what they mean in specific terms, and what effect they each have on your research work.

3.1: Rigour

A research work in philosophy will hardly qualify as such if it is not rigorous (i.e., if it lacks rigour). Rigour refers to thoroughness in carrying out the research in such a way that no stone is left unturned, and every logical thread is followed. The history of philosophy demonstrates that, at the point of its branching off from mythology, religion and other such activities, one of the fundamental, distinguishing traits of the emerging field of philosophy was its rigour. This is easily evident in the Socratic style of near-infinite interrogations until issues come out clearly and distinctly. Describing its rigorous bent, W. Dithley says the 'philosophic spirit' "leaves no valuations and aspirations unexamined and no piece of knowledge isolated; it seeks the ground for the validity of whatever is valid" (Rickman, 1979: 129).

Isaac Ukpokolo describes rigour as:

> the very act of considering every possible and related angle to an issue, leaving no stone unturned in the analyses and considerations of the different sides of an argument. It has to do with profoundness, depth and extent. Rigour also has to do with the employment of all philosophical tools of logic and argumentation, the principles of inference and entailment. It takes sides with the completeness and pursuit of linguistic perfections. All these could be considered as constituting rigour in research and writing in philosophy (Ukpokolo, 2021: 69).

For example, in considering an issue, all the angles to it, both obvious and hidden, should be thoroughly examined before taking a position. In other words, if there are positions A, B, C, D, E and F on an issue, rigour would thoroughly examine and clearly demonstrate why Position C, for instance, is correct and why each of the others is incorrect.

Besides the above, rigour would also consider all the possible logical angles to a philosophical issue. Take, for example, St Thomas Aquinas' argument for the existence of God. He claims, among other things, that, in the order of causality, since there cannot be infinite regress, God has to be at the beginning of the causal chain (Aquinas, 1947: 14-16). But if we explore all the logical angles to this argument, there are a number of questions one could ask. For example, why is infinite regress is impossible? What assures us that it is God (as popularly understood in Judeo-Christian theology) who is at the beginning of the causal chain? Instead of a linear chain, what if the causal process is round (e.g. A causes B; B causes C; C causes D, and D causes A) or a network (e.g. A causes B, C and D; B causes A, C and D, etc.)?

In all, the function and importance of rigour is that no stone is left unturned, and every angle is thoroughly investigated, so that, when finished, the research work is as close to flawless as possible.

3.2: Coherence

Coherence is the feature of philosophical research and writing by which a body of statements has internal concord or agreement, such that it makes a central point in a strong and mutually-reinforcing manner. Ukpokolo describes coherence in philosophy as "a certain condition of agreement and orderliness of idea, words and statements, arguments and assumptions. The word has been employed in the analysis of truth and meaning in philosophy" (Ukpokolo, 2021: 55)

Consider the following examples:

a. There is a strong likelihood that it will rain today. The sky is overcast and the clouds have gathered over the last couple of hours. The winds have become increasingly strong and cold. Besides, the weather forecast this morning predicted that there will be rainfall today.

b. It is highly doubtful if that student will pass the test. The lecturer’s first daughter got married only recently, and there was a lavish party. He has been absent from class, and has not been studying. The school compound is very beautiful, and it is the time of year when many flowers are in blossom. He is very prepared for the test, having assimilated so much of the course content.

In the first example, there is a central point being made in that group of statements, and every sentence serves to reinforce that central point. In the second example, however, it is difficult to identify a central point that is being made because some of the sentences in that group of statements obviously contradict one another while the others have little or no bearing to the rest.

Coherence therefore ensures, among other things, the right and effective flow of the discussion in such a way that the average reader can follow without difficulty. As Ukpokolo says,

> Indeed, a very important component or character of coherence is continuity, that is, the way an essay moves from one part to another towards its goal. An essay that meanders, seemingly not directed to any particular destination, is defective even if each sentence is charged with great rhetorical energy (Ukpokolo: 58).

Concerning logical coherence, Adeshina Afolayan says,

> This requires that you examine whether the set of beliefs that make up your worldview hang together or is contradictory. If they fundamentally complement one another, then you have a coherent and logical worldview. If they are contradictory, then either one of the beliefs may be false, or most of them may be false. You therefore have an illogical and incoherent worldview. (Afolayan, 2019: 15).

The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* describes coherence as an intellectual virtue. It says,

> coherence gives rise to justified belief and knowledge precisely because it is the manifestation of intellectual virtue. In our world, and for beings like us, coherence increases reliability, and therefore constitutes a kind of intellectual virtue in its own right.

It is great and quite commendable to gather as much material as we can for a research work. However, the materials must be organised in such a way that they hang together and cohere in order to make the points that you want to make.

4.0: Conclusion

This unit has discussed rigour and coherence as features of philosophical research and writing. In other words, we have discussed, in this unit, those features of philosophical research and writing that ensure that your work is thorough, focused and robust. These features are so important that a research work in philosophy is not only incomplete but also lacking in substance without them.

5.0: Summary

For a research work in philosophy to be worth its name, it is important for it to possess certain features. These include Rigour and Coherence, which have been discussed in this unit. The others are Clarity and Concision, which will be discussed in the next unit. Rigour means thoroughness in thinking and research. This requires that every angle to an issue is explored exhaustively (or as near-exhaustively as possible). It also means that the position we adopt has to be well-argued for while we state why the alternatives are untenable. Besides, rigour will also demand that all the logical possibilities to an issue are considered. As for coherence, it means basically that there is a consistence in the body of the work, such that the statements hang together to make a central point and do not meander in such a way that many words are used and they end up making no point.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What do you understand by rigour as a feature of philosophical research and writing?
2. Explain the feature of coherence in philosophical research and writing
3. What implications do these features have for a research work in philosophy?

4. How can they be applied in your work?

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UNIT 2: Features: Clarity and Concision

Contents

1.0: Introduction

In the last unit, we considered rigour and coherence as features of research and writing in philosophy. Now we proceed to the other features – clarity and concision – which we discuss at some length in this unit, using some examples and illustrations to drive home the point.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the meaning and implication of clarity
- understand the meaning and implication of concision
- know how to apply both clarity and concision in research works in philosophy;
- recognise cases in which exceptions must be made to the rule of concision.

3.0: Main Content

Having dealt with the features Rigour and Coherence in the previous unit, we now turn our attention to the other two features of research and writing in philosophy, which are Clarity and Concision. In this unit, we want to understand the meaning of each of these features, as well as their distinctive characteristics. We also consider why they are necessary, and how they are applied to philosophical research and writing.

3.1: Clarity

According to John Searle, "If you can't express it clearly, you don't understand it yourself" (Warburton: 59) It is therefore of great importance that what is written by the researcher is clear because, since the researcher's primary obligation is to communicate with his or her audience, he or she cannot afford to give the impression of lack of proper understanding of the subject matter. As Nigel Warburton points out,

> One way in which you can demonstrate that you have understood a philosophical idea is to write about it clearly. If your writing is vague and impressionistic, it won’t be obvious to your reader that you have a strong grasp of the topic (Martinich, 2005. 59).

Since it is possible for a work to be coherent without being clear (Martinich, 2005. 145), it is essential to strive for clarity in a research work in philosophy. Clarity implies that a statement or group of statements is clear, and not convoluted or mixed up; and that the point being made is easy to recognise.

Clarity is often audience-relative. In other words, what an audience considers clear might be considered unclear by another audience. For the student or researcher in philosophy, the primary audience would be, first, an examiner or instructor (the lecturer in philosophy), then the community of scholars in philosophy. It is therefore assumed that the primary audience already understands philosophy. But this in itself is a double-edged sword because, on the one hand, one may not need to go to great lengths in order to make oneself understood by this audience; but on the other hand, this audience, because of its familiarity with the subject matter, can easily spot errors and problematic presentations. In the final analysis, one must express oneself as clearly as possible without the triple problems of ambiguity, vagueness and indeterminateness (Martinich, 2005. 146).

Orderliness goes a long way to enhance clarity because it makes the researcher’s arguments easy to understand and follow. Orderliness means that a work is arranged in such a way that every piece is placed where it properly belongs and one point follows another in an organised manner. Orderliness also implies that facts and points are not flung around in an arbitrary manner as though the reader is expected to find and reconstruct them by herself. The cumulative effect of orderliness is that the entire work flows and holds together as a single whole.

Ludwig Wittgenstein says, “The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said clearly”. This is because it is easy to hide ignorance or lack of comprehension behind a cloud of unclearness. In this regard, Robert Heinlein’s words ring true: “Obscurity is the refuge of incompetence.” Ukpokolo points out that “philosophers in their writings are, among other things, to challenge and clarify constructs that are used to make sense of the world; constructs often taken for granted, rather than explicated and properly understood." Arthur Schopenhauer draws a link between clarity and authentic philosophising. According to him,

> … the genuine philosopher will generally seek lucidity and clarity and will always strive not to be like a turbid, raging, rain-swollen stream, but much more like a Swiss lake, which, in its peacefulness, combines great depth with a great clarity that just reveals its great depth (Schopenhauer, 2015).

Employing philosophical rigour and insisting on clarity of argument can only improve the output of a research work in philosophy. As in all areas of philosophy, there is no guarantee that clear arguments will provide convincing answers to the difficult questions, but it does increase the chances of achieving this (Warburton, 2013: 175).

Warburton mentions some 'guidelines on clear writing' given by George Orwell in his essay, 'Politics and the English Language' (Orwell, 2012.), some of which are relevant to the present discussion:

- Never use a long word where a short one will do.
- If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
- Never use the passive where you can use the active.
- Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or a jargon if you can think of an everyday English equivalent (Warburton, 2004: 60).

3.2: Concision

Concision means that an expression – whether a statement or a set of statements – is concise. This implies, in other words, that the statement says all and only what it sets out to say. The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines the adjective 'concise' as "short and clear, expressing what needs to be said without unnecessary words." Concision, to borrow Martinich's expression, combines brevity and content. Or, as Ukpokolo puts it,

> Concision is brevity of content. Being concise means conveying a considerably large set of information in a brief space. Brevity does not call for much comment. It is desirable because it typically makes fewer demands on the reader's attention and understanding (Ukpokolo, 2021: 60).

A work can say a lot about a little; or it can say a little about a lot. A concise work, on the contrary, does not sacrifice important detail for brevity; neither does it add details that are unnecessary when the point can be adequately made without such details.

Brevity is the hallmark of concision, its most distinctive characteristic. Brevity (to be brief) means that the work should be as short as necessary (though, of course, not shorter than necessary). One way to apply brevity to a piece of research writing is to use a single 'technical' term rather than a descriptive sentence. Some popular examples include using 'bachelor' instead of 'a man who is not married', or 'widow' instead of 'a woman whose husband has died', or 'monotheism' instead of 'the belief that there is only one God'. Sometimes it happens that the word you want to use is not known to your audience. In such a case, you need to define the term at the first instance of use, after which you can proceed to use the term on its own. For example:

> A sizeable fraction of those who identify as believers in the supernatural profess monotheism – the belief that there is only one God. But despite this, their day-to-day actions and outlook on life often reveal something other than monotheism – ranging from belief in no God at all to a belief in many gods.

However, as Martinich points out, brevity sometimes admits of exceptions in certain circumstances. One of these is that, because of their literary status, certain expressions need a wordier sentence in order to guarantee their elegance and rhythm. Another reason for using more words, rather than fewer words, is that some expressions need more words to be fully comprehended; if not, they would be unduly turgid and dense. In his words, "Short sentences, dense in content, are often less intelligible to a specific audience than longer sentences with the same content" (Martinich, 2005: 151)

4.0: Conclusion

This unit has discussed clarity and concision as features of writing in philosophy. In other words, we have seen why a research work in philosophy must be clear and concise: without ambiguity, indeterminateness and vagueness; and we have also seen why such a work must say all and only what it sets out to say. We might conclude this unit with a quote from Warburton that obviously applies to clarity as well as concision:

> Philosophy can be difficult enough to read without introducing syntactical difficulties. Some students write in very long and convoluted sentences which add to the difficulty of understanding what they are trying to say. The impression such sentences give is of a rambling unfocused mind (Warburton: 61).

5.0: Summary

The last unit discussed the features of Rigour and Coherence in philosophical writing, and this unit has given attention to the other features of Clarity and Concision. So, we have considered, in this unit, the need for a work to be clear and concise in order to, as it were, meet the basic requirements of a research work in philosophy. Clarity implies that the point being made in a work is easy to identify and the arguments are not difficult to follow. In other words, clarity would necessitate that a work is not ambiguous, vague or indeterminate. Concision, for its own part, implies that a research paper says only and all it has to say: no more, and no less. Concision also has the advantage of brevity, which makes it fewer demands on readers' attention and understanding.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is coherence?
2. How is coherence practically applied in a research work in philosophy?
3. How do you understand concision?
4. In what way does concision help in making a research work effective?

7.0: References/Further Reading

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UNIT 3: TOOLS: Language

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this unit where we will discuss Language as a major tool of research and writing in philosophy. Though philosophy is not a literary discipline, it is, however, important to give close attention to language and its use in the process of philosophising. In this unit, the meaning, use and relevance of language to philosophy will be discussed. Very often, the difference between a good work of research in philosophy and a bad one lies in the use and mastery of language. Language is really important to the activity of philosophy, and it makes a lot of difference if language is properly and correctly utilised. This unit, therefore, discusses language as a tool of research and writing in philosophy, highlighting some points that are central to our understanding of language and its effective use in philosophy.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give a sufficient understanding of what language is.
- explain the relevance of language to a research work and writing in philosophy.
- employ language correctly in philosophical research and writing and
- note some basic points in the use of language.

3.0: Main Content

This section gives attention to language, as well as a number of important points to note about the use of language in philosophical research and writing.

3.1: Language

Language, as a core tool of communication, is very paramount to research in philosophy. Of particular import here is how language is used, such that it effectively conveys what the researcher has in mind and wants her audience to receive. According to Adeshina Afolayan, language is “a system of signs and symbols that stand for something external to the signs/symbols and facilitate verbal exchange among humans” (Afolayan, 2019: 165).

Language has to be used in such a way that our words and expressions are not susceptible to easy misinterpretation or confusion. According to W. I. B. Beveridge, “careful and correct language is a powerful aid to straight thinking, for putting into words precisely what we mean necessitates getting our own minds quite clear on what we mean” (Afolayan, 2019: 165). For Irving Copi, there are three basic functions of language: the informative, the expressive and the directive (Copi, 1978).

Language plays an important role in how philosophical concepts and ideas are expressed. According to Oladipo,

> …language matters in philosophy because much of what philosophers do involves conceptual elucidation. But more than this is the fact that philosophers are also involved in the business of using language as a means of achieving what Rita Nolan calls “certain cognitive advantages over members of other species” (Oladipo, 2009. 22).

Ukpokolo corroborates this when he says,

> …a mastery of language is of great importance in researching and writing in philosophy. It is required to account for the pursuit of meaning in philosophy which involves the clarification of concepts and terms employed in an essay in philosophy to express our ideas and viewpoints (Ukpokolo, 2021. 63).

The importance of language to a piece of philosophical writing is perhaps most poignantly underscored by A. J. Ayer who says, “A philosopher who had no mastery of language would be as helpless as a mathematician who could not handle numerals” (Ayer, 1969: 404). Being a philosopher or student of philosophy (or any other discipline) is no excuse to write or express yourself in poor English (or whichever language you are using to convey your thoughts). Let us now examine some other components that are central to our understanding of language and its effective use in philosophy

3.2: Spelling

It is important to spell a word correctly. A misspelt word could easily give the impression that you are trying to say something different entirely. For example, if you leave out the letter ‘t’ from ‘immortality’, you end up spelling ‘immorality’. Besides this, there are several words that often get carelessly mixed up in casual usage, mix-ups that a scholar would do well to avoid. Consider there/their; your/you’re; I’m/am; and so many others.

3.3: Punctuation

Punctuations include full-stops (periods), commas, spaces, cases (whether Upper, or lower, or BLOCK) etc. It is easy to think that these are matters of language, not philosophy. After all, what has punctuation to do with philosophy? Yet, without the proper use of the language we are using to convey our ideas, our writing can actually end up as quite misleading. And a central aspect of language is punctuation. Punctuations therefore have to be in the right place, serving the right purpose. Consider a popular example of the right and wrong uses of punctuation (or, shall we say, significant differences in the effects of how punctuations are employed):

1. A woman: without her, man is useless.
2. A woman: without her man, is useless.

Consider also the example of a word like ‘therapist’. With the wrong punctuation, one might be saying something completely different: the rapist. Now, imagine a victim of rape who has an appointment with a therapist; and, on getting to the entrance of his office, sees written on his door: THE RAPIST!

This last example illustrates the amount of damage that can be done if a writer does not get her punctuations right.

3.4: Precision

Precision ensures that your words express exactly what you want to express, and the possibility of being misunderstood is thus reduced. Among a group of synonyms, for example, it is better to use the word which is less likely to have other meanings within the context of what you are trying to express. Consider the English synonyms ‘path’, ‘way’, ‘road’ and ‘trajectory’ for example. If you are trying to say something about arguments or discussions, it might be a bit inaccurate to use a word like ‘road’ to describe how the discussion proceeds. Consider the following:

1. The **road** of the arguments is difficult to follow.
2. The **trajectory** of the arguments is difficult to follow.

The first sentence is more likely to be misleading than the second. In other words, in the second sentence, language is used in a way that gives more clarity and precision.

Precision will also demand that an expression that is susceptible to multiple interpretations is used in such a way that the particular meaning we have in mind is made obvious. A phrase like ‘Greek tragedy’ could refer to a literary genre; yet it could be a regular phrase that means something else. Let us look at the following example:

1. Greek tragedy no doubt constitutes a high point in the appreciation of Western literature.
2. It remains to be seen how the European Union deals with the Greek tragedy.

The first example obviously refers to literature while the second refers to a real-life situation. In the second example, however, we might need further clarifications. By ‘Greek tragedy’, do we mean a particular tragic event that occurred in Greece, or tragic incidents generally in Greece, or the ‘tragedy’ that the Greek state has become, or something different? These examples demonstrate the need to be precise in our use of language.

3.5: Suitability

The researcher also has to ensure that her language is suitable for its set purpose. Language, by its very nature, varies with setting, circumstances, purpose of its use, as well as the audience. The language used in casual conversations is different from that used in religious gatherings. The language of the military is different from that of the marketplace. In the same way, there is a choice of words – or a kind of expression – that is suitable for research. You need to set a suitable tone for your writing from its beginning, and this tone must be maintained throughout the work. The use of colloquial language in a research work is not only unsuitable; it is completely unacceptable. And your audience – whether a professor or any other scholar within the philosophical community – is quite likely to be put off by your use of a colloquial tone. As Warburton observes, “One of the surest ways of irritating your reader is to use colloquial language or a conversational style in an academic essay. The tone or register of what you write can be as important as its content” (Warburton, 2006: 65)

There is a language, as well as a tone, that can be regarded as properly philosophical. While avoiding the use of casual language, you must also, as much as possible, resist the urge to employ religious, cultural or other non-philosophical choice of words in your research work.

Whichever language one is using, a mastery of it is important. Thus the researcher must be very familiar with the rules of grammar, syntax, vocabulary and other particulars of the language in question.

4.0: Conclusion

It is important to understand the value and significance of language in research and writing in philosophy (or, we should say, any other intellectual endeavour that involves expression). And it is in this regard that a researcher needs to pay close attention to the correct use of language, such that what is being expressed is not lost in the woods of poor writing on account of an inadequate or wrong use of language.

5.0: Summary

This unit has dealt with language as a tool of research and writing in philosophy. It has paid attention to what language is, how it functions in a research work in philosophy, as well as its importance. It has also given some attention to certain points that must be noted in order to use language profitably, such as spelling, punctuation and precision. The unit concluded on the note that the correct use of language is necessary in order to forestall the poor presentation of a researcher’s ideas and thoughts.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is your understanding of language?
2. How is a proper, effective use of language related to research and writing in philosophy?

3. What specific points should be noted about the use of language in philosophical research and writing?

7.0: References/Further Reading

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UNIT 4: TOOLS: Logic

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to the last unit in this module where we discuss Logic as a major tool in philosophical research and writing. The core of a philosophical essay, according to Martinich, is argument (Martinich, 2005: 19). This is obvious since the major aim of a research work in philosophy is to make a point and give solid, convincing reason(s) for it. And nothing emphasises this more than logic which is, at the same time, the principal tool of argument. Logic is of core importance to a research work in philosophy, or any other field for that matter, for without logic, it is difficult to make sense or be understood by our audience. It is with logic that the different sentences we make are coordinated together in order to make a point.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give a sufficient understanding of what logic is and how it is related to argument.
- appreciate the importance of logic in a philosophical writing.
- know how to apply logic in philosophical writing and research.

3.0: Main Content

We shall now proceed to discuss what logic is, as well as its usefulness or relevance to research in philosophy.

3.1: What is Logic?

Logic, according to Adebola Ekanola, is the study of the laws of reasoning (Ekanola, 2019: 141). Ekanola goes on to define reasoning as a type of thought characterised by the making of inferences, which involves reaching some conclusions based on some premises. In the words of Irving Copi , "Logic is the study of the methods and principles used to distinguish correct from incorrect reasoning" (Copi, 2014: 2).

The word 'logic' is the English translation of the Greek word '*organon'* as used by Aristotle, the father of logic. In the Greek language, *organon* means 'instrument'. And it is in this sense that we understand and recognise logic for what it really is: the instrument for ensuring and judging sound and good reasoning.

Ukpokolo describes the function of logic thus:

> ...logic and argument have to do with those conditions under which evidence can be rightly said to justify, entail or imply, support or corroborate, confirm or falsify a claim. Thus, as a science of reasoning, logic is involved in the business of evaluating arguments by sorting out good ones from bad ones, using known principles or techniques of good reasoning (Ukpokolo, 2021. 63).

Our interest in this particular module is how logic assists in expressing the ideas we are trying to express in a clear and convincing manner, such that our thoughts proceed from one point to the next in a logically sequential way. Thus logic comes in here to assist us to ensure that our thinking process is thorough and our reasoning is valid. To this effect, we must pay some attention to the laws of thought.

3.2: Laws of Thought

Even though this is not a work is logic as a branch of philosophy, we shall consider some basic laws of logic in order to underscore the need for logic in a research work in philosophy. Thus we consider here the laws of thought:

1. Law of identity: This law simply implies that a thing is itself, and not something else; and when a word or term is used to designate a particular object, fact or reality, it means just that object, fact or reality and nothing else. In this regard, if a statement is true, then it is true (it cannot be anything other than true).

2. Law of contradiction (or non-contradiction): This implies that one cannot say that a thing ***is*** and ***is not***, at the same time. A statement cannot be both true and false at the same time. The law also implies that a statement and its contradiction cannot both be true or both be false at the same time.

3. Law of the excluded middle: This law implies that a thing either is or is not. There is no middle point at which it is neither true nor false. Every statement is either true or false (Copi, 2014: 351-352).

These laws need some clarification, especially as regards our use of the word 'statement'. A statement can ask a question (for example, "Where is the nearest library around?"). It can make an exclamation (for example, "What a day!"). It can also give a command (for example, "Come over here at once."). None of the foregoing is relevant to our discourse here. A statement that has actual logical value (that can be adjudged true or false) is a *propositional statement*, because it says something that can be true or false. As Copi correctly points out,

> A *proposition* asserts that something is the case or it asserts that something is not. We may affirm a proposition, or deny it—but every proposition either asserts what really is the case, or it asserts something that is not. Therefore every proposition is either true or false (Copi, 2014: 2).

In practical terms, the first law of thought – the law of identity – means that, the terms you use have to be consistent in terms of what they mean. In a discourse, for example, you cannot use the term 'bank' to mean both a financial institution and the edge of a river. Consider the following example:

> I went to withdraw some money from the bank. And while sitting at the bank, I dove into the water for a swim.

Of course it is possible that the financial institution (bank) is located at the edge of a body of water (bank). But we do not want to confuse terms in such a way that they are ambivalent in meaning.

The second law of thought – the law of contradiction/non-contradiction – implies that your research work will be lacking in logic (or, at least, logically-impaired) if you say (or give the impression that) something is, and is not, at the same time; or that a position is true, and also false, in the same work. For example, it will be contradictory (and, therefore, logically weak) if you imply (even if inadvertently) that ideas have independent, objective existence; and somewhere else in the work, you imply that ideas are merely thoughts in the subject's mind.

As for the third law of thought – the law of excluded middle – it would mean, in practical terms, that you cannot make a statement that is neither true nor false. Using the example of God's existence, one cannot say (or imply) that the statement 'God exists' is neither true nor false, in the same way you cannot say that the statement 'There is no God' is not true and is not false. Every propositional statement in logic is either true of false, there is no middle ground!

There are, of course, circumstances in everyday life in which we say things like, "It is both true and not true," or, "It is so, and it is not so." But when we examine these statements further, we usually discover that the senses in which we use these words are different. For research purposes, however, it is better to avoid unnecessary ambiguities, most especially with statements whose definite truth-values cannot be ascertained.

3.3: Formal and informal logic

Logic can be formal or informal. Informal logic is one which deals with our everyday attempts at making and justifying claims, whether the statements are put in obvious logical patterns or not. The primary objective of informal logic is "to enhance the habit of straight, clear and correct reasoning." Formal logic, on the other hand,

> deals primarily with the logical or formals structures of statements and arguments. It focuses on the deductive or formal connections between statements without considering their actual contents or the substance of the claims made in such statements (Ekanola, 2019: 148).

Unless the contrary is obviously the case, the focus of your research work is informal logic because most (if not all) of the materials you will have to deal with use informal logic for their expressions. Sometimes, the argument is organised in an obviously logical arrangement. Consider the following example:

Either Femi is at home, or he is at the cinema.
Femi is not at home.
Therefore, Femi is at the cinema.

The first statement constitutes the major premise, the second the minor premise, and the third is the conclusion. But sometimes, it is expressed in casual, ordinary language. The syllogism presented above could be presented, in ordinary language, as follows:

Femi must be at the cinema. You see, he's not at home.

Left unsaid here is the assumption that, if Femi is not at home, he would be at the cinema. Let us admit that this casual kind of expression, though not often seen in scholarly works, does slip in every once in a while.

Let us consider, for a concrete, relevant example of informal logic, the position by John S. Mbiti that "Africans are notoriously religious." This statement does not necessarily mean that 'ALL Africans are notoriously religious', or that 'EVERY African is notoriously religious'. If Mbiti himself is pressed, he might say that, by this statement, he meant that most Africans are religious, and not that it is impossible for an African to be irreligious, or that there are, in fact, Africans who practise no religion. This is an example of a proposition in which not all the premises are laid out in a systematic manner, which a researcher will encounter in her evaluation of materials.

3.4 Premises and Conclusions

In an argument, there are premises (or, sometimes, a premise), and a conclusion. A premise is the reason given for the conclusion; while the conclusion (the main point of the argument) is the consequence of the premise(s). Ordinarily, premises precede the conclusion. For example,

When the sun is in the east, it is morning.
The sun is in the east.
Therefore, it is morning.

The first two statements are the premises (the major premise and the minor premise respectively), and the last is the conclusion. But quite often, the syllogism is arranged differently. Consider the following:

> It is morning, because the sun is in the east; and
> that happens only when it is
> morning.

Or this:

> Segun steals. Everybody is a thief. Karim
> steals. Emeka is a thief; and so is Ene.

In both cases, the arguments are not arranged in a sequential, formal manner. And, although one expects something more organised in a scholarly material, the researcher should not be deterred or dismissive on account of an argument that seems to lack order. Moreover, in the examples used, our interest is not in the truth or falsity of the claims made, but in recognising the arguments embedded therein. In all, a researcher should look out for the reason(s) advanced for the claims made in the materials that she is using. More importantly the researcher must present her points in a logical manner, such that a compelling reason is given for every assertion made.

3.5: Inductive and Deductive Reasoning

There are two kinds of reasoning in logic – inductive and deductive reasoning – responsible for the two different kinds of arguments – inductive and deductive arguments. Some Inductive reasoning proceeds from the particular premises to general conclusion, that is, from particular cases to a general assumption or conclusion. For example, consider the following statements:

> Bala is a man, and he is tall.
> Kachi is a man, and he is tall.
> Tunde is a man, and he is tall.
> Osaretin is a man, and he is tall.
> Tofa is a man, and he is tall.
> Therefore, all men are tall.

What we see from the set of statements presented above is that we come to a conclusion about men being tall from a number of individual cases of tall men. However, this definition of Induction does not fully capture all instances of arguments that are inductive, as it is possible for an argument to move even from universal premises to a universal conclusion and still be inductive. Consider the following argument:

All Africans are blacks
All Nigerians are Africans
Therefore, All Polish are whites

What is fundamental to both arguments is that their premises do not provide adequate justification for their conclusions. This is what marks out Inductive reasoning from Deductive ones. Inductive reasoning is, essentially, a matter of probability: the premises give grounds for the likelihood of the conclusion. The following is example of an inductive argument:

Most African women are beautiful.
Nkem is an African woman.
Therefore, Nkem is probably beautiful.

In some deductive reasoning also, we proceed from the general premises to particular conclusion, that is, from a general principle or assumption to a particular conclusion. For example:

All black men are strong.
Akin is a black man.
Therefore, Akin is strong.

But like we said earlier concerning Inductive argument, this definition is not exhaustive of all cases of Deductive arguments, and so cannot be said to be an adequate definition of Deductive reasoning. This is because there are instances of arguments which would move from particular premises to particular conclusion and still be deductive. Consider the following:

If Peter is an African then he is black
Peter is an African
Therefore, Peter is black

The hallmark of deductive reasoning is that the conclusion necessarily or logically follows from the premises. In other words, the premises provide support for the acceptance of the conclusion. Also note that it is only deductive arguments that can be considered valid or invalid. An argument is valid if it is not possible to accept the premises as true and then reject the conclusion as false. Invalid arguments are not considered as logical as valid ones and therefore, are of no use to your research. However, while a deductive argument is valid or invalid, an inductive argument gives probabilistic or insufficient support to the conclusion. An important point to note here is that, although inductive reasoning might be considered weaker on account of its probabilistic conclusion, much of ordinary day-to-day life and observation-based conclusions rely (sadly) on induction.

3.6: Usefulness of Logic

In all, a research work in philosophy needs to employ logic effectively in order to make its point in a lucid and compelling manner. Oladipo says,

> …if language matters in philosophy as a means of sorting out human experience and deepening our understanding of that experience, the importance of logic as a tool of philosophy cannot be overemphasised. The primary concern here is not with the capacity to manipulate symbols as a means of proving an argument valid or invalid, although this is not out of place in the philosophical scheme of things. Rather, in focus is the application of certain general principles and techniques of good reasoning to the communication and articulation of ideas. In this regard, logic matters in the enterprise of philosophy, first, because much of philosophy has to do with providing good reasons for our views or positions. But, it is also important because philosophers are generally concerned with the "logical assessment of arguments" (Oladipo, 2009: 23).

Commenting on the value of logic, Francis Offor says,

> Logic as an act, induces in us certain abilities that enhance our capacity for the development and construction of good arguments. A person who has some training in logic will therefore be in a better position to analyse issues, with a view to differentiating the essentials from the

> inessentials, than a person without any training in logic. In fact, a critical analysis and examination of whatever we read in books, watch on television or even discuss in our everyday conversation, will be of great help in the development of human knowledge (Offor, 1012: 5-6).

Note that it is not in every statement that the logical content will be immediately obvious. Thus, if a statement is not put in the style of formal logic, it does not follow that it is of no logical value.

In your research work, the use of logic consists not only in making your arguments or points, but also in assessing the validity of the claims that you encounter in the materials that you use. Oladipo avers that the evaluation of arguments follows certain steps. The first is to identify and fully state the premises and conclusion of an argument. The second is to determine whether the argument is inductive or deductive, as this is likely to ease the process of evaluation. And the third is to assess the kind of justification provided for the conclusion by the premises (Oladipo, 2009: 51).

4.0: Conclusion

The importance and value of logic to a work of research and writing in philosophy cannot be overemphasised. In fact, the merit and worth of your research work are, to a considerable extent, a function of the logic of its content.

5.0: Summary

This unit has dealt with logic as a tool of research and writing in philosophy. It has examined what logic is, its relevance to a research work in philosophy, while not dealing with it as a branch of philosophy. To this effect, it has looked at the laws of thought, the distinction between formal and informal logic, and between deductive and inductive arguments. It has also given hints on recognising premises and conclusions, considered the usefulness of logic to research and life generally. It is therefore sacrosanct that the researcher gives a lot of attention to the logical underpinning of the entire work.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is logic?
2. What is the relevance of logic to a research work in philosophy?
3. What is argument and what kinds of arguments are there in logic?

4. What would you consider to be the usefulness of logic to research and life generally?

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MODULE 4: FORMS, APPROACHES AND STEPS OF RESEARCH AND WRITING IN PHILOSOPHY

Unit 1: Forms of Research

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this unit where we discuss forms of research in philosophy. With our knowledge of the features and tools of research and writing in philosophy as discussed in module 3, it is now time to look not only at the forms, but also the approaches and steps to be followed when researching and writing in philosophy. However, this present unit will discuss the forms of research in philosophy while units 2and 3 will be devoted to discussing the various approaches and steps in philosophical research and writing.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to:

- know and be familiar with the different forms of research in philosophy;
- explain the difference between a research paper, a summary paper and a review essay
- know the requirements and conditions for each form of research;

- carry out each of these different forms of research as the need dictates.

3.0: Main Contents

In the discussion that follows, we examine the basic structure, pattern or characteristics of a research paper, a summary paper and a review essay, as forms of writing in philosophy.

3.1: Research Paper

A research paper is meant to survey important views that have been published on a certain topic. It is often the most extensive and important project in a philosophy course.

According to Ukpokolo, research in its general understanding is an activity consisting in some creative work carried out on a systematic and coherent ground, with the aim of improving the stock of human knowledge and understanding (2021: 72). Research involves the use and effective synthesis of many of the skills discussed earlier in module 3 of this volume. A research paper typically requires that you locate and examine information relevant to the subject matter of research from many sources, made up of primary and secondary sources. Typically, a writing of this kind requires that you find a research problem and proffer a research thesis. This may require giving and analysing arguments, explanations as well as providing criteria for evaluating the adequacy of competing positions. The research paper usually has a final page or set of pages titled 'Works Cited' or 'References.' This section of the research paper displays information such as author, publisher, and date of publication for each source to which you referred in your paper. It. is to be noted, however, that this section may be titled 'Bibliography', when you intend to include works that you found helpful in putting together the ideas in your research paper, but which were not actually referred in your work. Examples of research paper include Term paper, Seminar paper, Long Essay, Project, Dissertation, Thesis, Conference and Workshop papers. A research paper can be an examination of a concept or idea in philosophy, by a particular philosopher, or of interest to philosophy (even if it lies outside the regular boundaries of philosophy). Whichever trajectory one decides to pursue, however, it is important that the philosophical component of the research work be clear; otherwise, the work's philosophical status might be in doubt.

3.2: Summary Paper

A Summary Paper is an attempt to *summarise* works written by others. In other words, a summary paper attempts to put succinctly the works of others which have been expressed in a longer form. It does this by identifying the central points made in these works, and the main lines of argument advanced in support of these points. Ukpokolo describes a summary as

> a short piece of writing which condenses a long piece into a concise summation and statement of the main points, leaving out extraneous materials that do not advance the argument(s) of the original work. As such, a summary is meant to organise the information present in the original work for clarity, paraphrasing the language used by the author (Ukpokolo, 2021: 53)

The purpose of a summary paper is to restate someone else's views in your own words, usually in a more precise form. Where the original work may have been wandering, thick, or abstruse, the summary is concise and direct to the point. It reports, with or without critical assessment, the claim(s) advanced in the original work and the reasons in support of such claim(s). A summary must therefore accurately represent the original work, clearly state the essential contents of the argument(s), make the form of the argument(s) clear, and omit all extraneous materials. One major purpose of a summary paper is to evaluate a student's understanding of a philosopher's position and the arguments offered in support of the position (Seech, 2009: 22)

It is important to state here that you could sometimes be required to write a critical summary paper. In the critical summary paper, you are required (in addition to presenting the structure of the arguments of the work to be summarised) to make a critical assessment of the arguments summarised. In other words, you are to put forward your criticism(s), whether such criticism(s) is (or are) positive or negative, as well as the reasons for holding such criticism(s). It is, however, notable that some of the best critical assessments are those that take a humble approach to the text, stating not that the philosopher is 'obviously wrong' in the position held, but beginning with the possibility that maybe the philosopher just missed a point that is worth mentioning. It is important not to begin to write the summary of a text until one is done reading the entire text to be summarised. The reasons for this are many; but primarily, one has to understand what point the author is trying to make, and how she achieves that, before one can justifiably summarise the text. As pointed out by Seech,

> A summary is not intended to be a sentence-by-sentence rewriting of the original. It is not intended even to have the same number of paragraphs as the original. Often, the opening paragraphs do not get to the heart of the matter. They may be introductory and even incidental to the main argument. You need to know where the author is going, what the thesis and main lines of reasoning are (Seech, 2009: 23).

A summary paper is not meant to be a reproduction of the writing style or idiosyncrasies of the author. Rather, it should re-present the core points and arguments of the author in a way that draws attention to the ideas rather than the person in question. A question needs to be asked here: if one should not write the summary until one is done with the reading, how does one manage to keep the points one has already read, at the risk of forgetting some salient details? The answer is really simple: make notes as you read; but do not write the paper until you are done with reading, so that you can consider the work as a single whole rather than a patchwork of individual details.

3.3: Review Essay

The notion of 'review' implies taking a second look at a work that is already made available for public view. This 'second look' is necessitated by the need to appraise and, as it were, pass a judgment on the soundness or merits of a work. A review essay not only restates a philosophical work – an article, a book, or any other scholarly paper – usually in a shorter form, but also critically examines and appraises it. It therefore attempts to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of a work, its points and arguments, while also stating how the work could be better. As Ukpokolo points out, "A review essay requires that you sum up a discussion or a work and make a response" (Ukpokolo, 2021: 54).

The term 'review', therefore, means 'viewing again', 'a looking back', 'a reconsideration' or 'a critical examination'. A review essay requires that you sum up a discussion or a work and make a response. Ukpokolo identifies the following steps as useful in writing a review essay:

Step 1: Attempting a clear and honest representation of a position contained in a work. This is done with the avoidance of building a ‘straw man’, which is wrongly presenting a position so as to find an in-road for criticisms.

Step 2: Presenting the merits or strengths of the position just x-rayed.

Step 3: Presenting the possible challenges or difficulties with regards to the position under review.

Step 4: Attempting a remedy or rescue or explanations in excuse of the shortcomings of the position under examination.

Step 5: Where applicable, stating the fact that the position is not remediable.

Step 6: Attempting to find alternative points of view to what has been identified as untenable.

Generally speaking, a review paper has the approach of an exposition combined with appraisal, employing the tool of analysis.

4.0: Conclusion

Research papers, summary papers and review essays are form of researches in philosophy. Examples of research paper include Term paper, Seminar paper, Conference paper, Workshop paper, Long Essay, Project, Dissertation and Thesis. However, each of these items could be the subject-matter for summary paper and review essay.

5.0: Summary

Whereas a research paper is meant to survey important views that have been published on a certain topic by way of locating and examining information relevant to the subject matter of research from both the primary and secondary sources, the purpose of a summary paper is to restate someone else’s views in your own words, usually in a more precise form. A summary is a short piece of writing which condenses a long piece into a concise summation and statement of the main points, leaving out extraneous materials that do not advance the argument(s) of the original work. A review essay requires that you sum up a discussion or a work and make a response.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is a research paper and how is it different from a summary paper and review essay?
2. In what sense can research papers also become the subject-matter for summary paper and review essay?
3. Identify 5 steps that might be useful in writing a review essay.

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Unit 2: Approaches to Research and Writing in Philosophy

Contents

1.0: Introduction

It is important to be familiar with the different forms of research and writing in philosophy; but it is equally of essence to know the approaches to research and writing in philosophy, as well as how to apply them. It is good to note, *ab initio*, that a single paper in philosophy can have a combination of different approaches, depending on what one is attempting to do at any point in the writing. In this unit, we will be discussing approaches to research and writing in philosophy. Though, it would be pretty difficult to exhaust what may be referred to as approaches to research and writing in philosophy, this unit identifies certain broad categorisation which stand out as very general approaches to writing in philosophy. These are the ‘comparative and contrastive’, the ‘appraissive’ and ‘expository’ and the reconstructive approaches.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to:

- state the difference between the ‘comparative and contrastive’ approaches to philosophical writing.

- explain how the ‘appraissive’ approach is different from the ‘expository’ approach.
- Explain the reconstructive approach to philosophical writing and research

3.0: Main Contents

In the sections that follow, we explain some of the very general approaches to research and writing in philosophy, and how they can be employed in writing a good research paper or essay. Though our discussion of approaches here is not exhaustive, yet, these categorisations represent the very popular approaches used in philosophy.

3.1: Comparative and Contrastive Approach

The purpose of ‘comparing and contrasting’ as an approach to writing is to show how two views or philosophies are alike and how they differ. In other words, the aim is to bring two or more ideas or positions together in order to highlight or discuss what they have in common as well as what they do not have in common (including where they actually disagree or contradict one another). It should be noted that sometimes the verb describing the task of comparing and contrasting may not be explicitly stated. One is, therefore, expected or required to develop the ability to denote the required task from the question. This is over and above the fact that an assignment may sometimes include more than one of the stated expressions defining the task to be done. In such cases, one should be careful to read closely and distinguish the expressions from one another, and then perform all the tasks that have been assigned, whether explicitly or implicitly.

Furthermore, in the ‘compare and contrast’ approach to writing in philosophy, you could be asked to compare and contrast, for instance, the ideas of a given philosopher or the ideas of some philosophers on the same subject. For example, one may be asked to compare and contrast Plato and Aristotle’s views on the nature and ontological status of ideas. The assignment could also be a comparison between two philosophical movements or schools of thought or to compare and contrast two or more positions or worldviews on a particular question, such as comparing the different positions on the mind-body problem. One may also be required to compare and contrast the ways that a given concept is developed at different times by different thinkers or groups of thinkers. The ultimate aim of the 'comparing-and-contrasting' approach is to highlight the similarities and differences between various positions in order to enlighten or inform the reader about the common grounds of these positions as well as to demonstrate the student's familiarity with these positions.

3.2: Appraissive and Expository Approaches

One of the very common approaches employed in essays in philosophy is that of appraisal. To appraise is to estimate the worth of a position, a viewpoint, a submission or a proposal. In other words, when you appraise, you attempt to assess or set a price on a given claim. In doing this, you say how much the idea is worth: you give an official opinion; you evaluate the significance or status of the' idea or give an expert judgement of the merit of the idea. All these are found to be very common in philosophy papers and writings. An appraisal, therefore, is meant to critically examine a piece of writing, in order to judge its worth as a scholarly work. Little wonder Ukpokolo describes appraisal as an approach "wherein the researcher attempts a critique of a work, position or a discourse" (Ukpokolo, 2021: 6). In essence, appraisal as an approach to research and writing in philosophy performs the function of trying to assess the soundness or lack thereof, strength or weakness, depth and thoroughness of a position as well as the arguments and facts associated with it. In short, appraisal is meant to assess the merit, or lack of merit, of a work in philosophy. There are a number of legitimate steps to be taken in appraising a position or viewpoint:

1. The first is to render the position or state it as correctly as possible. This calls for fairness and sincerity, avoiding any form of what is referred to as "the fallacy of Straw man", wherein a position is deliberately misrepresented by creating errors so as to find in-roads for criticisms and discredits.
2. The second step is to identify and bring to the fore, the strength of the position, making clear its merits and positive aspects.

3. The third step in the process of appraising is to expose the weaknesses, demerits or errors in the position. These are to be stated as modestly as possible, avoiding outright sarcasms.
4. The fourth step is to attempt to rescue the position, giving reasons to excuse the faults therein.
5. The fifth and final step is to show, as the case may be, that the position is justified or that in spite of all the efforts to excuse and rescue the position, it is simply irremediable.

It is important, while appraising a work, to be as fair and clear as possible. To this end, a work should not be mischaracterised in order to be able to critique it more easily. This would amount to what is called in logic "the fallacy of the straw man." Besides presenting the content of the work as precisely as possible, criticism should not be unduly harsh or uncharitable. It is also necessary to avoid being romantic about any idea expressed in the work just because they happen to square with the researcher's opinions. As Seech (2009: 13) counsels, "Your paper is weakened if it sounds as if you are wearing blinders. Philosophers, as much as thinkers in any other academic discipline, pride themselves on fairness in appraising even unpopular points of view." In all, sentiments – whether about persons or ideas – should be reduced to the minimum when appraising a work.

The expository approach on the other hand has to do with setting out to public view; or the act of expounding, explaining, commenting or the enunciation of ideas, themes, positions, theories and beliefs. An exposition may not necessarily require any value judgement or comment of merit or demerit. Rather, it is essentially a straightforward analysis, bringing to the fore and representing the origin, content, nature and character of a particular belief, viewpoint or position, though it could sometimes be critical. To this extent, a philosophical paper that demands an exposition would include the statement of the position, the reason for the position (that is, the point or need for holding the position), what the position entails as well as the implications thereof. In exposition, the researcher attempts to present facts that her audience may not have known up to that point (or, if it is a student writing an assignment), to demonstrate to the lecturer her familiarity with these facts. Exposition as an approach to research and writing in philosophy presents facts, positions and arguments without necessarily having to prove whether the position has merit (or where there are many positions), which of them has greater merit (Martinich, 2005: 227). By this understanding, in the expository approach, it is usually the requirement that one goes beyond a summary of the work explained or the ideas, to illuminating the views and reasoning of an author by the addition of points that have been adduced to make clear the author's position.

3.3: Reconstructive Approach

The comparative, contrastive, appraissive and expository approaches will lose their ultimate value if the researches they are applied to cannot be used to generate visions that would serve as guides to life, or used to make sense of fragmentary human experience. Put differently, researches will only be worth the while if they can be used to promote a better understanding of the human condition and to enhance the human capacity to cope with the challenges of life. This is where the reconstructive approach comes in. This approach can be used in either of two ways. First, reconstruction is employed by the researcher who attempts to assist an otherwise-sound position by making up for its weakness(es). This is done by 'reconstructing' the work in such a way that its strengths are emphasised and its weaknesses are mitigated. Reconstruction here does not entail 're-writing' a work, rather, it is an approach to research and writing in philosophy that merely reviews a work in such a way that its merits are not allowed to be drowned by its weaknesses. Second, reconstruction is used through some form of reconstructive thinking, where the principles, ideas and ideals generated in a research are applied to existential human conditions. As Oladipo (2008) rightly notes:

> The philosophical mansion is not simply a house of words which guarantees its occupants an opportunity for a permanent possibility of conversation. Rather, it is a theoretical observatory, which provides a

vantage position from which to have a clearer, even deeper view of the human condition.

This vantage position is achieved through the reconstruction of ideas, positions and view-points and their subsequent application to existential human challenges.

4.0: Conclusion

The comparative, contrastive, appraissive, expository and reconstructive approaches can be employed in philosophical research and writing. While some of these approaches like the appraissive, the expository and the reconstructive can be employed singly, a few others like the comparative and the contrastive approaches may be combined in philosophical research and writing. However, the reconstructive approach draws insights from all other approaches in evolving a model that can be applied to resolving existential human problems.

5.0: Summary

This unit has discussed some of the popular approaches to research and writing in philosophy, such as the comparative, the contrastive, the appraissive, the expository and the reconstructive approaches. Though, the approaches discussed here are not exhaustive of all the approaches used in philosophical research and writing, yet they represent the very general popular approaches employed in philosophical research and writing.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Name any five approaches to research and writing in philosophy that you now.
2. How is the appraissive approach different from the expository approach?
3. List some of the legitimate steps to be taken in employing the appraissive approach.
4. What would you consider to be the advantage(s) of the reconstructive approach over other approaches to philosophical research and writing?

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Unit 3: Steps in Research and Writing in Philosophy

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this discussion on steps in research and writing in philosophy. A research in philosophy is often times more than mere accumulation of information about what others have said. Rather, a researcher in philosophy is expected, in addition to knowing what others have said, to also develop his/her own ideas which will constitute his/her own distinct contribution to scholarship. In other to avoid falling into the dilemma of the proverbial 'blind man in a dark room looking for a black piece of rag', the researcher would need to be guided through certain steps consistent with effective research and writing in philosophy. These include: sourcing materials, identifying an area of research interest, identifying a research problem and identifying a research thesis

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to:

- identify the various steps in philosophical research and writing.
- distinguish between a practical problem and a research problem.
- identify a research problem and a research thesis in an essay

3.0: Main Content

In the sections that follow, we examine four major steps that should guide philosophical research and writing. A research should start with sourcing materials, after which you identify an area of research interest. This is followed by identifying a research problem after which a research thesis is established.

3.1: Sourcing Materials

Gathering materials that are related to one's quest, and familiarising oneself with such materials is the first most essential step of any research programme. As a matter of fact, it forms the basis for the ideas formulated and the arguments presented in any research undertaking. Of course, one cannot in the attempt to source materials, read every book or article written in the discipline of philosophy. Thus a good place to start is to have an area in philosophy that one would like to research. For example, the student might be interested not just in ethics but, more precisely, in bioethics. And so, the relevant materials that the student should seek to gather would be in the area of bioethics (and maybe other materials that have some bearing on bioethics). These materials can be books, articles or other scholarly materials and might be in hard copies or soft copies. Gathering materials has to do with identifying relevant materials which would actually give credence to the research work. Perhaps an attempt to answer the following question might constitute a useful starting point for sourcing materials for any research work: What are the criteria for considering a material essential or relevant for a research work? In other words, how do we select materials for an essay in philosophy, for instance? In writing or researching in philosophy, one's focus can be guided by either 'subject consideration' or 'theme consideration'. By 'subject consideration' is understood choosing a figure in philosophy and discussing his/her views on a particular issue. The thematic approach has to do with choosing a matter or issue and examining the issue in the light of contributions from figures in philosophy. In other words, one could chose the philosopher, Immanuel Kant and discuss his idea on knowledge, noting his central contributions in the discourse. This is the subject approach, as Immanuel Kant is a subject or figure in philosophy. Furthermore, one could choose the idea of knowledge as a theme in philosophy and discuss this from the point of view of more than one philosopher. In either case, the researcher makes use of primary and secondary sources that are relevant for the research. Primary materials refer to the original writings of the philosopher, while secondary materials refer to reactions by other philosophers in terms of interpretations, reviews and criticisms. Consulting primary materials is most important in research before one is free to carry out one's own interpretation and analysis of the work, and to own up whatever comes as a result of the interpretation. This is better than relying on other persons' views and building a position on likely erroneous base of others.

Closely related to the foregoing is the use of the internet and online resources. Some of these materials (primary and secondary) can be sourced from the internet (that is, online). In doing this, we may have no problem with primary sources. Yet, we could be heavily restricted by the shortcomings of secondary materials that are not properly sourced. The propriety of our resource here would have to do with the competence or professionalism of the writer of the material to be consulted, as well as the range of acceptance of the work, usually determined by whether or not such works are peer-reviewed. These, among other notes of caution, would help a contemporary researcher to avoid the pitfalls that have dotted the entirety of online research. This is due to the fact that it has become clear that the contemporary man can do very little or nothing without help from the cyberspace.

3.2: Identifying an Area of Research Interest

In its general understanding, research is an activity consisting in some creative work carried out on a systematic and coherent basis, with the aim of improving the stock of human knowledge and understanding. In the activity of research, attention can be focused on the following areas:

- (i) area of interest
- (ii) area of competence and
- (iii) area of specialisation.

Every researcher, however, begins his activity by identifying his area of interest. By area of research interest is understood that broad area of study or inquiry a researcher chooses to identify with and pursue. It is an area or aspect to which a student or emerging researcher has developed a liking for, usually due to proper instructions or personal studies. And so, such a student or emerging researcher is said to have considerable understanding of the discussion, debates and issues of such an area.

In philosophy as a discipline, areas of research interest could be located in any of the core or applied areas of philosophy. For instance, epistemology can be an area of research interest, but could yet be restricted to naturalised epistemology, social epistemology, virtue epistemology, humanised epistemology or formal epistemology. Other areas of research interest could be metaphysics, ethics, logic, aesthetics, political philosophy or African philosophy, among others. It is, however, instructive to note that an area of interest can become an area of competence when adequate attention is put in to improve one's knowledge of relevant literature. From a given area of competence, one can identify an area of specialisation.

3.3: Identifying a Research Problem

Having thoroughly investigated the interventions of different scholars on the particular topic that the researcher is looking into, he is likely to identify certain challenges, difficulties or problematics, which would have caught his attention. This challenge or problematic constitutes what Ukpokolo calls "a gap, a lacuna – that is, an important but ignored point in the debate concerning the phenomenon" (Ukpokolo, 201: 73-74). This informs the formulation of what is usually referred to as the research problem. The research problem is the problem that the researcher identifies in the process of carrying out the research which bears on the core issue being researched but constitutes an unaddressed point or matter. In other words, the research problem is the gap in literature concerning what is being studied. As a matter of fact, the notion of 'problem' conveys various understandings in the world of research. In our everyday experience, a problem is something we try to avoid, whereas in research, a problem is something we discover.

Indeed, a researcher without a research problem to work on faces an uphill task; for, without a research problem, research is empty.

One way to understand the meaning and nature of research problem is, perhaps, to also have a good knowledge of what may be referred to as practical problem - an existential challenging condition or state of affairs which, if unattended to or ignored, portends some real danger. Attending to such an existential state of affairs requires that we locate and propose a solution to the research problem - problem defined by what has not been clearly stated or understood about the practical problem. By this understanding, research problems derive from practical problems. For example, the phenomenon of the collapse of traditional values in contemporary African culture has been investigated by various scholars, who have come up with different explanations with regard to the cause of the said collapse of these values. One such explanation is the interaction with Western civilisation, ignoring the place of ideology in pre-colonial African culture, and its overthrow by the Western alternative which was easily preferable. In attending to this problem, there is the need to study and investigate the cause (immediate and remote), the scope of activities and other operational manifestations as represented in existing literature (a sort of literature review or history of the discourse concerning the phenomenon in question). In the light of this review, a gap or lacuna, that is, an important but ignored omission in the debate concerning the phenomenon, is brought to the fore. This in itself constitutes a research problem!

Generally understood therefore, a practical problem is as a result of some condition in the world that could make us unhappy, and in resolving a practical problem, we do something either to eliminate the cause of the problem or to ameliorate its effect. What this means is that, in resolving a practical problem, we must first attempt to resolve a research problem.

A perhaps more common conception of research problem is to consider various literature available to a debate, an issue or problematic. Such a problem could be conceptual, theoretical or hermeneutical. It could also be socio-economic, political or cultural. The researcher, in examining available literature with respect to a particular issue, identifies a gap or a lacuna or a break that needs to be filled. This gap in literature is usually referred to as a research problem. An important component of research procedure in philosophy therefore, is literature review or history of the discourse, where the researcher presents a general overview of the debate, showing the place(s) of contributing ‘voices’ and revealing the lacuna or what is left out, or the missing link in the conversation. The literature review could be incorporated into the introduction or made a separate section in the writing. Taking our earlier case as an example, a researcher examines and considers available literature directed at dealing with the collapse of traditional values in contemporary African culture, and identifies a missing link in the materials. This missing link represents a research problem, and what is discovered to fill the missing link represents the research thesis.

3.4: Identifying a Research Thesis

Etymologically, the term “thesis” derives from a Greek word meaning “something put forth”, referring to an intellectual proposition. A research work in philosophy is incomplete – in fact, it would not qualify as a research work at all – if there is no research thesis. Same would go for a situation in which the writer actually has the idea of a research thesis in her head but does not express it in any identifiable way in the written work. What, then, is a research thesis? A research thesis, simply put, is the central point that the work is trying to make. But, unlike, say, a newspaper article, it identifies a solution to a problem that has already been highlighted and discussed in the research work. Concerning the research thesis, Oladipo says,

> An essay in philosophy is much more than a mere accumulation of information on what others have said. The writer is not only expected to know what others have said about his/her subject, he/she is also expected to develop his/her own ideas. Indeed, it is these ideas which constitute his/her own contribution to knowledge (Oladipo, 2008: 95).

Standardly, one must have carried out some preliminary research before creating a thesis, which may be reviewed during the research and writing process. And so, a research thesis is represented in a set of statements; short .and precise, stating the position of the researcher that fills the missing link in literature. Thus, the research thesis presents a research solution to the research problem, and it is to the research thesis that the various sections of the work are connected.

The major challenge faced by students and researchers in philosophy is the belief that philosophical problems are merely everyday practical problems, such as the problem of infrastructural development, the problem of good governance, and the problem of insecurity. To be sure, philosophical problems arise from practical issues of everyday life. But if philosophers engage these problems merely as they are, they do nothing different from what natural or social scientists do. But philosophical problems are more theoretical than practical. They are meant to identify issues with theories postulated for practical everyday problems, or theories that interpret other theories of everyday practical problems. Concerning the issue of good governance, for instance, there are theories of justice and fairness postulated to resolve such problem. A philosopher engages a particular theory or set of theories of justice, identifies a problem, and defends a thesis. The problem could be that the main arguments in support of a theory are not coherent or consistent; or that a theory does not fit with everyday experience; or that the criticism already leveled against a theory does not hold in the light of' new evidences; or that a theory has become anachronistic or out-dated. Thus, a philosophical problem identifies a gap or lacuna that has been left open or unfilled in theories or scholarship. But once a theoretical problem is identified, the writer postulates and defends a thesis that he or she is convinced can fill the obvious vacuum in scholarship.

Besides identifying a philosophical problem, a philosophical paper is a defence of a thesis. In fact, the bulk of an essay in philosophy is dedicated to stating, explaining, analysing, arguing for, and responding to, anticipated objections to a thesis. But what exactly is a thesis and how is it stated in a philosophical essay? As stated, earlier, a thesis is a statement of the position or conclusion of the argument of a writer. It expresses the writer's position on an issue. Thus, a philosophical essay is not complete if the writer simply describes a philosophical position without analysing it in order to identify a philosophical problem and take .a position. A thesis is a statement that makes some clear, definite assertions about the subject under discussion.

A philosophical paper is not a personal report of how one feels or what one believes or a description of what has been said about a topic. It is an argument for a thesis. To avoid mistaking a thesis for a description, personal feeling or belief, a writer must follow some definite steps in developing a thesis. First, the writer must explain what he or she means by his thesis. If the thesis of an essay says that abortion is wrong in any circumstance as against a position which defends the rightness of abortion in a particular, circumstance, the writer must explain what “in any circumstance” means. The next step would be to provide clearly stated arguments for the thesis or position one holds, and show why they are better than, or how they reaffirm, other positions. Very importantly too, the strength of a thesis depends on the extent to which one is able to identify, examine and respond to anticipated or foreseen objections. Once these steps are followed, the writer’s thesis will become evident and clear, rather than being difficult to pinpoint.

4.0: Conclusion

The researcher would need to be guided through certain steps that would enhance effective research. First, the researcher has to identify existing relevant materials that would give credence to a research work. After going through such materials, the researcher would then choose an aspect as his/her area of interest. As the researcher engages the materials in the area of interest, he is likely to identify certain challenges or difficulties which have not been effectively resolved in the literature. This informs the formulation of what is usually referred to as the research problem. He may in the course of his research come up with a position that fills the missing link or gap in literature. This position constitutes the research thesis.

5.0: Summary

This unit has examined four major steps that should guide philosophical research and writing. A research should start with sourcing materials, after which you identify an area of research interest. This is followed by identifying a gap in literature. This gap or lacuna constitutes the research problem. In the course the research, the researcher may come up

with a position that fills the missing link or gap in literature. This position constitutes the research thesis. The research thesis presents a research solution to the research problem, and it is to the research thesis that the various sections of the work are connected.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is the difference between a research problem and a practical problem?

2. Distinguish between a research problem and a research thesis.

3. Why is a review of existing literature important in philosophical research and writing?

7.0: References/Further Reading

Martinich, A. P. Ed. 2005. *Philosophical writing: an introduction, 3rd edition.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Oladipo, O. 2008. *Thinking about philosophy*. Ibadan: Hope Publications.

Seech, Z. 2009. *Writing philosophy papers.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Centage Learning.

Ukpokolo, I. E. 2015. *Methodology of research and writing in philosophy: a guide.* Southern Carolina: Create Space Publishing.

Ukpokolo, I. E., Offor F and Udefi C. A. 2019. Methodology of research in philosophy. In A. B. Ekanola, A. Raji-Oyelade and R. O. Olaniyi (Eds.) *Theories and methodologies in the humanities,* Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, pp.237-260.

MODULE 5: STRUCTURE OF RESEARCH AND WRITING IN PHILOSOPHY

Unit: 1 Structure of Summary Paper and Review Essay

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this unit, where we will be discussing the structure of summary paper and review essay. The process of writing a summary or an essay or paper usually begins with the close reading of a text. It involves careful and meticulous interpretation of passages from a primary source in most cases. When you close read, you observe the facts and details that are conveyed by the type of words used. Each word matters, as each plays an important role in conveying the general meaning of the text to the reader. By paying attention to all striking features of the text, including rhetorical devices, structural elements, cultural and historical references, we are able to have a conceptual understanding of the text. When writing a summary paper on the one hand, we take a pause to comprehend the ideas in the paper before commencing our writing. It is expected that when we write, only the very important ideas in the text are diligently represented in our own words. For this reason, it is not expected that all the points in the material to be summarised must be mentioned since it is possible for a ten page paper to be summarised in just two or less pages and a meeting that held for one hour could be summarised in just five or less minutes. All other parts which are left out of the material or activities which took place during the meeting can be described as embellishments. On the other hand, the purpose of a review paper is to succinctly present recent progress in a particular topic. In a review, we are expected to summarise the current state of knowledge of the topic as well as make an easier understanding of the topic for the reader by discussing the findings presented in recent research papers.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to:

- identify the structure of a summary paper
- mention some basic questions that aid the writing of a summary paper
- identify the structure of a review essay
- mention the areas to identify in writing a review essay

3.0: Main Content

In the sections that follow, the unit discusses the structure of a summary paper and a review essay and then examines some basic questions that would aid the writing of a summary paper. It also suggests areas to identify in writing a review essay.

3.1: Structure of a Summary Paper

A summary is written in paragraph form and it generally does not include subheadings. It is important to begin with an introduction which clearly identifies the general idea of the article including the topic, the question or purpose of the article, and its findings. The body of the paper which is broken down into paragraphs explains how arguments and evidence support the findings or conclusion. Alternatively, the body paragraphs of an empirical article summary may explain the methods and findings, making connections to predictions. The conclusion explains the significance of the argument or implications of the findings (Webster. 2017). This structure ensures that the summary paper is focused and clear. Students must therefore remember the following when writing a summary paper:

i. It should be in the form of a paragraph.
ii. It should begin with an introductory sentence that states the text's title, author and main point of the text.
iii. It should identify the sections the author used to organise the paper.
iv. It should be written in your own words.
v. It should contain only the ideas of the original text.
vi. It should identify the important sub-claims the author uses to defend the main point.

The writer should also:

i. Make direct quotations of parts of the essay which support or defend the main point of the essay.
ii. Use source material from the essay to defend claims.
iii. The last sentence should be written in such a way that it sums up your summary by rephrasing the main point.

3.2: Some Basic Questions that Aid the Writing of a Summary Paper

One of the many challenges that confront writers when summarising a paper is to misunderstand the goal of the paper**.** In an article summary, your job is to write about the article, not about the actual topic of the article. For instance, when summarising Walter Rodney's 'How Europe Underdeveloped Africa', it is your mission to present to us what Rodney said in the book and not whether you disagree with the title or not. An individual's knowledge and understanding of the paper to be suummarised is very important to successfully doing justice to any paper. This is why it is essential to read carefully and closely. Some basic questions that would help in this direction are:

For Argumentative Articles

1. What is the topic?
2. What is the research question? In other words, what is the author trying to find out about that topic?

3. How does the author position his/her article in relation to other studies of the topic?
4. What is the position? What are the supporting arguments?
5. How are supporting arguments developed? What kind of evidence is used?
6. What is the significance of the author’s position? What does it help you to understand about the topic?

For Empirical Articles

1. What is the topic?
2. What is the research question?
3. What are the predictions and the rationale for these predictions?
4. What methods were used (participants, sampling, materials, procedure)? What were the variables and controls?
5. What were the main results?
6. Are the findings supported by previous research?
7. What are the limitations of the study?
8. What are the implications or applications of the findings?

3.3: The Structure of a Review Essay

i. Introduction and Background: This should be brief, it should be able to catch the reader's attention and at the same time be used to introduce the topic and provide the necessary background information.

ii. Body of the Paper: Should describe important results from recent primary literature articles and explain how those results shape our current understanding of the topic. It should mention the types of experiments done and their corresponding data, should not repeat the experimental procedure step for step.

iii. Conclusion: It should clearly summarise the major points, point out the significance of these results, and discuss the questions that remain unanswered in that area.

iv. Work Cited: All works cited in the reviewed paper must be presented as references or bibliography as required.

3.4: The Areas to Identify in Writing a Review Essay

When asked to review either a book, an article in a journal or a chapter or more in a book, you should pay attention to important areas such as the presentation of the author’s argument and your assessment of the writing. The following should be clearly identified:

i. The book: This should include the author, title, and year of publication.

ii. The main issue or problem that the author addresses: You are expected to say what the issue raised in the book or article is, as well as why the author addressed it. This is because sometimes, authors write to refute other writers' opinions, to fill in a gap or to bring in a new perspective.

iii. The author's thesis, which is the answer given to the problem raised: Here, you need to explain how the author proves or supports the thesis as well as the arguments and evidence used. Attention should also be given to how the author makes his case. This is where the reviewer should begin critiquing the work. As you may have learnt in other modules, to criticise does not have to be negative. It simply means to evaluate objectively and present both the strengths and the weaknesses in the author's argument.

iv. The overall argument of the work: here, you are required to explain why you believe or do not believe that the reasons given in the argument does or does not support the conclusion. You should also state whether or not the evidences provided are well analysed and integrated in the argument.

v. Whether or not the author is biased in the way ideas are interpreted with reference to the primary sources.

vi. Whether or not the argument was persuasive in such a way that you can say that the author dealt in a convincing way with counter-evidence and with counter-arguments to the points made.

vii. Whether or not the work is readable as well as to what audience is it directed.

4.0 Conclusion

Before concluding a summary paper, you should ask yourself some very important questions such as;

- Did I report the author's ideas accurately?
- Did I include all the key points or main ideas?
- Did I acknowledge the importance the author placed on certain ideas?
- Did I write it in an easy-to-understand paragraph form?
- Did I write it in my own words

5.0 Summary

Creating a reverse outline is one way to ensure that you fully understand the article. Pre-read the article (read the abstract, introduction, and/or conclusion). Summarize the main questions and findings. Skim sub-headings and topic sentences to understand the organisation; make notes in the margins about each section. Read each paragraph within a section; make short notes about the main idea or purpose of each paragraph. This strategy will help you to see how parts of the article connect to the main idea or the whole of the article. Also take note of the following: the author, the title, the year of publication. Identify its main focus by reading through the introduction and conclusion. Skim through the text and notice the various chapters, sub-chapters, as well as titles and sub-titles. Read each division carefully with the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How questions in mind and jot down major points for each division and sub-division. Be specific and concise and don't forget to identify the sources used by the author to back up the argument.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Identify the structure of a summary paper
2. Mention some basic questions that aid the writing of a summary paper
3. Identify the structure of a review essay
4. Mention the areas to identify in writing a review essay.

7.0: References/Further Reading

Megan Webster. 2017. How to Write an Academic Summary. Canada: Thompson Rivers University Press. https://inside.tru.ca/2017/01/18/how-to-write-an-academic-summary/

Paul C. Price, Rajiv Jhangiani, & I-Chant A. Chiang. 2017. Research Methods in Psychology - 2nd Canadian Edition. Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercialShareAlike3.0License. https://opentextbc.ca/researchmethods/chapter/american-psychological-association-apa-style/

Literature Review Paper. 2001. University of Wisconsin.
https://websites.uwlax.edu/biology/ReviewPapers.html#What%20is%20a%20review

Unit 2: Structure of Long Essay and Project

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this unit where we discuss the structure of Long Essay and Project. The purpose of an essay is to present a systematic and logical argument in response to a specific problem. This is why providing an effective outline or structure helps the argument presented in an essay to unfold clearly to the reader. A Long Essay or Project is an academic research that is undertaken by a student in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a First Degree. It is intended to prepare students in area of problem solving in their expected duties in the society. It is a way of testing their abilities to see if they have been properly groomed to face the challenges of the workplace. As a part of the requirements for graduation as mentioned earlier, students are usually asked to come up with about three topics in their most preferred areas of study for their projects or long essay from where the supervisor would approve just one. However, there are instances where supervisors could assign topics to students. Since the goal of every scholarly production is perfection and perfection does not admit of any flaw, final year students need to know the rudiments of project writing. This is the reason for taking a course in Research Methodology (Boyer. 1987: 142).

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to;

- describe the structure of a Long Essay and Project Paper
- Identify the structure of the body of a Long Essay and Project in the sciences
- Identify the structure of the body of a Long Essay and Project in the Arts and Humanities

3.0: Main Content

The sections that follow will examine the structure of Long Essay and Project Paper both in the humanities and the sciences.

3.1: Structure of a Long Essay and Project Paper (Preliminary Pages)

It is useful to know what you want to argue for or against before you begin to write. Your introduction should state your argument while you spend the rest of the essay presenting the reasons and evidence that make it valid. It is also important that you give some thought to the order in which you present your argument for it to be clear and convincing. To achieve this, you should, at the beginning of your essay writing ask yourself some important questions such as; do I understand what my project topic is all about? What is my prima facie response to the question presented by the topic? What do I already know that is of relevance to the question? What other information do I need to find out? What have other researchers written on the topic and do I agree or disagree with them? What is the main point I want to argue or put across in this essay? What reasons do I have to support my main argument or message? To be able to put all ideas together in a coherent manner, there is need to follow a certain structure, thus:

Preliminary Pages

i. **Cover page**: This should contain the title of the essay, the author's full names and Matriculation Number as well as the month and year the essay was completed.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AND THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH ITUA TAYO
MATRIC. NO.: ART 23456
AUGUST, 2021

ii. **Title page**: This should contain the title of the essay, the name and Matriculation Number of the author, as well as the department, faculty and institution to which the essay is to be submitted. It should also indicate the purpose of the essay, for instance ...In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A) degree in Philosophy. Afterwards, the city or location of the institution, month and year of completing the essay will follow.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AND THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPMENT

BY

JOSEPH ITUA TAYO

(MATRIC NO; ART 23456)

BEING A ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A) DEGREE IN PHILOSOPHY

IBADAN

AUGUST, 2021.

iii. **Certification page**: This page contains the author's declaration of title and an honest claim that it is his original work. The page also contains the signature of the author and the supervisor.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this essay titled: **African Philosophy and the Challenge of Development,** submitted to the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, is a record of original research carried out by me: **Joseph Itua TAYO.**

SIGN

------------------------------ --

Date Joseph Itua TAYO

SIGN

------------------------------ --

Date Supervisor

iv. **Dedication Page**: This is where the author dedicates the essay to whoever he/she wishes.

DEDICATION

To my father

v. **Abstract**: This is where the author states the limit or scope of the work as it may not be possible to write everything about any topic. An abstract should contain the following:

a. An introduction which very briefly summarises the entire work.
b. The aim which the essay sets out to achieve in the area of research.
c. The scope of the essay which has to do with the boundaries of the essay in the area of the research.
d. The methodology and Literature review, where the methodology indicates the way the research will be carried out and literature review is a diligent, honest effort to highlight and acknowledge the efforts made by earlier researchers in a particular area of research. A good literature review enables the researcher to see where there are gaps in the progression and growth of knowledge in that area of research is. It is through such gaps that the researcher can hope to make his own little contribution to knowledge.
e. The result (expected).

vi. **Acknowledgements**: Here the author pays his respect and offers appreciations to all those who assisted and contributed to the success of the essay and sometimes, those who impacted the author in one way or the other throughout the entire program.

vii. **Table of Contents**: This is where all contents are stated in order of their page numbers.

3.2: Structure of a Long Essay and Project Paper (The Body of Essay in Sciences)

Chapter One

This is usually consisting of the following sections:

i. Introduction: Brief introduction of the chapter
ii. Background of the Study
iii. Statement of Problem
iv. Objectives
v. Scope and Limitation of the Study
vi. Justification
vii. Project Risk and Mitigation
viii. Budget and Resources
ix. Project Schedule

Chapter Two

Literature Review: Literature review should not be just a compilation or reproduction of the works of others. It requires the author to examine and comment critically on the literature relevant to the student's project area or area of research.

Chapter Three

Methodology: should describe a model or framework under which the system was developed. It should address at least the following areas;

i. The exact techniques used to collect facts and data
ii. Tools used to analyse the data and the processes
iii. Tools to implement and test the system
iv. Time schedule and project cost

Chapter Four

System Analysis: This should address:

i. How the current system works using system analysis modelling tools such as flow charts, Use cases, etc.
ii. It should describe the facts and the data gathered including the methods used
iii. It should focus on description of the system design, database design, conceptual, logical and physical modelling tool

Chapter Five

System Implementation: It addresses the following areas;

i. Tools used for coding and testing
ii. System test plan
iii. Testing: This should be explained in terms of the data used to test and the approach
iv. Proposed Change-over techniques
v. A sample of the system code should be included in the appendix.

Chapter Six

Limitations, Conclusions and Recommendations:

I. Limitations: In this section you need to state some of the problems you encountered in the process of doing your research.
II. Conclusion: The conclusion ties the results of the study to theory, practice and policy by pulling together the theoretical background, literature review, potential significance for application and results of the study.
III. Recommendations: The section highlights suggestions and recommendations for further improvements in the system.

Reference

References are the detailed description of resources from which information or ideas were obtained in preparing the essay. The details of every references cited in the text, published or unpublished, must be listed alphabetically in this section.

3.3: Structure of a Long Essay and Project Paper (The Body of Essay in Arts and Humanities)

General Introduction: This includes the following:

i. Background of the Study
ii. Statement of Problem
iii. The Aim and Objectives of the Study
iv. Scope of the Study
v. Methodology
vi. Justification of Study
vii. Contributions to Knowledge

Each chapter usually begins with an introduction and ends with a conclusion. This is because each chapter is focused on dealing with a particular objective and all the chapters collectively address the aim of the study. In this way, the various conclusions are harmonised in the general conclusion. The chapters are arranged in the following order:

i. Chapter One
ii. Chapter Two
iii. Chapter Three
iv. Chapter Four
v. General Conclusion
vi. References
vii. Bibliography

4.0 Conclusion

A Long Essay or Project is an academic research that is undertaken by a student in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a first degree. It is intended to prepare students in area of problem solving in their expected duties in the society. This is why it is very important that you give some thought to the order in which you present your argument in clear and convincing manner, as it is in most part, a reflection of how much the institution has impacted the student.

5.0 Summary

A Long Essay or Project is a piece of writing that is written to convince someone of something or to simply inform the reader about a particular topic. In order for the reader to be convinced or adequately informed, the essay must include several important components to make it flow in a logical way. The main parts to an essay are: the introduction, body, conclusion and references.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Describe the structure of a Long Essay and Project Paper
2. Identify the structure of the body of a Long Essay in the Sciences
3. Identify the structure of the body of a Long Essay in the Arts and Humanities

8.0 References/Further Reading

Ernest L. Boyer. 1987. College: The Undergraduate Experience in America, 83-101, See generally Book Review by J. Peter Bryne, “Neo-Orthodoxy in Academic Freedom”, Texas Law Review, Nov. 2009. Vol. 88 No.1, 142

Mount Kenya University. 2012. Department of Information Technology Undergraduate Project Paper Guidelines.

Components of a Good Essay. Retrieved from; https://www.evansville.edu/writingcenter

Unit 3: Structure of Dissertation and Thesis

Contents

1.0: Introduction

Welcome to this unit where we discuss the structure of dissertation and thesis, both in the sciences and in the humanities. Depending on institutional conventions, a dissertation may be an academic research that is undertaken by a student in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Master's or an M.Phil Degree, while a thesis is undertaken in fulfilment of the requirements for a Doctorate Degree. Dissertations and theses are meant to deal with challenges and problems in a greater degree than a long essay or project would do. This is why they are in fact referred to as higher degrees, although, a doctorate is the highest academic degree that can be acquired. In writing a dissertation or thesis, it is important to be familiar with the structure of both their preliminary pages and their main bodies, most especially as it applies to the humanities.

2.0: Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this unit, you would be able to;

- distinguish between a dissertation and a thesis
- identify the structure of dissertation and thesis in the Sciences
- identify the structure of dissertation and thesis in Arts and the Humanities

3.0: Main Content

The sections that follow will examine the structure of dissertation and thesis both in the humanities and the sciences.

3.1: Structure of Dissertation and Thesis (Preliminary Pages)

i. **Cover page**: This mainly contains the title of the essay and the author's full names as well as previous degree(s), matriculation number and date.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AND THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPMENT

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B.A., Philosophy (Lagos), M.A., Philosophy (Ibadan)

(MATRIC NO; ART 23456)

AUGUST 2021

ii. **Title page**: Just as found in Long Essays and Projects in Unit 2, this should contain the title of the essay, the name and Matriculation Number of the author, as well as the department, faculty and institution to which the essay is to be submitted. It should also indicate the purpose of the essay, for instance ...In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Masters of Arts (M.A) degree in Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Philosophy as the case may be. Afterwards, the month and year of completing the essay will follow.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AND THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPMENT

BY
JOSEPH ITUA TAYO
(MATRIC NO; ART 23456)

BEING A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS OF ARTS (M.A) DEGREE IN PHILOSOPHY

AUGUST, 2021.

iii. **Certification page**: This page contains the author's declaration of title and an honest claim that it is his original work. The page also contains the signature of the supervisor and the author (where required).

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this work was carried out by Joseph Itua Tayo under my supervision in the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Signature

Supervisor

Date

iv. **Dedication Page**: This is where the author dedicates the essay to whoever he wishes.

DEDICATION

To God and to my loving mother

v. **Abstract**: The abstract of a dissertation or thesis is made up of three or four paragraphs of not more than 500 words as well as keywords and word count.

   1. The first paragraph is a short introduction or background to the study. It talks about the gap in literature and how the thesis intends to bridge the gap.
   2. The second paragraph focuses on the theoretical framework that was adopted as well as the various texts that were examined. The text must be shown to have proper connection with the different objectives of the thesis in relation to the aim of the work. The paragraph also contains the methodology employed in the work.
   3. The third paragraph makes an in-depth analysis of findings from the texts consulted and shows the point at which critical intervention was made in a bid to respond to the problem of the study.
   4. The fourth paragraph establishes the thesis of study by stating clearly, how the gap in literature was filled.

Keywords: Usually, a maximum of five keywords which clearly describes what the entire work is all about are listed.

Word count: As said earlier, an abstract should contain a maximum of 5oo words. Here, the author is expected to state the number of words used in the abstract.

vi. **Acknowledgements**: Here the author pays his respect and offers appreciations to all those who assisted and contributed to the success of the essay and sometimes, those who impacted the author in one way or the other throughout the entire program.

vii. **Table of Contents**: This is where all contents are stated in order of their page numbers.

3.2: Structure/Body of Dissertation and Thesis in the Sciences

a. Chapter One

i. Background to the Study: This sets the general tone for your study.

ii. Statement of the Problem: It informs the reader of the specific problem under study and it flows from the existing gap in literature and shows how the present study fills that gap.

iii. Purpose of the Study usually states the reasons for an interest in attempting to address the problem of study.
iv. Research Questions and, or Hypotheses: These are questions around which the research is focused
v. Significance of the Study indicates those that will benefit from findings of the study and how.
vi. Scope of the Study should cover both the content scope and geographical scope.
vii. Operational Definition of Terms states clearly the definitions of some variables that might be confusing to the reader.

b. Chapter Two

i. Conceptual Framework
ii. Theoretical Framework
iii. Empirical Analysis
iv. Appraisal of Reviewed Literature

c. Chapter Three

Methodology: This chapter should describe a model or framework adopted in the essay and how it was developed. It should also address at least the following areas:

i. The exact techniques used to collect facts and data
ii. Tools used to analyse the data and the processes
iii. Tools to implement and test the system
iv. Time schedule and project cost

d. Chapter Four

System Analysis: This chapter should:

i. Address how the current system works using system analysis modelling tools such as flow charts, Use cases, etc.
ii. Describe the facts and the data gathered including the methods used
iii. Focus on description of the system design, database design, conceptual, logical and physical modelling tool.

e. Chapter Five

System Implementation: This chapter addresses the following areas:

i. Tools used for coding and testing
ii. System test plan
iii. Testing: This should be explained in terms of the data used to test and the approach
iv. Proposed Change-over techniques

v. A sample of the system code should be included in the appendix.

f. Chapter Six
i. Limitations
ii. Conclusion
iii. Recommendations

g. **Reference**

h. **Bibliography**

3.3: Structure/Body of Dissertation and Thesis Arts and Humanities

General Introduction: This includes the following:

i. **Background of the Study**: This is a brief introduction that lays the foundation for the establishment of the problem of study.
ii. **Literature Review**: This is an analysis of existing literature which describes what other scholars have done and what they have left undone.
iii. **Statement of Problem:** This is the gap in literature that is expected to be filled.
iv. **Statement of Thesis:** This is a description of how the researcher intends to respond or 'address' the problem of study.
v. **The Aim and Objectives of the Study:** There are usually several objectives of study which are arranged in such a way that they each form a chapter, but there can only be a single aim of study. This aim is the general point at which the entire study is directed.
vi. **Scope of the Study:** This shows the limitation of the study or the extent to which the study covers.
vii. **Methodology**: This is a description of the research method employed in the research whether qualitative, quantitative or both.
viii. **Justification of Study:** This is an expression of the fact that there is or there are legitimate grounds for conducting the research.
ix. **Contributions to Knowledge:** This is an expression of the impact the research makes to existing body of knowledge.
x. **Chapter Outline:** This is a list of all chapters in the work.

The number of chapters in a dissertation or thesis shows the number of objectives that the essay is set to respond to. Each chapter usually begins with an introduction and ends with a conclusion. This is because each chapter is focused on dealing with a particular objective and all the chapters collectively address the aim of the study. In this way, the various conclusions are harmonised in the general conclusion. The chapters are arranged in the following order;

viii. Chapter One: The focus is on objective one
ix. Chapter Two: The focus is on objective two
x. Chapter Three: The focus is on objective three
xi. Chapter Four: The focus is on objective four
xii. Chapter Five: The focus is on objective five
xiii. General Conclusion: As stated earlier, each chapter begins with an introduction and ends with a conclusion. The general conclusion is a harmony of the conclusions of all the chapters which are directed towards addressing the aim of the problem. The conclusion of a dissertation or thesis should sum up your argument by way of drawing all the threads together. According to Baden, in a real sense, the conclusion is the most important part of your essay, because it is the forum in which your authentic voice is heard. No new information is introduced at this stage; it's just you, summing up your arguments, recapitulating, giving your final response to the thesis statement, and spelling out the implications of this. Although, you are not expected to be repeating the wording from the introduction in the conclusion, however, there should be symmetry between your introduction and conclusion (Eunson. 2012).
xiv. References: This is a record of all works cited either in the general Introduction, the Chapters or the General conclusion. Shem noted that references are part of the evidence you provide for each of your objective to show that you draw on ideas from a range of sources which include materials from journals, books, reports and other sources, both hard copy materials as well as those available digitally via the internet (Macdonald. 2015).
xv. Bibliography: This is a list of all works cited in alphabetical order without repetition.

4.0: Conclusion

Dissertations and theses are meant to deal with challenges and problems in a greater degree than a long essay or project would do. Depending on institutional conventions, a dissertation may refer to an academic research undertaken by a student in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Masters or an M.Phil Degree, while a thesis is an academic research undertaken in fulfilment of the requirements for a Doctorate Degree. In writing a dissertation or thesis, it is important to be familiar with the structure of both their preliminary pages and their main bodies, most especially as it applies to the humanities.

5.0: Summary

This unit has examined the structure of the preliminary pages and main body of dissertation and thesis, most especially as this apply both to the humanities and the sciences. A dissertation may be used to describe research undertaken by a student as part of the requirements for the award of a Masters or an M.Phil Degree, while a thesis refers to an academic research undertaken in fulfilment of the requirements for a Doctorate Degree. Dissertations and theses are meant to deal with challenges and problems in a greater degree than a long essay or project. In writing a dissertation or thesis, therefore, it is important to be familiar with their structure, especially as it concerns disciplines in Arts and the Humanities.

6.0: Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is the difference between a dissertation and a thesis?
2. Identify the structure of the body of dissertation and thesis in the sciences
3. Identify the structure of the body of dissertation and thesis in the arts and humanities.
4. How is the structure of a dissertation in the humanities different from that in the sciences?
5. How is the structure of a thesis in the sciences different from that in the humanities?

7.0: References/Further Reading

Baden Ian Eunson. 2012. Academic Writing: The Essay. Australia: Monash University. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263863946_Academic_writing_the_essay?

Shem Macdonald. 2015. A typical structure for an academic essay. Academic Support and Development, Victoria University. http://www.vu.edu.au/learningsupport.