**ELAN2006: Research Methods for Linguists**

*Outline plan: designing an independent research project*

This assignment is **due by Friday 6th May, by 12 noon**. You must submit an electronic copy by this deadline, using Turnitin via the module Blackboard site. You will find the Turnitin link for the assignment under the main Turnitin tab.

**Failure to submit your work by the specified deadline will incur a lateness penalty.** See the English Language Programme Handbook for details.If you think you are at risk of not being able to meet the deadline, e.g. due to an illness, you must speak to Aimee in advance of the deadline.

You will receive your mark and feedback for this assignment electronically through Blackboard within 20 working days of the assignment deadline.

For this assignment, your task is to produce a **2,000-word outline plan** for an independently-designed research project on a linguistic topic of your choice. This outline will consist of discussion setting out the approach to your chosen topic, as well as an annotated bibliography setting out the scholarship used to inform the decisions made in your project design.

Your outline will be used to assess your ability to:

* identify a specific and targeted research question within a broader topic in language study that can be answered within the scope of an undergraduate research project.
* conduct an effective literature review by selecting the sources most relevant to the research being proposed; the most important sources influencing the design of your project or containing existing work on your topic should be featured in your annotated bibliography.
* succinctly summarise and critically evaluate sources in your annotated bibliography; it should be clear how each source has informed the construction of your project.
* select the methodology you deem to be most appropriate for answering the given RQ; be prepared to justify this decision.
* use findings from existing scholarship to make informed hypotheses about the outcomes of the research being proposed
* highlight any ethical issues involved in your proposed topic/method/datasets, if applicable, and how to address them.

Note: you are not expected to conduct the research being proposed in your outline. The goal here is to showcase your capability to design language-based research projects similar to the ones most of you will be doing in ELAN3000 next year.

The structuring of the outline should broadly follow the ordering set out above, which embeds the annotated bibliography in the body of your report. Use of sub-headers to delineate separate sections is allowed, should it be deemed useful in helping you structure your work. All usual introductory and concluding sections are expected to be present in this outline plan. Please note that, despite the assessment being labelled as an 'outline', all work should be drafted in **full academic prose**; you should not be using bullet points anywhere in your outline plan, including the annotated bibliography. Further details about the annotated bibliography (formatting, number of sources, etc.) are provided in the accompanying information handout under the Assessments tab on Blackboard.

As a high-level piece of academic work, the discussion of your chosen topic and approach featured in your outline plan should provide a level of linguistic detail and scrutiny that surpasses common knowledge thresholds, even for native English speakers. The plan must therefore cite **at least five** appropriate scholarly sources (e.g. for definitions of technical terms, information about linguistic processes, or specific claims, ideas or deductions drawn by someone other than you). These five sources can include those required for the annotated bibliography. However, it is expected that in-text citation will be needed in the other sections of the outline plan to help you discuss your project design outside of the annotated bibliography. You can cite the sources appearing in the annotated bibliography in other sections but this doesn't preclude the option of bringing in other sources; this would be particularly relevant if using a source to provide basic definitions of a given language feature/pattern or general information about ethical considerations when working with language data, for example.

Appropriate scholarly sources include linguistics and English Language textbooks, academic journal articles and reputable online sources, but notwebsites such as *Wikipedia*. If you want to refer to any information that was mentioned in a workshop, avoid citing the lecture notes. Instead, find a published source that mentions the same information and cite that instead. In addition to searches of the DMU Library catalogue and Google Scholar, pg.13 of the module handbook contains information about relevant sources associated with the content of the module.

The word limit for this report is 2,000 words, including the annotated bibliography. In-text citations are included in the word count, but not the full list of references at the end of the outline plan. Your assignment should be double-spaced and in a font of at least 12 points.

Referencing: As this is an English Language assessment, it is expected that you will use the Harvard system for all referencing purposes. The DMU Harvard referencing guide is accessible here: <https://library.dmu.ac.uk/ld.php?content_id=32522796>.

Academic integrity: Collaborative work on this assessment **is strictly prohibited**. The university’s rules regarding collusion and plagiarism apply to all marked assignments; for more details, please refer to your ELAN Programme Handbook.