UNIT 4. WHAT IS A RESEARCH PAPER?

Discussion points

- Have you ever faced any problems when writing a report or an article? What kind of problems did you have?

Read the text below and say if the statements after it are true or false.

Written Report

Definition of the research paper

The research paper is a typewritten paper in which you present your views and research findings on a chosen topic. Students usually work on the 'term paper' or the 'library paper' or the 'diploma paper', postgraduates work on their dissertations. No matter what the paper is called, the task is essentially the same: to read on a particular topic, evaluate information about it, and report your findings in a paper.

The research paper cannot be written according to a random formula but must conform to specific format. The format governs the entire paper from the placing of the title to the width of the margins, and to the notations used in acknowledging material drawn from other sources.

The format of scholarly writing is simply an agreed-upon way of doing things – much like etiquette, table manners, or rules of the road.

Interpreting the facts

After gathering all the necessary information, you must decide upon the most logical way to present it. Perhaps the key word is logical because it is through logic that you will take disparate facts and order them into a meaningful pattern. Logic will help you to discover a pattern from the facts and the results of the study; discovering a pattern and developing a viewpoint are key issues in interpretation.

Clear presentation of information can be accomplished only if you take the time to think about your task before you begin to write. Presentation of information in a logical manner will be enhanced if you cover all aspects of your topic. In covering all

aspects of the topic, you will find that you will have answered many of the readers' questions before they have had a chance to ask them.

The following outline represents the various kinds of information that it is necessary to include in most technical reports. In addition, the outline breaks a long technical report down into these components: introduction, body, and conclusion. Part 1, labelled *The Problem*, consists of the kind of information that must be included in the introduction of any technical report.

I The Problem

Introduction to the Problem

Statement of the Problem

Background (summary of the known and the unknown)

Definitions of Unfamiliar Terms (Operational Terms for Experiment)

Value of Study or Experiment

Limitations of Study or Experiment

By stating the problem precisely, the writer clearly and concisely defines the writing task for the reader. If purpose is always in mind, clear presentation of ideas will not be far behind.

The other parts of the Problem section are self-explanatory except for the Definition of Unfamiliar terms. You should remember that it is necessary to define any word that the reader might not understand. This is the point of definition section of any report: to define the terms used in the reports so well that they are clear to the audience.

The next four steps of the outline represent the body of the report.

II Background Information

III Designing and Procedures of Important Experiments

IV Results of Experiments

V Discussion

First, you should give enough background information to demonstrate that you have some knowledge of the subject. Your next steps are to discuss the designs and procedures of your experiment and to list these results. In listing the results, if possible, use graphs and tables for clear presentation of facts and explain whatever is necessary

from the graphs and tables. The discussion is not the place to introduce new ideas, this is just a discussion of the facts presented in the body.

VI Conclusions, Summary, Implications and Recommendations

The final part of the report is used to summarize the information, to state your interpretation of the patterns reported in the body of the report and to make any recommendations you think necessary. Whereas the body of the report is used to state the facts, the conclusion is used to state your interpretation of the facts. An interpretation should always flow logically from the information presented in the introduction and the body.

Abstract or Summary

An abstract or a summary highlights the most important ideas in the proposal, manual or dissertation. Abstracts or summaries are very helpful to people outside your scientific field so they need to be worded carefully in general, not scientific terms.

After reading the text decide whether you think these statements are true or false:

- *Students' and postgraduates' research papers usually have polar tasks.*
- *Research papers can be written according to a random formula.*
- *Students should start to present information in the research work without wasting time on thinking over the structure of the paper.*
- *The writing task for the reader should be defined in the introduction of the research work.*
- *Terms are not to be defined in the paper as readers are good experts in the problem discussed.*
- *Graphs and tables are strongly recommended when listing the results of the experiment.*
- *Conclusions differ from the body of the report in the way of presenting the facts.*

Vocabulary work

1. Match the columns.

1. to present the views	a) посилювати, збільшувати
2. random formula	b) охоплювати всі аспекти
3. to conform to	c) безладна формула
4. to evaluate information	d) упорядкувати непорівнянні факти
5. to order disparate facts	e) знайомити із поглядами
6. to cover all the aspects	f) підпорядковувати, погоджувати
7. to enhance	g) стисло визначати
8. to define concisely	h) оцінювати інформацію

2. Find the words in the unit which have the opposite meaning to the words below.

1 to differ from	5 in detail
2 similar	6 colourless
3 to diminish	7 useless
4 approximately	8 scientific

Key vocabulary:

a research paper, research findings, postgraduates, to evaluate information, notations, acknowledging material, source, to discover, to develop a viewpoint, an outline, introduction, body, conclusion, to define, definition, background information, graphs and tables, summary, abstract.

Text work

1. Answer the questions.

— What is a research paper?

— Complete the ideas:

 Students usually work on the ……

 Postgraduates work on……

— What is the task of any research work?