MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IBN KHALDOUN UNIVERSITY OF TIARET FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES

**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

**FIELD: LETTERS AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

**LEVEL: SECOND YEAR MASTER (DIDACTICS)**

**SEMESTERS: 3**

**TIME ALLOTTED: 22Hrs**

**COEFFICENT: 1 CREDIT: 1**

**TEACHING MODE: TD 1.30H/WEEK**

**ASSESSMENT MODE: 50%/50%**

**THE TEACHING UNIT:**

**FUNDAMENTAL**

**METHODOLOGICAL**

**DISCOVERY**

**TRANSVERSAL**

**SECTION: ENGLISH**

**SPECIALTY: ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**SUBJECT: TOULS OF INVESTIGATION**

**SUBJECT SYMBOL: UEM1**

**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

**Ibn Khaldoun University**

**Faculty of Literature and Languages**

**Section of English**

**Module**: **Tools of Investigation**

**Level:** Second Year Master (Didactics)

**Semester**: **3**

**Time Allocation: 22Hrs**

**Material used:** Handouts, Overhead projector, Board

**General Objective**: By the end of this syllabus, learners should be aware of the frequently used methods for data collection.

**Syllabus Contents**

**Introduction**

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**Lesson 2: Methods of primary data collection: Observation**

**Lesson 3: Methods of primary data collection: Survey Method**

**Lesson 4: Methods of primary data collection: Contact Method**

**Lesson 5: Methods of primary data collection: Experimental Method**

**Lesson 6: Integrating technology in data collection**

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**Introduction**

The current syllabus aims at satisfying the needs of Second Year Master students, specialty of Didactics at the department of English. The teacher is meant to supply learners with basic information in the form of hints about data collection methods for their future use. The point is that the teacher is expected to deal with the objectives for master two students of didactics. The process implies the short term objectives with reference to equipping students with the necessary tools of investigation as they are expected to embark on research as final partial fulfillment of a master degree.

As previously mentioned, learners are meant to be ready for the research process they are meant to carry on. Thus, all students are required to choose a tool of investigation and prepare a lesson about it. Then, the students are expected to present this lesson and hold a discussion about it with their classmates. In this case, Teacher’ s role a prompter and a guide is maintained. This change in teacher’s performance is an opportunity for learners to hold control over their learning process. This procedure is a double-edged measure that targets the achievement of two objectives namely; First, electrifying learners’ role as active participants in the classroom environment. The second objective implies enhancing g a reciprocal teaching/learning process by sharing responsibility over knowledge delivery

At this stage, there is another point worth stating which is about learners’ achievement of the coursework. The idea is that they can work individually as learner’s skills and competencies are developed. Then, learners can work collectively for a vain seek of enhancing classroom interactions in the form of students-students’ interactions.

As a conclusion, the present syllabus is an attempt to provide learns with the most possible hints about tools of research they can use for their thesis preparation. The input ca be subjected to further expansion and enrichment.

**NB.** For each lecture, students are expected to present a sample tool of research. Moreover, they are meant to give a possible view about the probable chosen tools for the realization of their future research.

**مقدمة**

**يهدف المنهج الحالي إلى تلبية احتياجات طلاب السنة الثانية ماستر تخصص تعليمية اللغة الإنجليزية. يهدف المعلم إلى تزويد المتعلمين بالمعلومات الأساسية في شكل تلميحات حول طرق جمع البيانات لاستخدامهم في المستقبل. النقطة المهمة هي أنه من المتوقع أن يتعامل المعلم مع أهداف طلاب السنة الثانية ماستر تخصص تعليمية اللغة الإنجليزية. تتضمن العملية أهدافًا قصيرة المدى مع الإشارة إلى تزويد الطلاب بالأدوات اللازمة للبحث حيث من المتوقع أن يشرعوا في البحث باعتباره إنجازًا جزئيًا نهائيًا لدرجة الماستر.**

**كما ذكرنا سابقًا، من المفترض أن يكون المتعلمون مستعدين لعملية البحث التي من المفترض أن يقوموا بها. وبالتالي، يتعين على جميع الطلاب اختيار أداة البحث وإعداد درس عنها. بعد ذلك، يُتوقع من الطلاب تقديم هذا الدرس وإجراء مناقشة حوله مع زملائهم في الفصل. في هذه الحالة، يتم الحفاظ على دور المعلم كموجه ودليل. هذا التغيير في أداء المعلم هو فرصة للمتعلمين للسيطرة على عملية التعلم الخاصة بهم. هذا الإجراء هو مقياس ذو حدين يستهدف تحقيق هدفين هما؛ أولاً، تنشيط دور المتعلمين كمشاركين نشطين في بيئة الفصل الدراسي. الهدف الثاني يعني تعزيز عملية التدريس / التعلم المتبادل من خلال تقاسم المسؤولية عن توصيل المعرفة**

**في هذه المرحلة، هناك نقطة أخرى تستحق الذكر وهي تتعلق بإنجاز المتعلمين للدورات الدراسية. الفكرة هي أنه يمكنهم العمل بشكل فردي حيث يتم تطوير مهارات وكفاءات المتعلم. بعد ذلك، يمكن للمتعلمين العمل بشكل جماعي من أجل السعي الحثيث لتعزيز تفاعلات الفصل الدراسي في شكل التفاعلات بين الطلاب.**

**في الختام، فإن المنهج الحالي هو محاولة لتزويد المتعلمين بأكبر قدر ممكن من التلميحات حول أدوات البحث التي يمكنهم استخدامها لإعداد أطروحتهم. يمكن ان تخضع المدخلات لمزيد من التوسع والإثراء.**

**ملحوظة. من المتوقع أن يقدم الطلاب لكل محاضرة عينة من أدوات البحث. علاوة على ذلك ، فهي تهدف إلى إعطاء وجهة نظر محتملة حول الأدوات المختارة المحتملة لتحقيق أبحاثهم المستقبلية.**

**Lesson 1: Definition of Notions**

**Aim:** By the of this lesson students should be equipped with information about the basic notions.

* 1. **Tool:**

Meant to be the way, or the means by which a process is achieved. I t is the tenet or techniques as apparent for the realization of an activity. When linked to research, it refers to the way data are collected from a certain sample for the investigation of a particular phenomenon.The notion of tool is closely linked to that of method as implying means used to carry on a research process for gaining findings.

**1.2. Investigation**

Investigation or research is about the process of exploring facts about a certain phenomenon. It is the act of collecting information to make the unknown known, or fill a gap in a previous research process.as stated by RAE (2008:114) in**:** *“It is an original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding”.* According to the quote, research is characterized as being: First, original implying the personal touch even if treated before. Second, scientific by employing a clearly defined method comprising the sum of tools to collect data. Third, it is a careful investigation or inquiry searching for collecting new facts about a certain phenomenon.

According to the advanced learners’ dictionary:*“It is a systematized effort to gain new knowledge”.* Systematized refers the implemented scientific method. Effort refers to time and money spent in investigating the phenomenon. Robert Ross defines research as being: “*an investigation recording and analysis of evidence for gaining knowledge*”*.* Recording implies the use of instruments to collect data, then analysing and drawing conclusion.

One can state that research is an original contribution to the existing stock of knowledge for making its advancement. By doing research, one aims at completing an assigned task and the improvement of certain skills namely: First, the understanding of the problem by knowing facts about the occurrence of the phenomenon. Second, improving competence in doing research by acquiring new tenets or ways of things and making sense of the world around us.

* 1. **Methods of Data Collection:**

There are two types of data, which are namely: Primary and secondary data.

**13.1. Primary Data**:

These information represent data collected for the first time. They are the sum of information accumulated by the researcher himself, and most importantly through experiments and research. Thus, they are known as first hand data implying the researcher’s fingerprints in the collected findings.

**1.3.2.Secondary Data**:

This type of data refers to readymade data collected from other sources as books. They belong to other researchers. This sort of data was collected, then analyzed by someone else. Secondary data are in the stock of knowledge previously accumulated through past research process by other researchers.

**Lesson 2: Methods of Primary Data Collection:**

**Aim:** By the of this lesson students should be equipped with information about the basic notions.

There are different methods used for collecting first hand data. So, choice of methods is made according to certain parameters including: nature and size of the sample, environment and spatiotemporal limitations.

2.1. **Observation Method**

This method is widely implemented in behavioral sciences, which require the presence of the researcher. The reason is that it helps investigators see and experiment actions from a closer corner. The process implies collecting vivid actions about the samples subjected to investigation. The implication is that the collection of primary data is carried out by investigator’s own direct observation of relevant people, actionsand situations. But, it can happen that the observer faces constraints to observe the sample. The point is that there are some populations or people who are not easy to observe. Consequently, the researcher faces difficulties concerning access to put his sample under observation as stated in the following statement: “ *At times, the fact that some people are rarely accessible to direct observation creates obstacle for this method to collect data effectively”(C.R. KOTHARI:96 2004).*

**2.2. Types of Observation:**

There are different types of observations. These kinds are classified according to structure or involvement of the researchers, which are as follows:

* + 1. **Structured Observation**:

Structured observation is con sided as a systematic method behavioral data collection within a firmly manipulated atmosphere. In this case the researcher observes interpersonal and overt actions. In a structured observation, the researcher defines behaviors to, be investigated. Then, he works on limiting features of every action and noting the frequency of occurrence for these targeted comportments within the phenomenon under investigation.

This type of observation is meant to be destined for descriptive research, where the researcher fixes all the problematic areas to be investigated. So, all the points under observation are predefined by the researcher. The point is that what is expected to be observed is already preprogrammed, as it is not possible to get out of the planned observation. This means exclusion of any new, or unexpected behaviors that may emerge while observing the phenomenon. The researcher concentrates on what he has already fixed before carrying out the observation process.

* + 1. **Unstructured Observation**

The matter concerns exploratory research, where the researcher gets to the scene without any preparation. The implication is that anything that happens is subjected to investigation. This type of observation is known by its flexibility to embrace exploring everything going on while observing, as it gives much room for the investigation of the uncontrolled variables. The process leads to the disorganization in the accumulated data. On the one hand, the process needs considerable skills from the part of the observer to hold control over the observed item. On the other hand, data need to be filtered.

* + 1. **Participant Observation**

As a [qualitative research](https://www.questionpro.com/blog/qualitative-research-methods/) method, participant observation enables the researcher to investigate a group by taking part in its activities.

The interactional process between the researcher and the participants is regarded as part of the fieldwork. The point is that it deals with the relationship dynamics like differences in status and power and social class. Participant observation is concerned with both intra and interpersonal actions. Consequently, sometimes the researcher explores places that are totally contradicting his construct. This unfamiliarity, can bring the researcher to set limitations for his research because of different ethical codes between him and the group being studied. Participant-observation is characterized by the use of technology for documenting observations.

### **Types of participant Observation**

### There are different types of participant observation. The followings are the most frequently used ones in research. They are classified according to the role of the researcher.

### **Passive-participant-observation** In this type of observation, the researcher observes the sample without influencing their practices as he is meant to avoid any involvement in the ongoing of the situation. He just observes people’s actions and communications publically. Observation can be a face-to-face action like in hotels, restaurants and other public spaces, or a distant one on the Internet through innovative methods such as *netnography*. **Active participant observation**

conversing with the observed groups and participating in their daily performances is part of the investigation process. At this stage, it is worth stating that the degree of the investigators’ commitment to the investigated groups differs. Some researchers get satisfied with their interactions in the form of interviews, whereas others are fully involved in all aspects of their subjects’ vivid experiences.

**Covert and overt**

In a covert participant observation, investigators hide their identity as researchers they keep themselves unknown for their subjects. But, in open participant observation they identify themselves as researchers and they are known by the group they investigate. But, researchers are not meant to reveal everything about their research process.

* **Covert and active**

A Covert and active participant observation is so advantageous. The point is that the researcher can have an easy access to a group which they would not have the opportunity to deal with. In this case, researchers can have an impact on the sample practices by their presence. But, the group under investigation may behave naturally without changing their behaviors as a response to the researcher’s active participation. The reason is that members of the group ignorance of being observed.

* **Covert and passive**

Within a passive participant observation, investigators are not expected to have an impact on their sample’s actions. The reason is that the group under observation ignores being observed. Most importantly, the researchers’ engagement with the observed subjects is of no presence during the observation process

**●Open and active**

In this type of participant observation, we notice the researcher’s active involvement in the ongoing of his subjects’ practices observational process. He also influences the group behaviors as he is engaged within the occurrence of these actions. The implication is that the researcher is within an active interactional process with his subjects. The situation can cause a change in the group’s actions because of their awareness of being subjected to an observation process, and then the reliability of the collected data is strongly questioned.

* **Open and passive**

This kind of observation is characterized by the researcher’s active interactional process with the sample under investigation. The process may imply a prompting process for more behaviours occurrence. The point is that researchers see their presence as passive on the behavior of the groups they study through their interactions with them**.**

**4. Non-participant observation**

As its name indicates within a non-participant observation, a researcher takes a more distant role than in a participant one. The point is that there is no interaction between the researcher and the research subjects. The idea is that the research sample complies: customers, employees, or other stakeholders, who are being observed in situations which are closely linked with the research question as far as showing a digital or physical service or product is concerned. A non-participant observation is implemented for avoidance of researcher’s bias as well as revealing differences between what people say and their actions.

At this stage, it is worth stating that a non-participant observation can be overt or covert. Overt means that research subjects know that researchers are present, but they do not interact with anyone and an overt non-participant observation can also be done. The action takes place when investigators sit in on distant meetings or workshops on site, but do not actively participate. Investigators gather data by observing behaviors without any active interactions with the participants. For example, when a researcher joins employees for meetings without interfering at all. It happens that an overt non-participant observation can be biased through the observer influence, when people change or seek to better their behavior just because they know that they are under observation.

Covert non-participant observation refers to observing research subjects without their awareness that they are observed. Sometimes researchers pretend to be customers. So, Covert non-participant observation minimizes the risk of people being influenced by the researcher’s presence. During non-participant observations, it is important to observe not only what people are doing by interpreting their body language, but also what people are not doing (perhaps ignoring instructions or refraining from asking for help or assistance). Depending on the country and organization you’re working with, do not forget to check what kind of legal, ethical, and confidentiality agreements you need in advance, Then, which forms of data you are allowed to collect, particularly in covert non-participant observations due to some sensational issues you may encounter.

**5. Disguised observation**

This kind of observation is characterized by learners’ ignorance of being observed. The point is that the researcher’s identity as an observer is hidden aiming at providing more freedom of the population’s actions. Subjects of the observation are meant to be free from any constraint. They are expected to move and behave freely in a natural way so that the researcher can accumulate reliable data concerning the actions under investigation in terms of actions and reasons standing behind their occurrence. The respondents are unaware that they are being observed. Disguise may be accomplished by using one-way mirrors, hidden cameras, or inconspicuous mechanical devices. Observers may be disguised as shoppers or sales clerks.

**Lesson 3: Methods of Primary Data Collection: Survey Method**

**Aim:** By the of this lesson students should be of the survey method in terms of its structures and types.

**2. Survey Method**

This method is used for gathering descriptive information namely about a certain population or phenomenon being closer to it and detecting all what is related to the worry. A survey research maybe conducted in the form of two patterns;

First, directly by asking direct questions straight about the behaviours without turning around the point to be investigated. This process implies avoiding any confusion or false interpretation of the question. There is no room for misunderstanding of the question or deviating from its exact meaning. This technique is meant to gather precise and concise information about what we are doing research without any bias or subjectivity. So, there is no room for any confusion for the researcher or the respondent in either asking, or answering a given question.

The second pattern implies presence of an indirect interrogation or questions. An example can be about personal or sensational issues as that of salary. The idea is that some people prefer not to reveal their wages as they see it personal. So, the researcher should be clever and ask an indirect insufficiency of the salary to satisfy daily needs or other life necessities, or highlighting a job that is of the respondents’ rank as being not well paid. This technique is divided into two types.

**Structured Surveys:**

They comply formal lists of questions which have already been designed and organized according to time allocation and problematic areas under investigation. The researcher is meant to fix points to be highlighted when facing the respondent. The latter is meant to be guided by the researcher throughout responding to the questions raised in the survey. Both interlocutors are meant to be subjected to the set of prepared questions. No probing is expected to take place while conducting a survey, as there is a kind of high fidelity to what has been designed before. The point is highlighted in the following statement: “ …*the interviewer in a structured interview follows a rigid procedure laid down, asking questions in a form and order prescribed*”. (R.C. KOTTHARI, 98:2004). The process implies the exclusion and denial of any change. The idea is that any new intervening variables should be totally ignored. And focus in on the predetermined point to be investigated.

**Unstructured Surveys:**

At this stage,the interviewer probes respondents and guides the interviewaccording to their answers. The implication is that the researcher uses the respondent’s answer (affirmative) as a basic information to be reformulated into an interrogative pattern. Within this kind of surveys, change is a major characteristic. Unstructured surveys are characterized by their flexibility to embrace the occurrence of new unpredictable actions, variables or uncovered problematic areas in the survey that may affect its ongoing.

**Lesson 4: Methods of Primary Data Collection: Contact Methods**

**Aim:** Learners are meant to be fully aware of the techniques used when talking about the contact method.

This method complies the establishment of a rapport between the interlocutors namely; the interviewer by asking questions, and the interviewee as a respondent by answering the questions. Information may be collected by:

**3. Telephone Interviewing:**

Telephone interviewing is characterized as being a quick method that helps the researcher save time. Moreover, it is seen as a more flexible method. The point is that the interviewer can explain questions, which are not understood by the respondent and facilitate difficulties he faces when answering questions. Within a telephone interviewing and depending on respondent’s answer they can skip some questions and probe more on others.This technique is of frequent use because it allows greater sample control and the response rate tends to be higher than mail and in an immediate manner.

Despite the previously listed advantages of telephone interviewing, it has some drawbacks.

First the cost per respondent tends to be higher, as it demands more financial support for credits to contact the respondents. Then, it happens that the interviewer faces obstacle as some people may not want to discuss personal questions, as a consequence the communication may end earlier than it should. Apart from that, the interviewer’s manner of speaking may affect the respondent’s answers. The idea is that shouting on the interviewee or showing a kind of carelessness can lead to his withdrawal from the phone conversation. Moreover, different interviewers may interpret and record response in a variety of ways depending on their personal conception. Another drawback is that the interviewer is under time pressure, therefore data may be entered without actually interviewing. Then, there will be no reliability of information.

**4. Personal Interviewing:**

Personal interviewing is characterized by its flexibility as being unstructured. This feature is well interpreted in the following statement: “*the unstructured interviews are characterized by a flexibility of approach to questioning. Unstructured interviews do not follow a system of pre-determined questions and standardised techniques of recording information.”* (R.C. KOTHARI.2004:98). The point is that it gives room for probing and clarifying ambiguous questions. The interviewer can ban all sorts of confusion and misinterpretation while conducting the interview. It is used for collecting large amounts of information in a short time. But, it demands trained interviewers so that they can hold the respondent’s attention and make the conversation go on smoothly.

As previously stated, the interviewer guides interviews and explores issues. He can also probe as the situation requires. Moreover, personal interview used in any type of questionnaire to be conducted. In fact, personal interviewing is fairly quickly, as it enables the researcher to save time. Another feature is that interviewers show actual products, advertisements and packages as a subject of research. It is also characterized by observing and record reactions and behaviours of respondents as part of their responses, which are part of data collection. Personal interviewing takes two forms:

**Intercept interviewing:**

This type of interviews is basically widely used in research related to the field of tourism. The reason is that it allows researchers to reach known people easily and in a very short period of time. On top of that, it is known as being the only method for reaching anonymous people, or those beyond the researcher reach. Another feature is that it involves talking to people at homes, offices, street, or shopping malls. However, in order to conduct this interview successfully, the interviewer is somehow obliged to gain the interviewee’s cooperation and understanding. When speaking about time involved, one should state that it may range from short to long depending on the length of the conducted survey and the sum of problematic areas raised to be questioned.

Concerning efforts specially the financial ones, compensation may be offered for the researcher, since he may spend a considerable sum of money on doing his research and more specifically data collection. The use of *judgmental sampling i.e. interviewer guidelines as to whom* to “intercept” is frequently implemented, for example: 45% under age 30 and 55% over age 50.

Nevertheless, it is worth stating that intercept interviewing has some shortcoming such as: First, possibility for error and bias. The point is that the interviewer cannot be able to correctly judge results obtained from asking factual questions like: age, race, gender and other possible variables. Another detriment within intercept interviewing is that the interviewer can be in an uncomfortable environment, especially when it concerns issues related to ethnic or age groups as sensational topics.

**Focus Group Interviewing:**

In fact, this technique helps the researcher to understand people’s thoughts and feelings by drilling deeper in their constructs, and working on knowing better their attitudes towards issues under \*investigation. It is conducted with six to ten people for few hours (product, service, organization. But, to get good results and reliable data focus group interviewing is conditioned to be held in a relaxed environment far from any distraction or intervening factors that may affect the ongoing of the process. As a matter of fact, focus group interviewing requires much objectivity and control over the subject, understanding of group and consumer behaviour. It is worth stating that focus group interviewing is conducted through the use of apparatus or devices connected by the internet. They are considered as an effective virtual distant technique complement to physical, or personal interviewing. It is a melting pot for the use of the written, and audio-visual means for data collection.

When conducting a focus group interview, the interviewer is recommended to starts with a general question moving to more specific issues in order to gain the participants’ comfortable cooperation. The point is that the atmosphere should be encouraging and open implying easy discussions for eliciting true feelings and thoughts of participants about a certain phenomenon. It also enables the interviewer in the determination ofthe subject areas on which questions are asked in the form of a large-scale, structured-direct interview. Therefore, comments are usually recorded or videotaped, and then studied later to understand consumer’ buying process.

Focus group interviewing is known as a more suitable technique for gathering data about the field of tourism by interacting with sources namely; managers of hotels, restaurants due to the easy access to customers. This investigation method is characterized by guests appreciation of this recognition and manager gets valuable information about their business for more amendments and customers’ attraction, as the case by holding discussion meetings over lunch or dinner. It is an easy and quick way of collecting both (qualitative and quantitative data.

Moreover, focus group interviewing is of no space demarcation. The idea is that it provides facile access to large groups geographically. It also contributes effectively in improving the accuracy of data entry by reducing omissions and duplicating entries. But, it is also known by its cost as being more expensive than telephone survey despite its limited sampling, since it is implemented with a small sample size that can be controlled. Focus group interviewing is also characterized by the interviewer’s bias, which affects the reliability of data. Another defect of focus group interviewing is its restriction of use by only participants who have access to the internet as the sole source of distant interactions between the researcher and the participants without forgetting the presence of the Potential lack of security throughout the process.

**Lesson 5: Methods of Primary Data Collection: Experimental Methods**

**Aim:** Learners are meant to be fully aware of the experimental method and be prepared of its use if even required.

The experimental method is basically related to the empirical research. It is characterized by being based on cause/effect method as a basic data-based research. The implication that conclusions are tested and subjected to verifying through observation or experiment by providing conditions for the renaissance of a given action. It aims at developing recipes for using products. It is also characterized by the experimenter’s control over the variables throughout the ongoing of the phenomenon to be investigated. The reason is that the research is expected to go about providing factors for stimulating the production of certain desired information about the action. As an empirical phase, the researcher formulates certain hypotheses as possibleresults to be tested. After that, the investigators Then accumulates information to confirm or disprove is hypotheses.

It is known that the experimental research aims at providing a systematic and logical method for answering the already raised question. Basing its experiments on more logical conditions, the empirical research intends to validate the sum of hypotheses raised throughout observing the happening of the action and recreating it continuously by providing its causes. Variables intervening in the renaissance of the phenomenon are meant to be carefully controlled or manipulated. In fact, the highly deliberate manipulation is a basis for the experimental method. In an experiment, the researcher aims at the measurement of any effect caused by the experiment which he conducts intentionally.

At this stage, it is worth stating that practice is a domineering aspect on all phases namely; observation experiment and or testing. This step ends in giving no room or space for doubt, since the results are tested again and again for setting rules, which are proved scientifically in laboratories. Then, they are set as criteria for the occurrence of the action in a natural, or artificial manner any time it is required.

1, **The Questionnaire:**

Questionnaires are regarded as the most popular tools for data collection because of their easy design and piloting. Most investigators make use of questionnaires as they can be handed quickly and easily to respondents.

**Definition of questionnaires**

A brief clear definition to a questionnaire was given by Brown when stating that:

"*Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers.* "(Brown, 2001: 6).

From the above quote, one can deduce that a questionnaire is a tool that takes a written form and handed to respondents. It comprises two sorts of sentences; First it can be a group of affirmative sentences to be confirmed or infirmed by respondents. The second form is a set of interrogative sentences, which need to be answered by the participants as sources of data in a short time.

So, one can say that the use of questionnaires as a tool for collecting data is of a paramount importance. The point is that it is very helpful to reach a big number of respondents, and consequently collect a large amount of data in a short time. But it is highly recommended to back up semi-structured interviews with questionnaires for more reliability of the collected data. The idea is requested by (vein, Gillham, 2000:82), who urges survey researchers to conduct semi-structured interviews to accompany questionnaire results for deeper understanding and avoidance of confusion about what the numerical responses actually mean. Interview data can serve for both illustrating and illuminating questionnaire results in order to "bring your research study to life"

In most cases a questionnaire can include three types of questions which are as follows: First, factual questions known also as ('classification' questions or 'subject

descriptors'. These questions are meant to figure out who the respondents are. They typically search about demographic characteristics like: age, gender, and other variables, marital and socioeconomic status, level of education, occupation, as well as any other background information *(Ibid.:08)*

The second type concerns behavioral questions, which are used for collecting data about what the respondents are doing or have done in the past as past experiences. They are usually used to collect information about people's life-styles, behaviours, habits, and personal history(Ibid:08). Thirdly, we have attitudinal questions that are specifically used to know about people’s thoughts. They are basically concerned with the respondents’’ attitudes, interests, beliefs, and opinions. (Ibid:08).

1-**Mail Questionnaires:**

This type of questionnaire is known as a sort of distant communication. I tis mainly used for collecting large amounts of information at a low cost. They are characterized by the collection of more honest answers to personal questions, as the respondents feel totally free to supply information about sensational issues. Mail questionnaires are also known by their objectivity of the collected data as gathered from unbiased respondents, who are involved in the research sample. As a main feature of this research tool, we count that it is not subjected to time or place limitations. The researcher faces no spatio-temporal demarcations when using the mail questionnaire.

Nevertheless, what has been previously stated about questionnaires is not an absolute truth. The point is that questionnaires are not designed to completely avoid bias and half truths about the real ongoing of a certain phenomenon or action, but they help reduce confusion and subjectivity in data reporting. This characteristic is well-highlighted in the following statement: "*Questionnaires can be designed to minimize, but not eliminate, dishonest, and careless reporting. "(*Aiken, 1997:58). So, minimizing false misconception and judgements about the subject under investigation is the main concern of questionnaires as a tool for investigating a given issue. Another feature of questionnaires is that they can be delivered quickly and easily. Consequently, questionnaires can involve ambiguity and confusion as stated in this statements: *"Questionnaires are so easy to do quickly and badly that, in a way, they invite carelessness." (Gillham, 2000: 11).*

Moreover, email questionnaires are meant to lack flexibility as there is no room for clarifying or simplifying the questions when required by the respondents. The problem is due to the nature of the interaction as a distant one. Once the questionnaire is delivered, the researcher will only wait for the response, as the case for the respondent who tries to answer questions according to his capacities and interpretation. Thus, false interpretations and misunderstanding of the questions can take place, then leading to falsifying data, or providing half-truths. Another shortcoming of email questionnaires is that it is time consuming as the respondents would consult their email frequently.

Low response rate is another drawback for this research tool, as respondents would neglect answering the questionnaire or spend much time in doing so. Apart from this, the researcher holds no control over who answers. The case can lead to a communicative failure, as the respondents would not care about answering the questionnaire and would completely deny it. Also the respondents are anonymous as the researcher would not really know who is answering the questionnaire. The idea is that it may happen that the respondents would ask other persons to answer the questionnaire for them for any reason.

Basically, a questionnaire consists of a set of questions presented to a respondent for answers. The implication is that the respondents are going to read questions, interpret what is expected from them then write down answers themselves. It is worth stating that diversity to ask questions makes questionnaires flexible and possible for reformulating in case of confusion or difficulty to understand. That is why questionnaire are designed, and then tested carefully before being handed used, or on a large scale.

At this stage, one can state that there are three basic types of questionnaires or questions:

Closed-ended, open-ended and combination of both.

**1.Closed –ended Questionnaire:**

Closed-ended questions need short answers, or require the choice among a set of prewritten ones. For example, we can have multiple choice, or scale questions, which imply analysis of quantitative statistics (numbers) as research findings.

**2. Open-ended Questionnaire:**

This type of questions requires long answers, which allows respondents to answer with their own style. here are no boxes to cross or tick in, but instead leaves a blank section for writing in a response. Most of the time, the answer is a process of drilling about attitudes and description of an action, or to find out people’s thoughts about something or somebody. Consequently, data analysis is more complex as it is open for different interpretation and implications.

**3. Combination of both:**

Using open-ended questions is not of all researchers’ agreement as the close-ended ones can be used within the questionnaire. The idea is made clear in the following statement: *“The desire to use open-ended questions appears to be almost universal in novice researchers, but is usually rapidly extinguished with experience.”* Robson, 1993: 243).The process takes place when the researcher aims at finding the number of persons do something. The point is that most questionnaires start with a series of closed–ended questions and end in a section of open-ended ones for more detailed response. This sequence of questions can help the researcher gain the respondents’ cooperation.

**Designing a questionnaire:**

There are certain steps and guidelines to be taken into consideration when designing a valuable attention attracting questionnaire. The following step aims at providing us with more details and hints about how to design a good questionnaire, with less shortcomings and more understandable by the respondents.

**Writing a short questionnaire**

When designing a questionnaire, one should take into consideration its. The designer is required to shorten it as possible as he can. The process makes of the questionnaire an inviting one and easier to answer, as the respondents feels he is going to fill it with less efforts and in a short time.

When questions are short, the respondents answer them directly without difficulty and confusion. So, the researcher is required to fire the target directly without turning around, as his questions will sound strong and more expressive. This idea is undoubtedly emphasized in the following statement:"... *short questions are good questions*. "(Brown, 2001:45). So for questions the shorter they are the better they are understood with less confusion from the part of the respondents. The point is that respondents feel comfortably answering, when they are handed a questionnaire including short questions which are understandable and answered with less efforts. The following quote gives more insights about problems when designing a questionnaire:

"Perhaps the most common mistake of the beginner in questionnaire construction is to crowd questions together in the hope of making the questionnaire look short.... While length is important, the respondent's perception of the difficulty of the task is even more important on self-administered questionnaires. A less crowded questionnaire with substantial white space looks easier and generally results in higher cooperation and fewer errors. "(Sudman & Bradburn, 1983, p. 244)

In fact, the length of questionnaires is very important as it can avoid crowdedness, especially about when it is about the respondents’ willingness to answer the questions. On top of that, it gives room f

or accuracy as it helps the designer and the respondents avoid errors.

**Using a simplified style.**

Simplifying words when formulating questions is of a paramount importance. The idea is that writing questions that are easily understood by everyone without false interpretations. One is required not to give room for diversity of questions interpretation or different understandings as they may come out with contradictory results.

**Organization of questions**

For the respondents’ cooperation attraction, the researcher is highly recommended to start his questionnaire with the most interesting questions. Thereby attracting the respondents’ attention.So, starting the survey with a set of questions that are likely to sound more interesting and attract the subjects' attention is very necessary in the construction of a questionnaire. Then, questions that may imply certain probable difficulties are expected to be left to the end of the survey.

Another trick is avoiding leading questions, which may seem as if the respondents’ choice is swept away. The researcher is required for giving the subjects freedom for answer not making them choose what he prefers. This action can take place when the respondents are pushed to make a previously given choice that is made by the researcher himself. The issue implies offering no room for the respondents’ preference but follow what has already been determined for them.

Another problem to get rid of is double negation that should be avoided for removal of confusion and misunderstanding of the question and its real meaning. Simple negative sentences are meant to be easily and clearly figured out without doubt. Moreover, even the list of choices as answers for a question should be short for the respondent to answer quickly.

Another item worth taking into consideration is the conceptual apparatus. At this stage, the researcher is meant to make use of familiar and frequent concepts and avoid the difficult ones. The idea is that writing a simplified form or version of a questionnaire helps the respondents save time and effort in answering the questions without appealing to dictionaries or other documents. Some questions involve concepts that are difficult for many people to understand. The matter concerns also recall questions, which are meant to target more recent events rather than those buried in history because the humen memory cannot retrieve very old experiences.

Applying a funnel technique in ordering the questions can be of good results. The point is that it is so efficient to ask a general question, and then move to ask more specific questions. Firing universalities at first in order to gain the respondents cooperation is of a high importance then getting to more specific things.

Before sending a survey to a target audience, piloting it is of a paramount importance as it can be sent to a small number of people as a test. After completing the survey, brainstorming can take place to figure out possible encountered problems while answering any questions. It would help if more explanation of the question is required by respondents and whether it is valid to the questionnaire or not.

It is worth stating that avoidance of using negative questions it highly recommended because they imply confusion for respondents, then they would provide false information or half-truths. “*Prestige Bias”* is another defect that should be completely avoided as it is leads to falsifying facts. Using indirect questions about personal or sensitive matters can lead respondents to flee from the fact by relating their answers to other people stead of giving information about themselves.

When using closed- ended questions, one should make sure that all the problematic areas are covered by ensuring that all probable responses are covered so that respondents may not be constrained in answering the set questions. This point leads us to recall what we stated previously about the length of *questions as the researcher is highly recommended to Keep the questionnaire as short as possible. The idea is requested in the following statement;” The temptation is always to cover too much, to ask everything that might turn out to be interesting. This must be resisted. "* (Moser & Kalton, 1971: 309). So, one is required to choose the most essential issues by avoiding asking questions about so many points. The implication is that the trying to questions so many things at once can cause the questionnaire to be boring and crowded without forgetting its exhaustiveness.

* -Ask easy quetionsess which respondents will enjoy answering
* - If combined questionnaire, keep open ended Qs for the end.
* -Make Qs as interesting as possible and easy to follow by varying type and length
* - Group the qs. Into specific topic as this it makes it easier to understand
* - Layout and spacing is important as cluttered Questionnaire is less likely to be answered.
* **Piloting the Questionnaire**

Furthermore, alternative versions of questions must be rigorously piloted because in

the absence of hard and fast theoretical rules, "tests of practicability

must play a crucial role in questionnaire construction" (Moser & Kalton, 1971, p. 350)

* Once you have constructed your questionnaire, you must pilot it.
* This means that you must test it out to see if it is obtaining the result you require.
* This is done by asking people to read it through and see if there are any ambiguities
* which you have not noticed.
* They should also be asked to comment about the length, structure and wording of the
* questionnaire
* Alter the questions accordingly
* **COLLECTING DATA :**
* Having formulated the research problem,, developed a study design, constructed a research instrument and selected a sample, you then collect the data from which you will draw inferences and conclusions for your study. Depending upon your plans, you
* might commence interviews, mail out a questionnaire, conduct experiments and/or
* make observations.
* Collecting data through any of the methods may involve some ethical issues
* in relation to the participants and the researcher :
* - Those from whom information is collected or those who are studied by a
* researcher become *participants of the study.*
* - Anyone who collects information for a specific purpose, adhering to the
* accepted code of conduct, is a *researcher*

1. Integrating Technology into Data Collection :

There are illimited uses of information technology in data-collection. This includes different devices and machinery lik : computers, smart phones, tablets, ipads,…etc. And different websites, apps and softwares. They can help in designing questionnaires and surveys, conducting interviews, making observation and finally, analysing and reporting the results. They are more useful for collecting quantitaive data.

1. Examples of Using Information Techonology in Data Collection.

Questionnaires and Surveys Online sureveys are an effective way to engage the participants and get feedback from them. There are many online surveys creators and apps some are free while others are paid because they offer more options. Here are the most common and used ones :

2.1.1 Survey Monkey. It is the most known name in the realm of online surveys. It is well designed and easy to use; the **free version** offers :

* 10 questions
* 100 respondents
* 15 question types
* Light themes and templates. The **paid version** start at $26/month, with more questions, more respondents and other features.

2.1.2 Typeform. Typeform’s interface is elegant and it’s style is attractive. For example ; if a user give his name in the begining, you can call them by his name in the next question. The **free version** has a lot to offer :

* Unlimited questions.
* Unlimited answers
* Data export.
* Basic reporting. The **paid version**  for $25/month

2.1.3 Google form. It is another feature in the cap of the wonder that is google. It is **100% free. These are its features :**

* Unlimited surveys.
* Unlimited respondents.
* Survey answers and data are automatically collected in Google Spreadsheets
* Add images or videos.
* Skip logic and page branching.
* Imbed survey into emails or website.

These and there are more others, but Google Forms are the most recommended.

**2-2 Observation**

2.2.1 video-based observation. Video recording has been under-utilised as a data collection tool because of confidentiality and privacy issues. However, it has many benefits as opposed to traditional observations, and recent studies using video recording methods have introduced new research areas and approaches.

**2-3 Interview**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Text | Multichannel |
| Asynchronous  (Any time) | **E-mail :**  Send and receive questions and answers.  **Forum :**  Post and respond to questions and answers I a secure online threaded discussion area.  **Weblog(blog)**  Personal online journal where entries are posted chronologically. Microblogs allow for very few entries.  **Wiki:**  Multiple authors add, remove, and edit questions and responses about the research phenomenon | **Podcast or Vodcast:**  Ask and answer questions by sending audio or video files.  **Video** :  Post, view, and respond to video clips.  **Visual Exchange :**  Post, view, and respond to photographs, charts and diagrams, and visual maps. |
| Synchronous  (Real time ) | **Text Message:**  Send and receive questions on mobile phone or handheld device.  **Instant Message or Chat:**  Post and respond to questions and answers on computer through a secure online website. | **Voice-Over Internet Protocol (VOIP):**  Ask and answer questions using live audio. **Videoconferencing or Video Call:**  See interview participants while conversing. |

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