Structuring Your Research Paper in Linguistics and TEFL

1. Important Note

This document contains information regarding the structure of research papers in linguistics and TEFL. Please keep in mind that these basic guidelines are not prescriptive or mandatory but are meant to offer a point of orientation. Research papers can but do not need to follow the prototypical structure outlined below; in fact, the structure of your paper individually depends on your topic and research questions, your methodology, the materials you use, etc. Consequently, there are numerous ways of structuring research papers, and the following specifications describe merely one possible approach out of many.

Additional information concerning the composition of research papers, formal issues, and ways of citing and compiling bibliographies is included in the style sheet of the Institut für Englische Philologie, which can be found at <http://www.anglistik.uni-muenchen.de/service_downloads/index.html>.

2. Possible Structure of a Research Paper in Linguistics and TEFL

Cover Page

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
Department of English Studies
(semester)
(course title)
(name of instructor)

title

(your name)
(address, phone number, e-mail address)
(course of study, majors/minors)
(number of semesters)

Table of Contents

Your paper must contain a table of contents with page numbers. The numbered items (with Arabic numerals) appear as section headings in the text as well.

Introduction

The introduction provides a brief overview on the topic of the paper. It outlines the structure of the paper, research questions and hypotheses, terminology and definitions, methodological considerations, resources (e.g. primary literature, television series, movies, corpora, etc.). If necessary, name issues that are not covered in your paper and give reasons why they were excluded.

Main Part

The main part – which does not have the title "main part" but (a) content-related headline(s) – consists of the presentation and critical discussion of the relevant literature, usually divided into several chapters and subchapters. These chapters should not stand on their own but should be connected in a meaningful and logical way. The main part may also include a detailed description of an empirical analysis (if relevant) and a discussion of the results.

Summary or Conclusion

The conclusion summarizes the main points made in the paper: major research questions, methods and approaches, and results. It also shows whether and how it has been possible to prove or disprove the hypotheses postulated at the beginning of the paper.

References or Works Cited

The References Section at the end of the paper contains a list of all sources used in a paper, ordered first alphabetically by the author's or editor's name. If you use several publications by the same author or editor, they are ordered chronologically. If appropriate, you may split the References Section into separate subsections (e.g. Primary Sources, Secondary Sources, Corpora, Dictionaries, etc.). Use capital letters for content words in English titles.

Plagiarism Statement

A signed plagiarism statement must be attached after the References section. The statement can be found on the homepage of the Institut für Englische Philologie at <http://www.anglistik.uni-muenchen.de/service_downloads/index.html>.