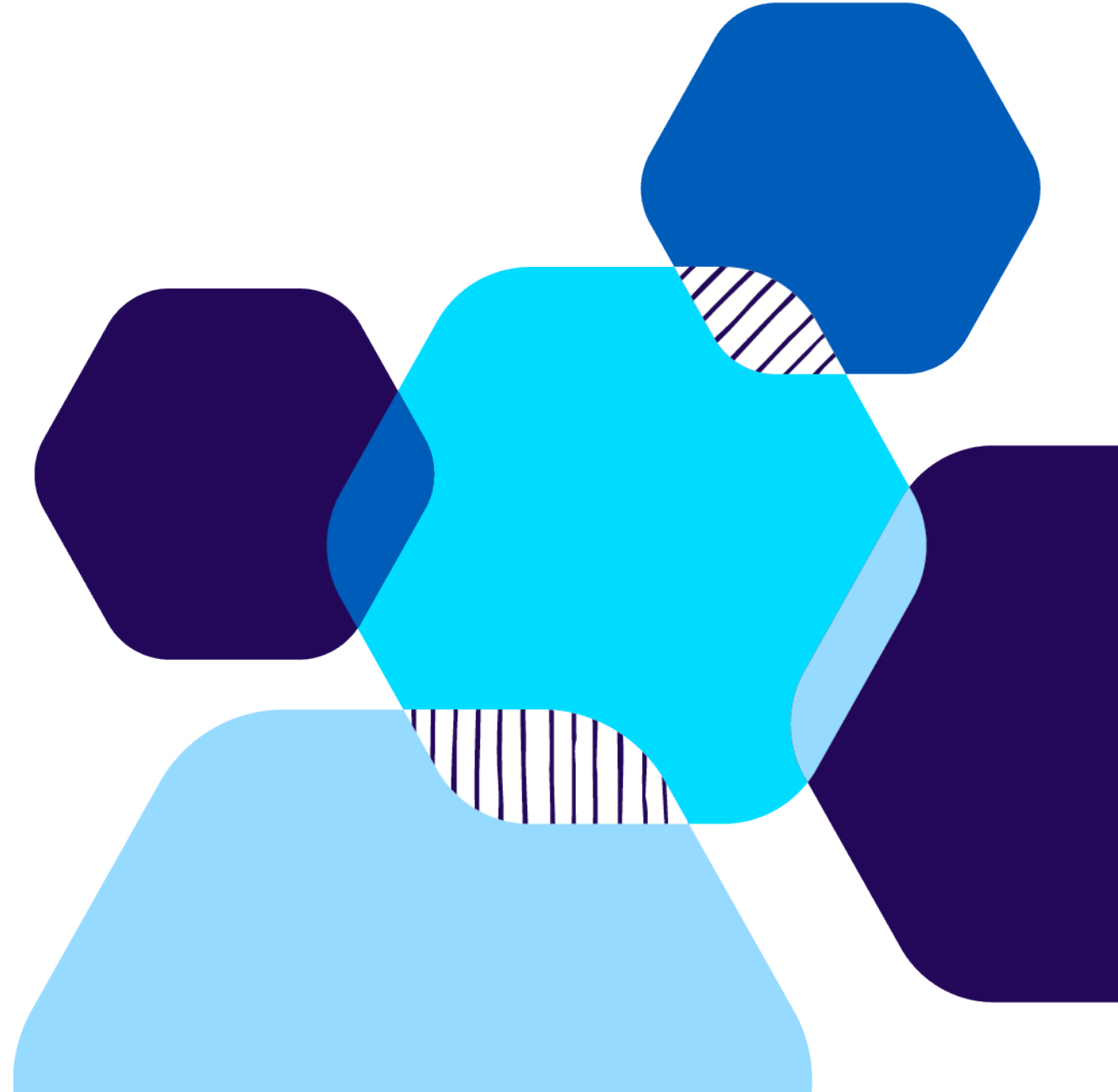


English Connects Action research

Exploring Gender in the African Classroom

showcase event

28 October 2023



Background to the project and overview

The three workshops will be led by Dr Gary Motteram, the English Connects Online Engagement Lead in Sub-Saharan Africa. The group of panellists includes 15 teachers/researchers and mentors.

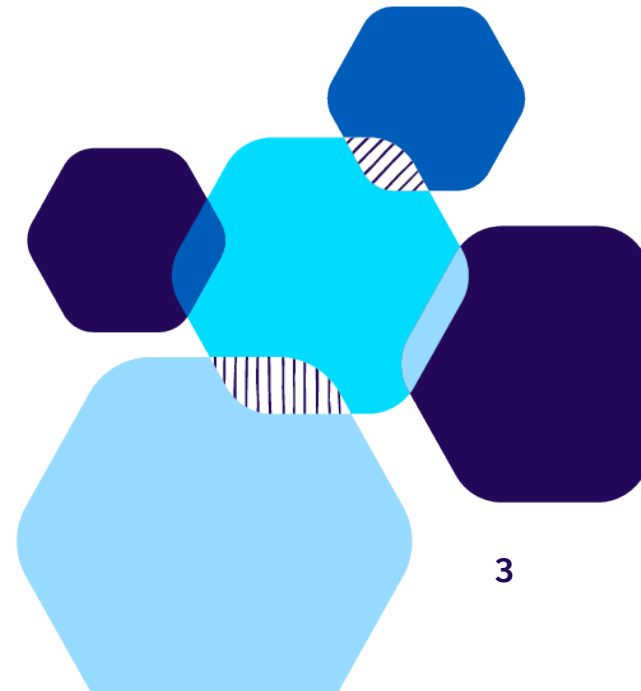


Background to the project and overview

The English Connects Action Research project started in 2021 to support and mentor English teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa to carry out their own action research projects. In 2022, a third cohort of teachers from Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Sudan reflected and proposed solutions for their classroom issues through exploratory action research.

Today marks the official launch of their publication titled **Exploring Gender in the African Classroom**, which contains the valuable insights they collected.

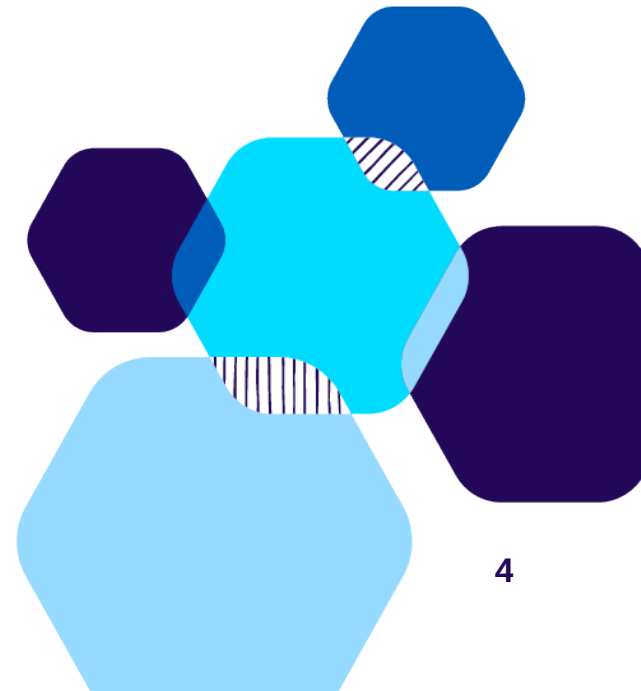
<https://africa.teachingenglish.org.uk/education/publications/exploring-gender>



Background to the project and overview

The researchers were trained by Paula Rebolledo and mentored by Mayyada Assadig Mohammed (Sudan), Sarah Balogun (Nigeria) and Aliyi Hassen (Ethiopia), who are authors of the previous Classroom Action Research publication **Learning from the African Classroom.**

<https://africa.teachingenglish.org.uk/education/publications/learning-from-the-african-classroom>



Exploring Gender in the African Classroom' showcase

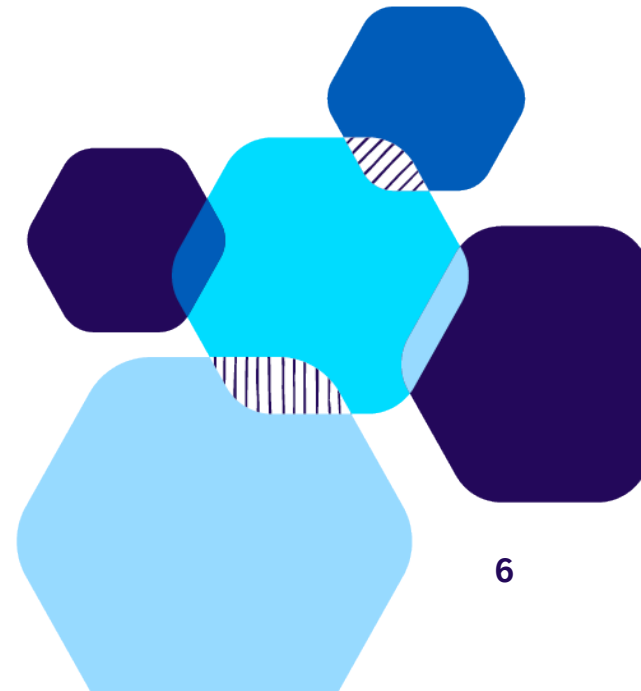
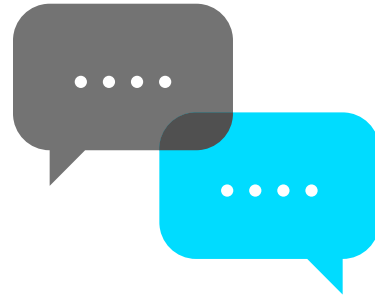
Worshop 1:
Introducing Classroom
Action Research



What do we understand by the term ‘research’?

Olatunde Ojerinde

Please put your views in the chat for the question above



What do we understand by the term ‘research’?

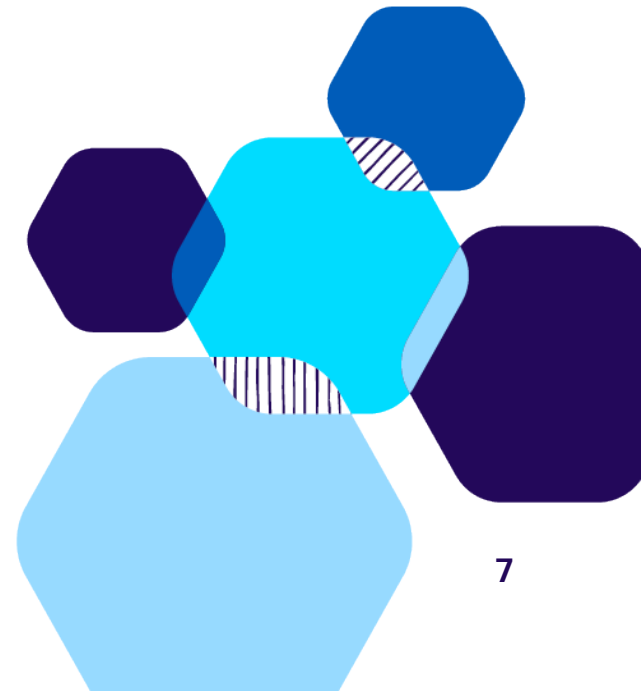
Olatunde Ojerinde

Starting point: Think about things you do every day: asking and taking little steps just to find out more about something already known, or to know about something previously unknown.

Research takes this further and looks for answers to questions in a systematic way.

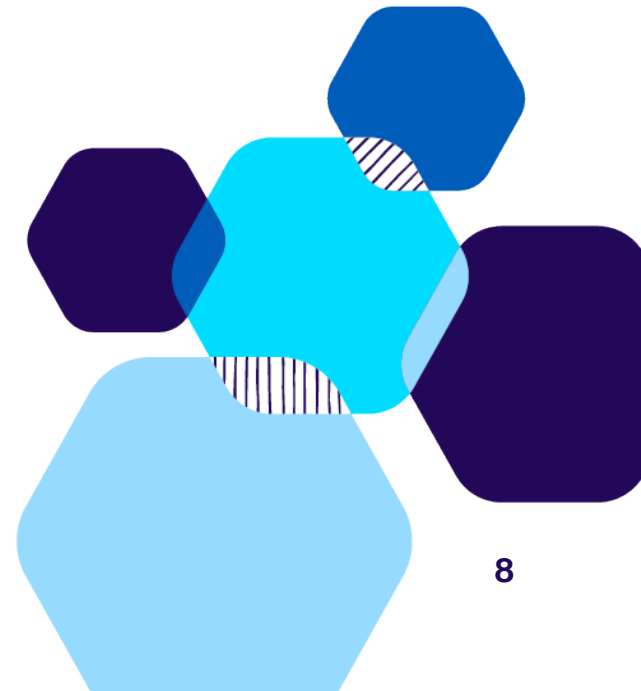
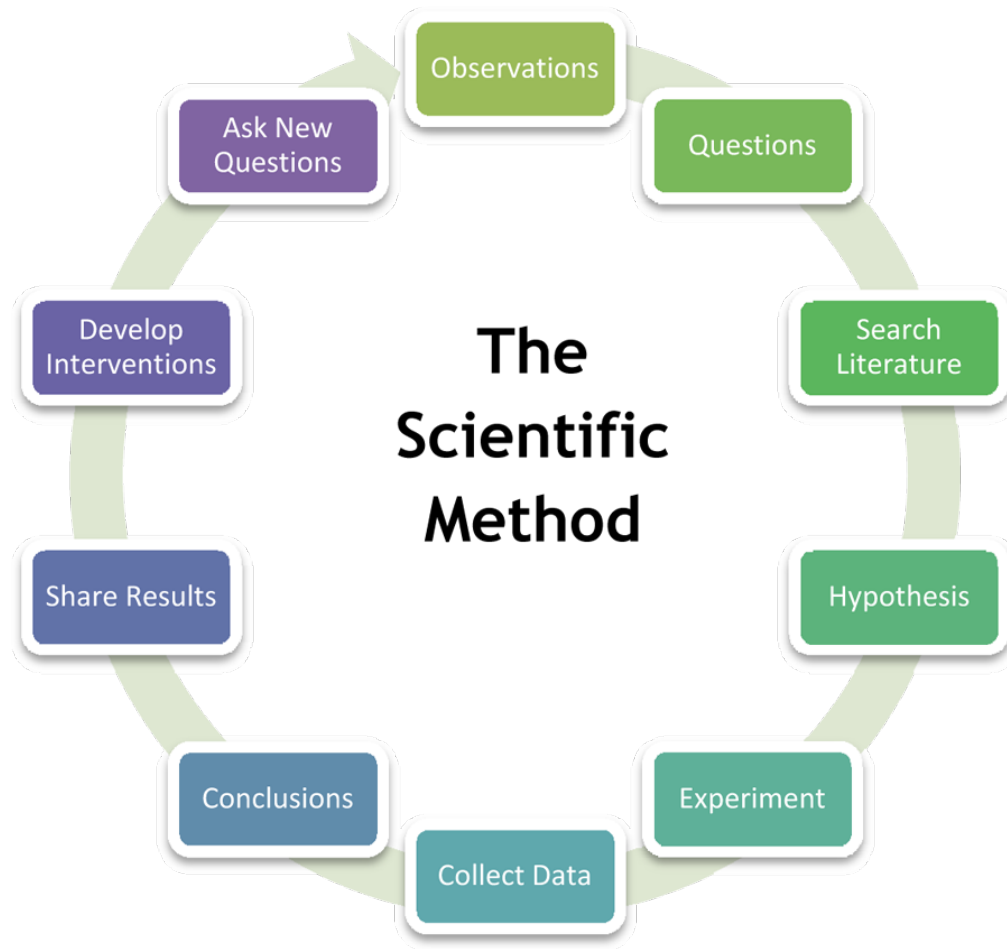
... a process of discovering new information.

‘Research is different [from] other forms of discovering knowledge (like reading a book) because it uses a systematic process called the Scientific Method.’ [*The Office of Research Integrity*](#)



What do we understand by the term 'research'?

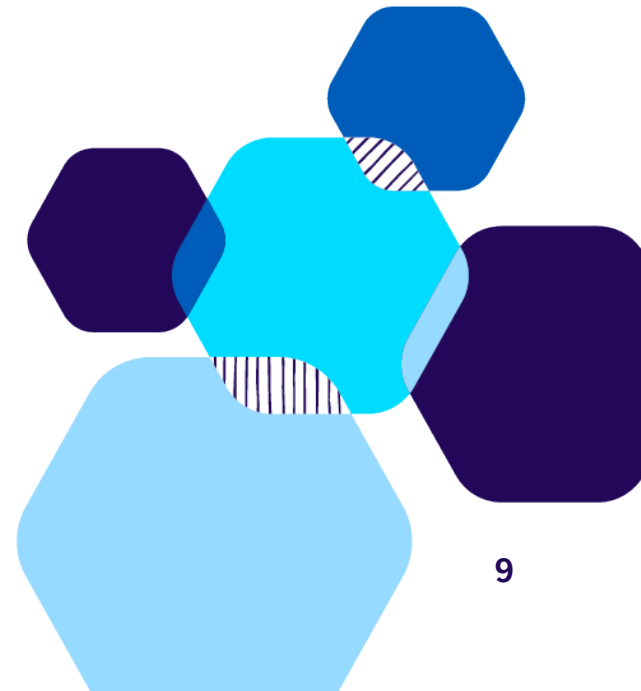
Olatunde Ojerinde



What is 'reflective practice'?

Kikelomo Adeniyi

Please put your views in the chat for the question above



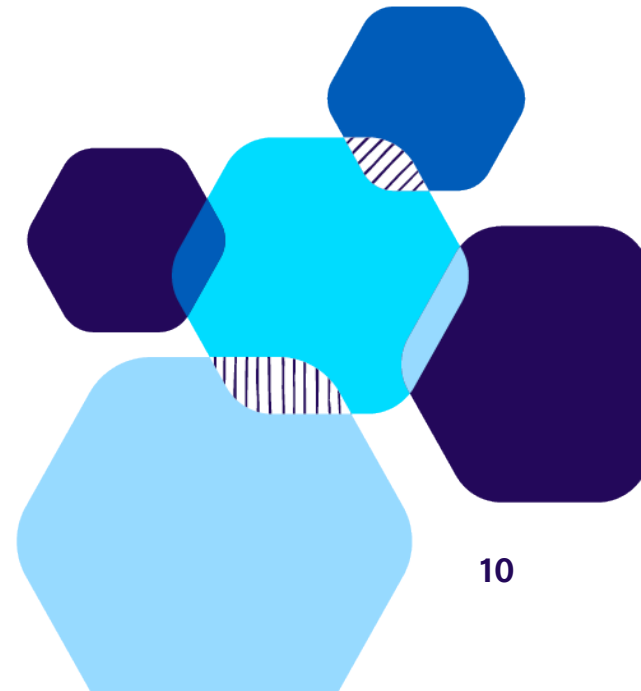
What is 'reflective practice'?

Kikelomo Adeniyi

Reflective practice refers to the process of critically analysing and evaluating one's own actions and experiences to gain insights and make improvements in the research process.

It involves systematically reflecting on and learning from one's actions and experiences during the research process.

Reflective practice in action research involves three main steps:



What is 'reflective practice'?

Kikelomo Adeniyi

Donald Schon talks about:

Knowing-in-action

Being able to understand and describe what we know we do in a particular situation

Reflection-in-action

Ability to think about what we are doing while we are doing it and being capable of changing as we do something

Reflection-on-action

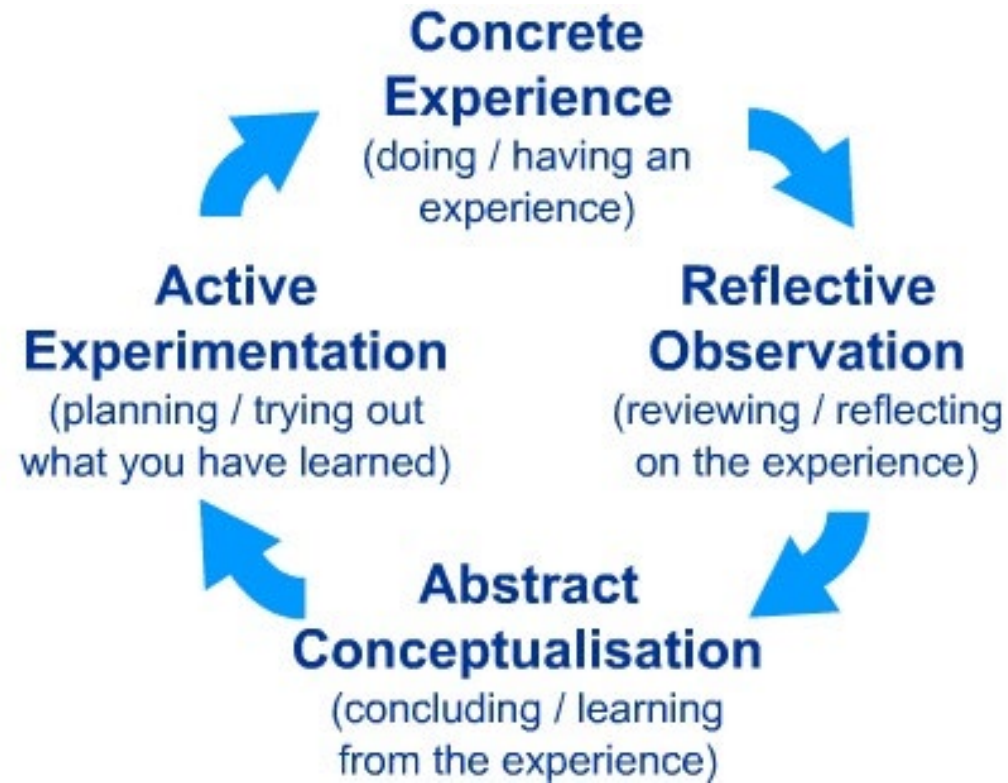
Ability to stand back and think about what we did

There are other reflective practitioners like Kolb whose ideas have been influential on our thinking about action research

What is 'reflective practice'?

Kikelomo Adeniyi

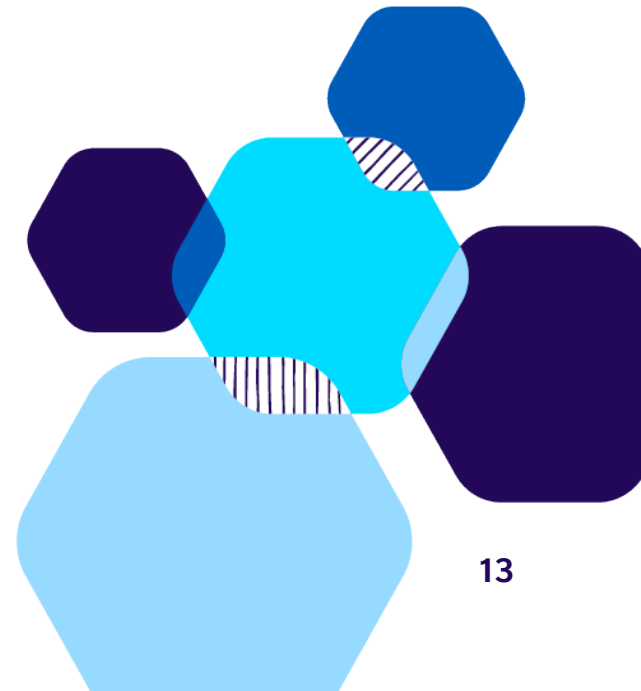
Kolb's model



What is 'action research'? What are its characteristics?

Sarah Balogun & Rasheedat Sadiq

Please put your views in the chat for the question above



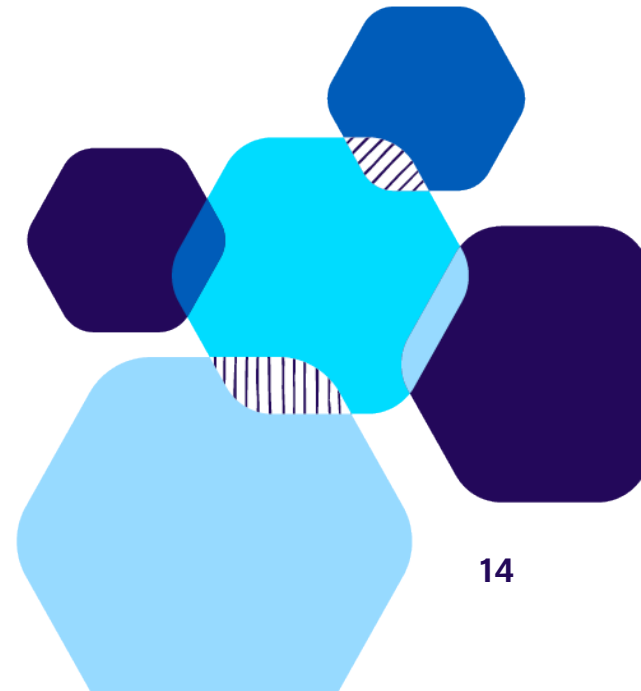
What is ‘action research’? What are its characteristics?

Sarah Balogun & Rasheedat Sadiq

Action research is a collaborative approach to inquiry or investigation that provides people with the means to take systematic action to resolve specific problems (Stringer, 1999).

Okoth & Simiyu (2017) see action research as the type of research that allows teachers to engage in collaborative actions that will lead to their understanding of the practice while at the same time developing themselves professionally.

It involves reflection at all stages which can be linked back to Schon and Kolb.

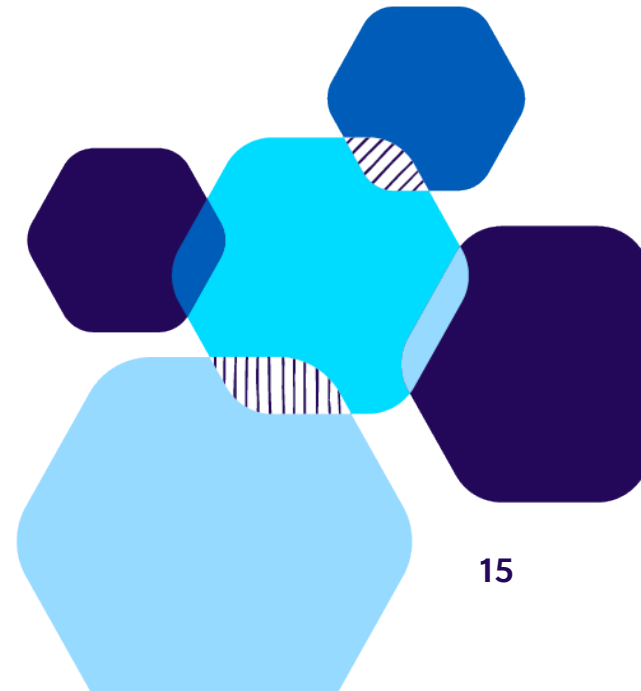


What is ‘action research’? What are its characteristics?

Sarah Balogun & Rasheedat Sadiq

- Situation-Based
- Participatory (involves the researcher and other stakeholders)
- Data-driven
- Practical and action-oriented
- Reflective
- Cyclical

Arnold, L. (2007) and Mertler, C.A. (2009)

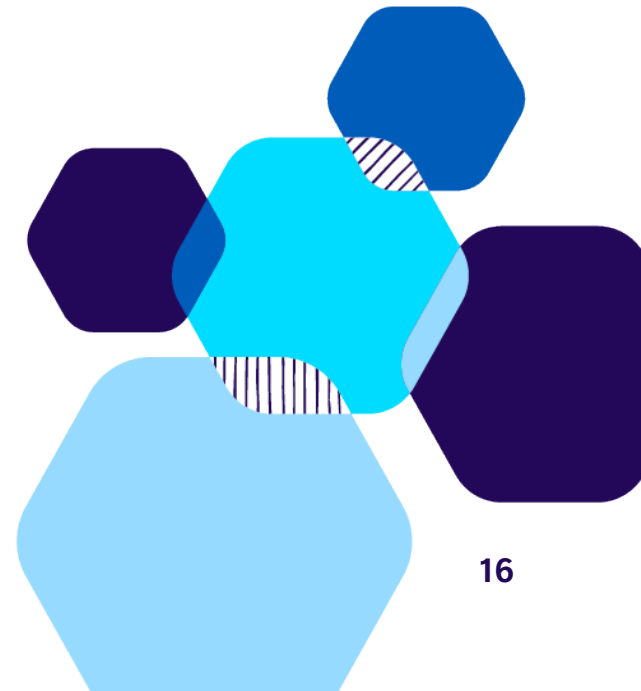


How does ‘exploratory practice’ differ from ‘action research’? What are its characteristics?

Ibrahim Ishaya

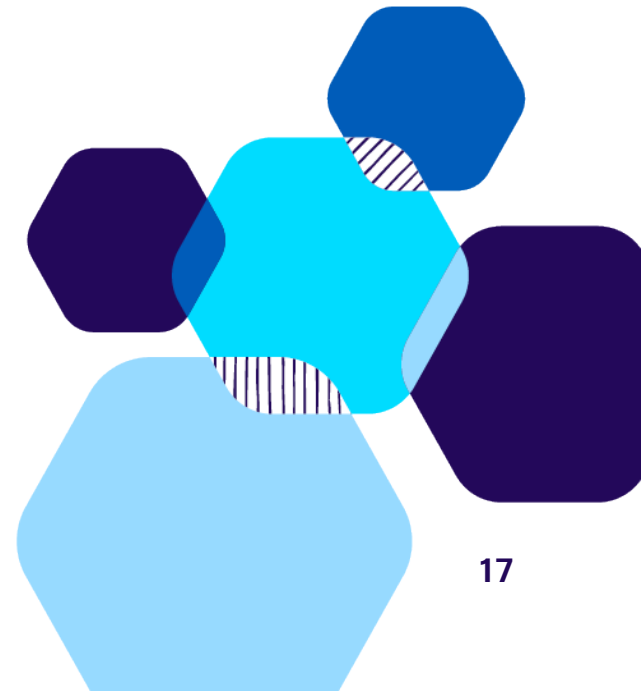
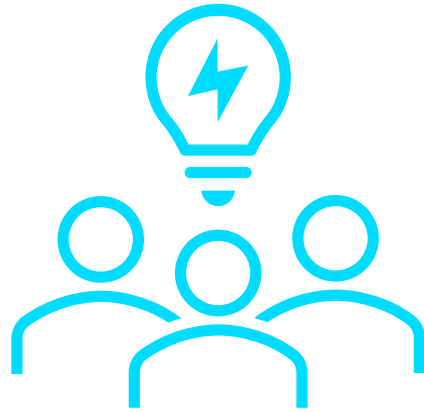
ER precedes **AR** and helps a researcher “to identify problems, defines the problem more precisely and identifies specific objectives or data requirement to be addressed through additional research” (Swaraj (2019) citing Kinner and Taylor (1996) p. 665). “...is concerned with developing research skills in order to inform and develop practice and promote active learning in context where teaching is conceptualized as a ‘problem to be solved’” (Peiser, 2016, p. 165). ER is “highly flexible, unstructured and qualitative” (Swaraj, 2019, p. 665).

AR follows on from **ER** and “is a type of teacher research conducted by professionals in order to investigate a problem in their work ...based on deep reflection and try to come up with ways of improving it” (Sela & Harel, 2012 p. 2).



How does a project start? Where do ideas come from?

Mayyada Assadig & Olatunde Ojerinde

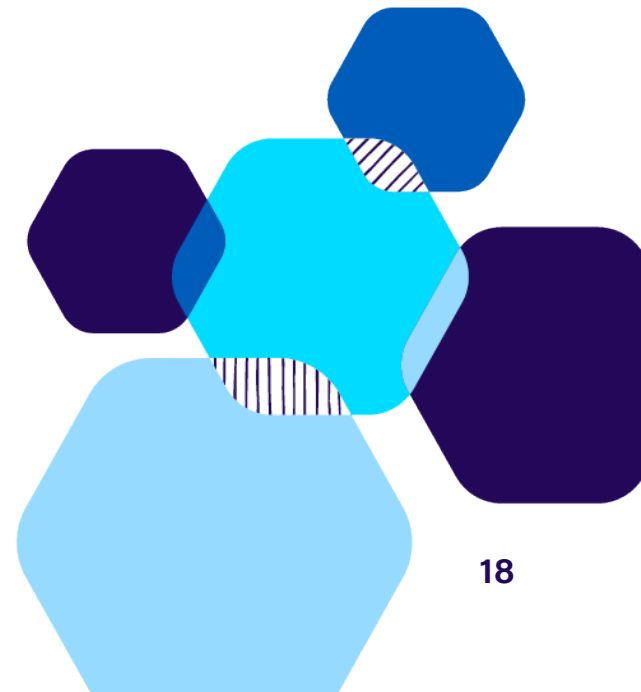
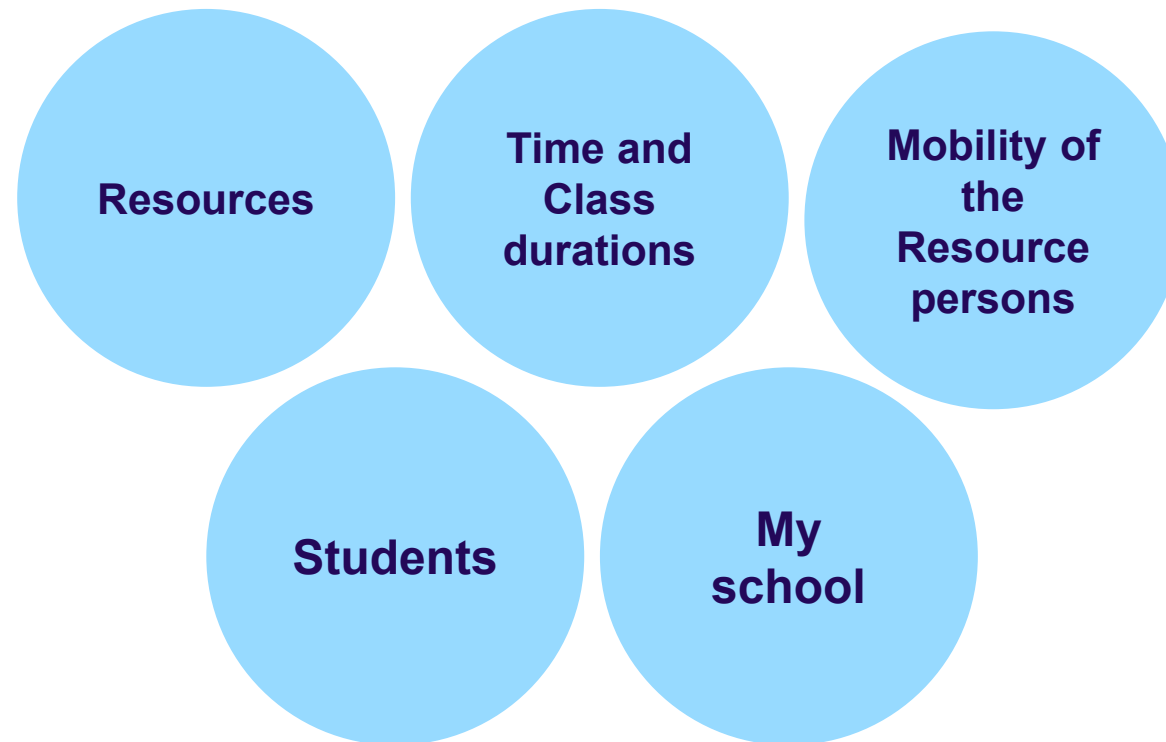


Refining the project

Hammed Lawal

Gender differences in a selected Year 9 recommended English textbook

Factors considered while refining the project:

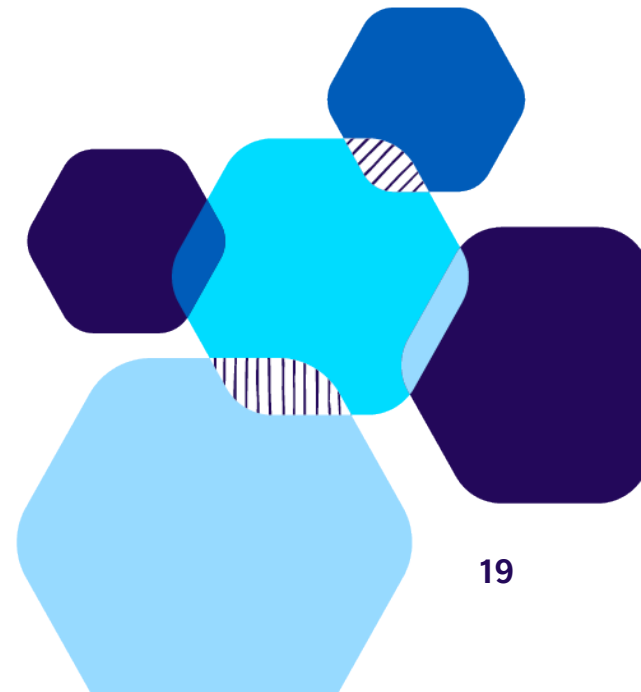
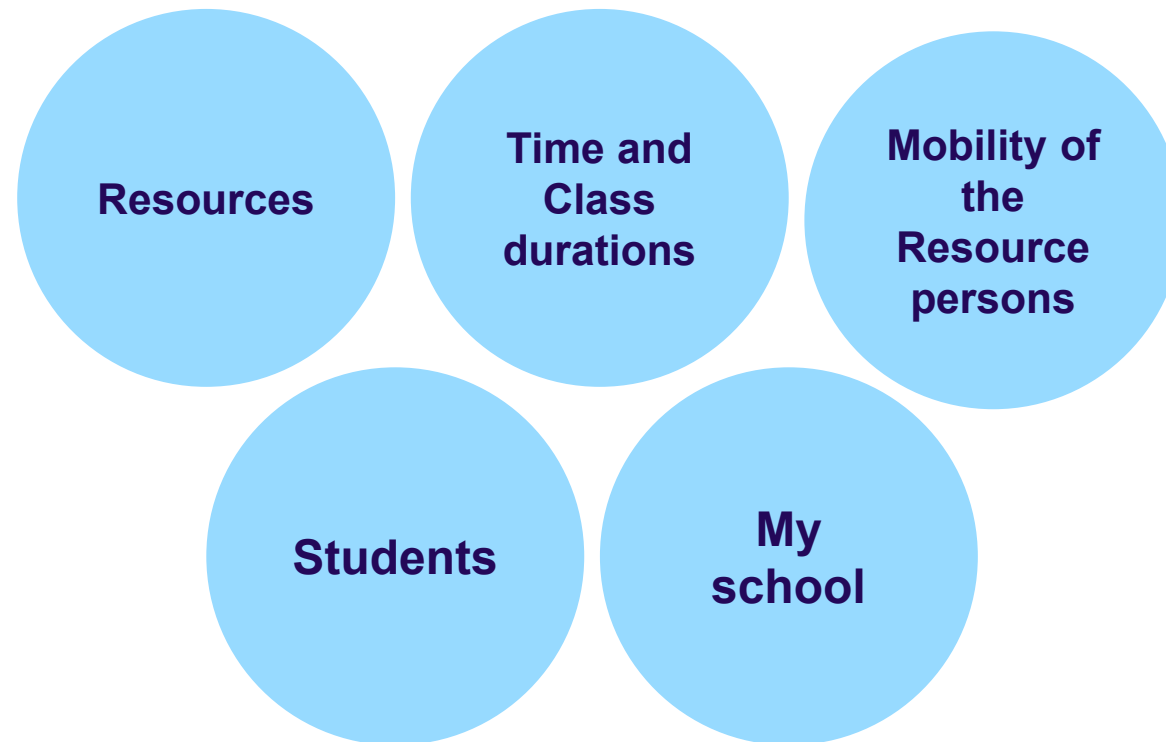


Refining the project

Dorcas Amayo Barnabas

Differences in speaking ability among boys and girls in the classroom

Factors considered while refining the project:

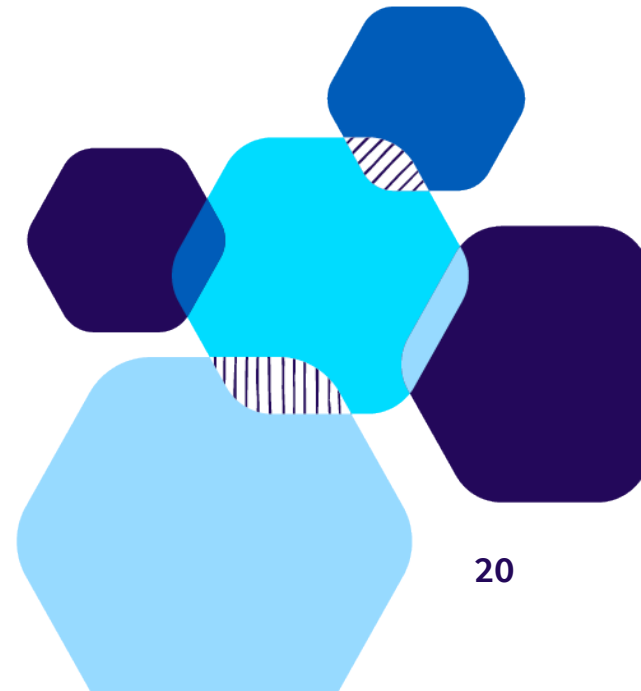


Exploratory questions

Moussa Ngom

Girls' passivity in classroom

- Context and the importance of this research for me, learners, and for other colleagues
- My exploratory questions
 1. What do I mean by girls' passivity in the classroom?
 2. How do girls participate in the classroom?
 3. What do my students think of their participation in the classroom?
 4. What do my colleagues think of girls' participation in the classroom?



Exploring Gender in the African Classroom' showcase

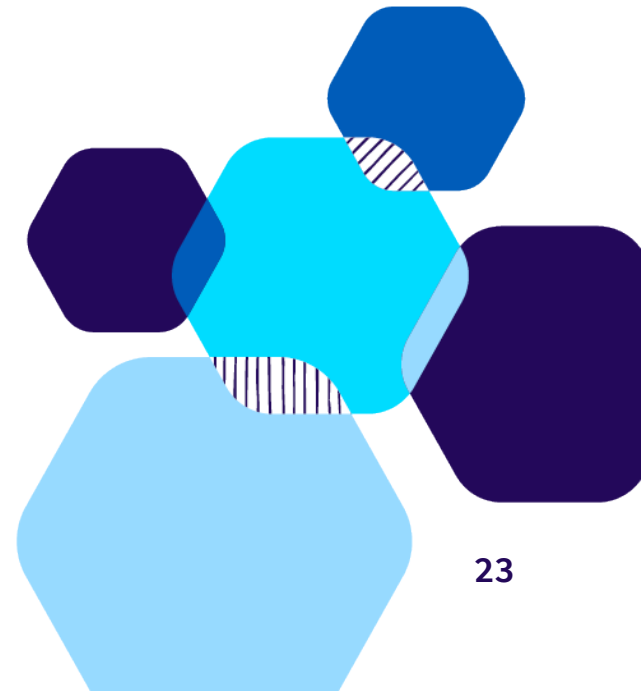
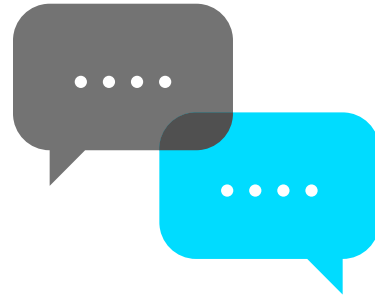
Worshop 2:
Engaging with Classroom
Action Research



What data collection methods are you aware of?

Issa Tidiane TOUNKARA & Marjolaine De Secondat Napel

Please put your views in the chat for the question above

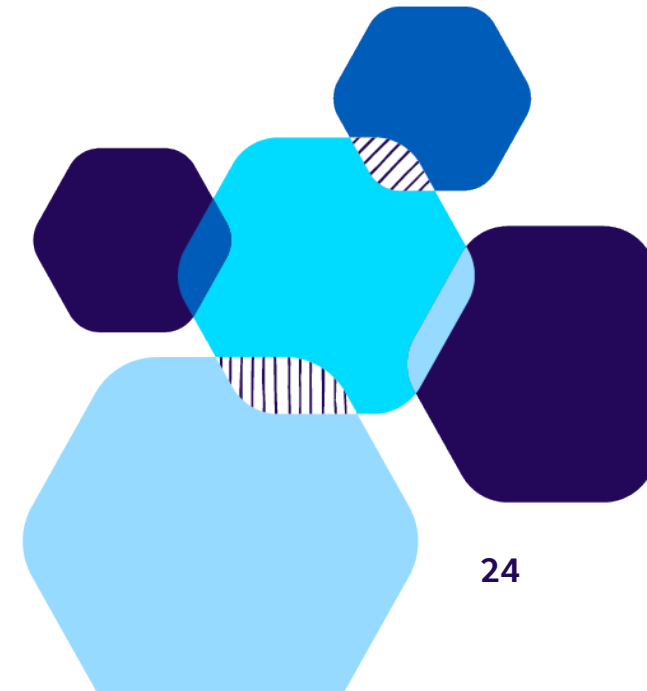
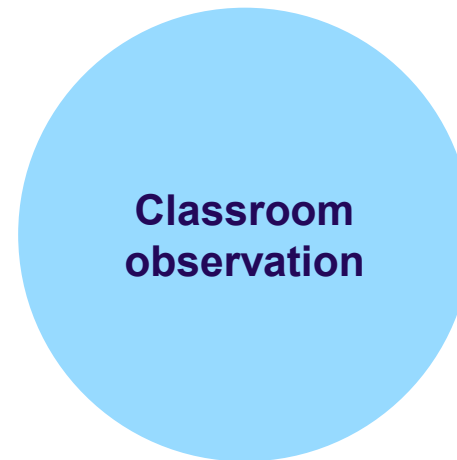
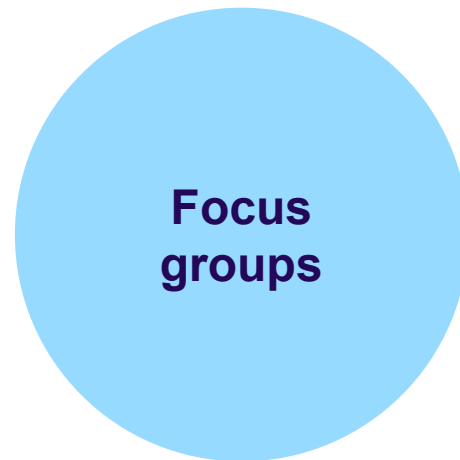


What data collection methods are you aware of?

Issa Tidiane TOUNKARA

Female students' participation in classroom activities

Research is meant for problem-solving. After identification of the problem, we dive into data collection. Thus, to do so, researchers resort to some tools as:



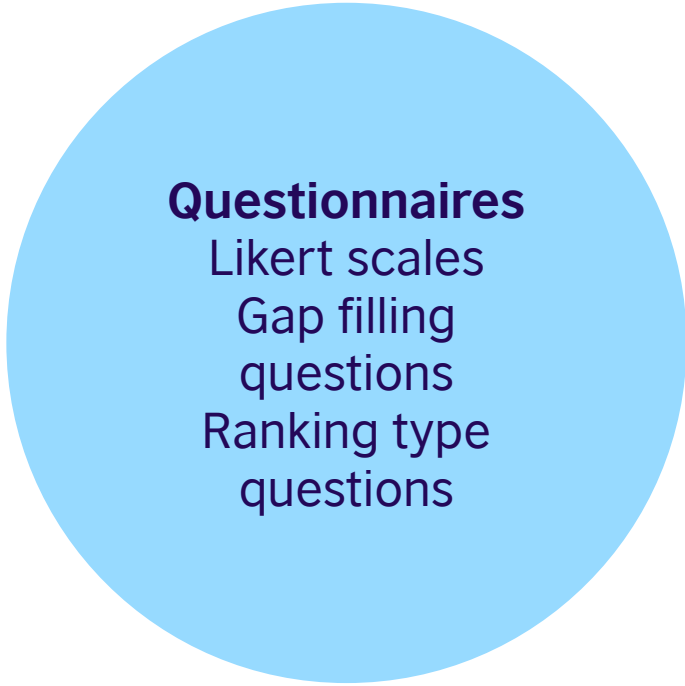
What data collection methods are you aware of?

Marjolaine De Secondat Napel



Reflective journals

Questionnaires

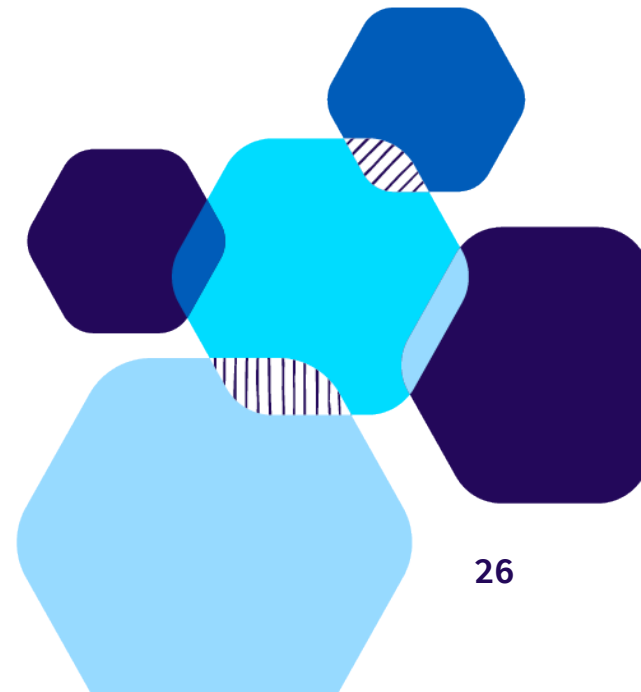


Likert scales
Gap filling
questions
Ranking type
questions

What data collection methods are feasible in the classroom?

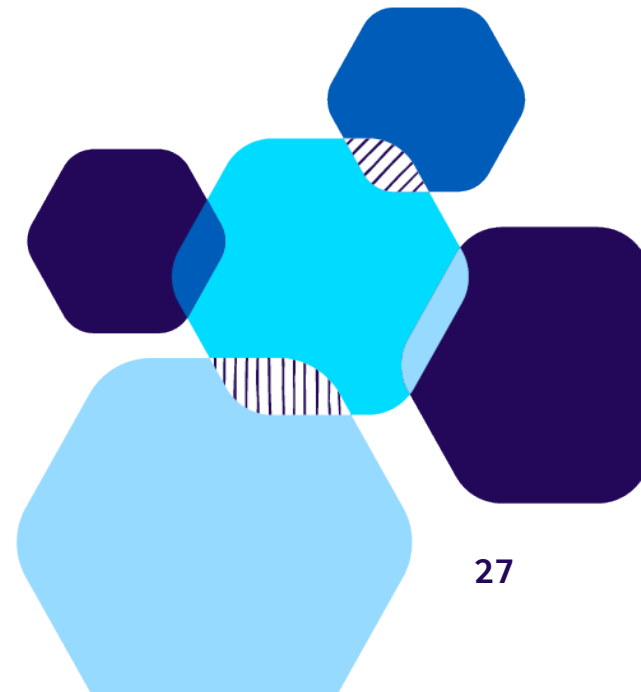
Babacar Gueye Diouf

Please put your views in the chat for the question above



What data collection methods are feasible in the classroom?

Babacar Gueye Diouf



Focus group in Mbam high school Senegal

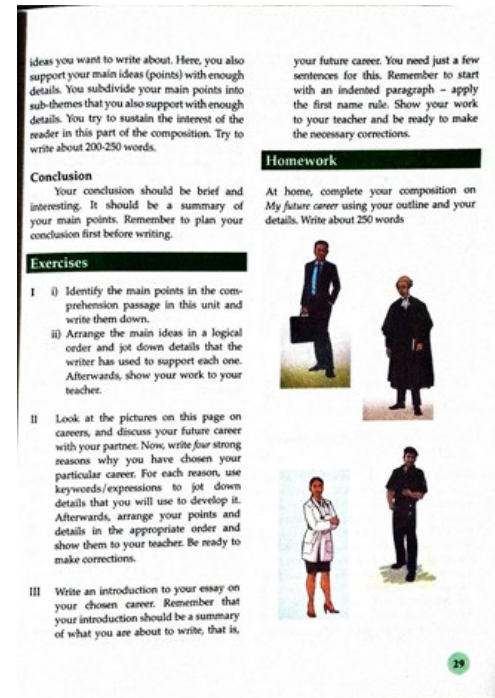
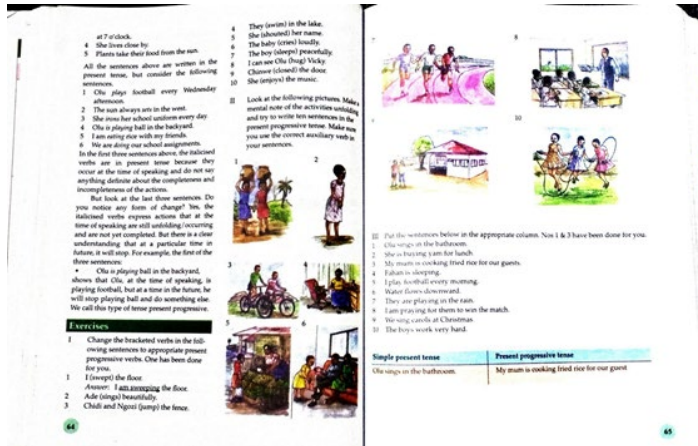
Babacar Gueye Diouf



What data collection methods are feasible in the classroom?

Hammed Lawal

Aspects of Gender Differences in a Selected English Textbook for Year 9 Learners



What data collection methods are feasible in the classroom?

Hammed Lawal

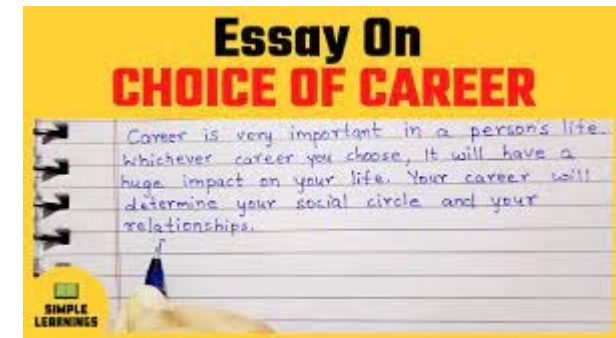
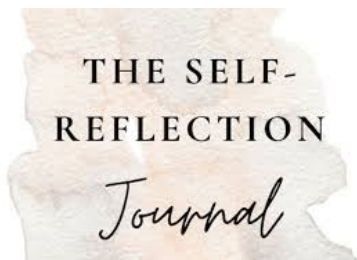
Aspects of Gender Differences in a Selected English Textbook for Year 9 Learners

Reflective journals

Classroom interview

Questionnaire

Essay test



Which data collection methods we chose and why

Moussa Ngom

Girls' passivity in the classroom



Reflective
journals

Observation

Questionnaire

Interview

Which data collection methods we chose and why

Rasheedat Sadiq

Differences in reading fluency of girls and boys in Year 5



Reflective
journal

Questionnaire

Focus group
interview

Why Focus Groups?

Rasheedat Sadiq

1. It gives access to a wider range of information on a specific issue.
2. Targets ideal participant demographic.
3. Engages other stakeholders and creates vested interest.
4. It allows freer expression of opinions of participants than other data collection methods.
5. Can be recorded for further analysis and exploration.



A small group of English Teachers from a Focus group session

Exploring Gender in the African Classroom' showcase

Worshop 3:

Insights and the Impact of
Classroom Action Research



Putting plans into action

Hammed Lawal

Action Plans (4 weeks)

- designing gender-neutral instructional materials
- engaging students in gender balance activities and roles
- inviting resource persons
- revision, exhibitions, interviews and assessment

Outcome

- Taking roles, sports and career choice without bias
- Nursing is a profession for both males and females.
- Increased motivation of all students in outdoor sports
- Interesting feedback from students



Putting plans into action

Dorcas Amayo Barnabas

TOPIC
DIFFERENCES IN SPEAKING ABILITY AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE CLASSROOM

TEACHING CONTEXT:
Kaduna State College of Education
Gidan Waya, Kaduna State.

Action
1: Class discussion.
2: Audio materials for pronunciation and pairs conversations.
3: Work in pairs' speaking activities.
4: Debate.

Research Questions:
1. What do I think about the differences in speaking ability among female and male learners?
2. What do my colleagues think are the causes of deficiency speaking among female and male learners?
3. How do boys and girls participate in speaking activities?
4. What strategies/activities do you do in the class in relation to speaking ability among boys and girls?

Evaluation Tools:
1: Focus group
2: Questionnaire

Exploration Instrument:
1: Reflective journal
2: Interview
3: Classroom Observation

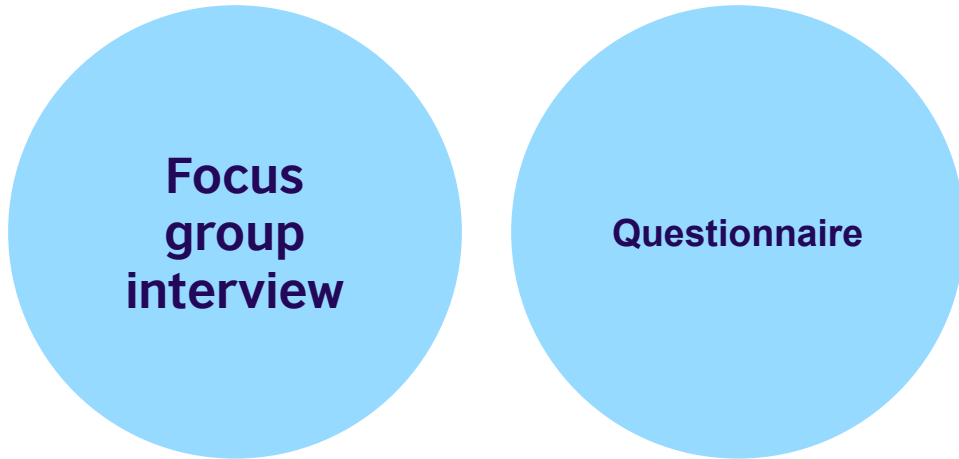
FINDINGS:
1: The girls tend to speak better than the boys because the boys are distracted and lacked confidence for the fear of being laughed at.
2: Poor background, environmental influence, and lack of exposure leads to deficiency in the speaking ability of the boys than the girls.
3: The boys find pronunciation and grammar as the most problematic areas.
4: My students, especially the boys like conversations in pairs, debates, and role play during the class activities.

POST ACTION ANALYSIS:
1: Built confidence to speak after the class' discussion.
2: The conversations in the audio motivated them to speak in pairs and during the debate.
3: The audio with pronunciations helped in pronouncing words correctly.

Collecting further data and the impact

Ibrahim Ishaya

Choice of learning resources and its influence on inclusive gender education



Learners understandings (impact)

- Better understanding of the role of women in society
- Females and males can excel in all professions
- The students' ideas about their career choices had changed
- The students liked the new materials I used ??

Collecting further data and the impact

Rasheedat Sadiq

Differences in Reading Fluency of Boys and Girls (Al Noor-Year 5)

Post Action Data Collection

Observation Reflection Journal

Focus groups of learners

Data Analysis and Impact on Learners

- 100% of male and female learners affirmed that their reading fluency and comprehension had improved over the period during the focus group sessions.
- 100% of male and female learners became used to being partners with a member of the opposite gender from an initial 90% of all males and females being uncomfortable working with a different gender.
- The regular highlighting and practice of reading strategies helped student engagement generally in class.
- The guiding questions greatly assisted in improving comprehension as evidenced by my observations during lessons.

Collecting further data and the impact

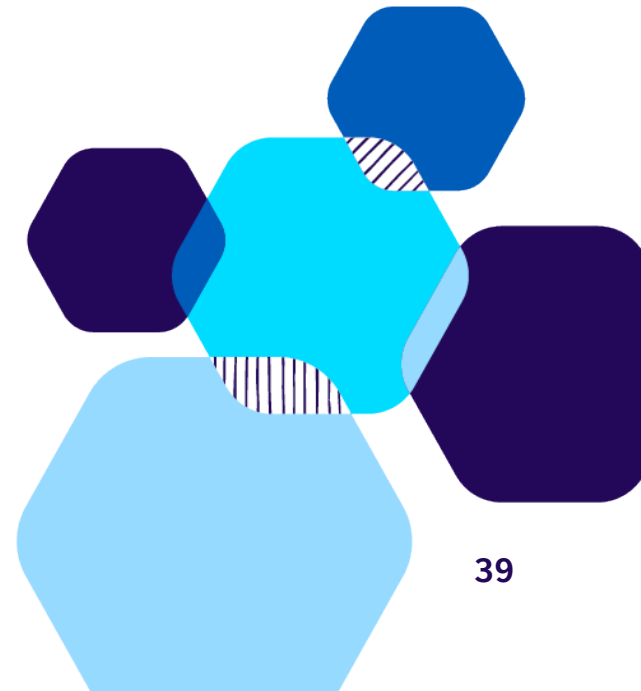
Rasheedat Sadiq

Next Steps

- Continue actions in plan but monitor the pairs more (and redirect when necessary) to reduce the task being dominated by any individual in the pair which was a concern from some boys.
- Allow learners co-create their own questions so that they can use the strategies regularly when they are reading outside the classroom setting.

Impact on me as a researcher and teacher

- ✓ Better insight into classroom dynamics.
- ✓ Clearing misconceptions and making me more open-minded.
- ✓ Value of data and record keeping.
- ✓ Sense of empowerment to face challenges.
- ✓ Increased rapport with learners.
- ✓ Importance of community and involving stakeholders.



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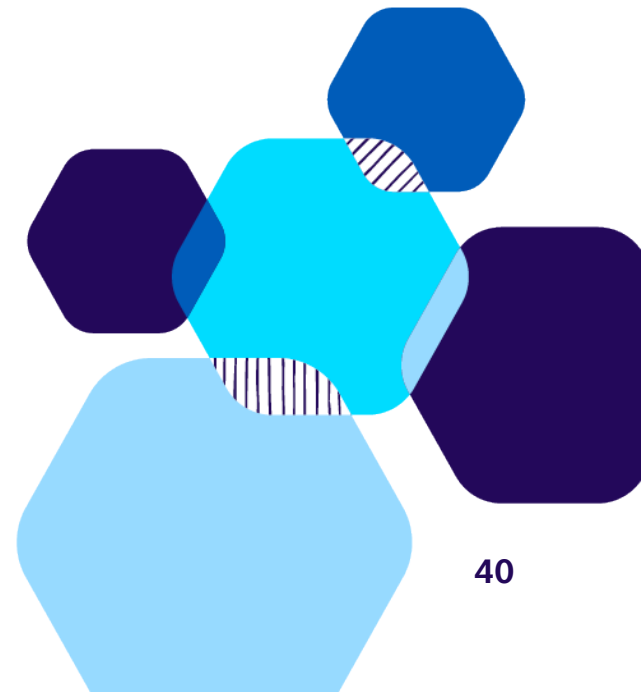
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Thank you

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