

Details: Researched Position (Paper 3)

When people with differing experiences, values, and beliefs consider complex issues, their opinions on these issues may also differ. In such cases, it is often important for people to be able to articulate their perspective on the issue at hand, and perhaps even to persuade others to agree with their position.

Overview: For this paper, you will argue for your researched position on an issue related to the topic about language variation that you wrote about for Paper 2, the literature review. To complete this assignment you will need to

1. choose an issue (on the topic of language variation) about which people hold differing opinions;
2. review—and perhaps extend—the research you have done on the topic;
3. develop an informed position on the issue; and
4. compose an essay that makes a scholarly argument for your position.

Goals: The main goals for this assignment are for you to learn more about:

- writing in academic situations where you are asked to understand (e.g., to comprehend, connect, explain, or interpret), to synthesize (e.g., to construct or formulate), and to evaluate (e.g., to assess, critique, or judge);
- shaping and supporting a scholarly argument; and
- developing an informed perspective on language variation and its implications for daily life.

Audience: Choose a specific audience that would benefit from reading your position on this issue. This could be an audience that hasn't yet taken a position, and/or an audience that disagrees with your position. In either case, your paper should clarify why it is important that the audience agree with you, as well as making rhetorical appeals to persuade the audience to agree with you.

This is a writing-to-learn assignment, so you will also be one of the audiences for your work. Your classmates are another important audience for your writing, as one of your aims is to demonstrate the logic of your position so that they will share your views. You may eventually post a polished draft of your position paper to your Web portfolio.

Resources and Reference Materials: Your writing should be informed by Devitt, Reiff, and Bawarshi's analysis of the genres of the argument paper (pp. 286-302) and the researched position paper (pp. 384-407). For guidance on APA documentation, see Ch. 32 & 34 of *The College Writer*.

Procedures and Requirements: Complete the following steps:

1. Choose an issue, relating to the broad language variation topic that you wrote about for Paper 2, for which you would like to argue a researched position. You should select an issue that you are knowledgeable about, that lends itself to a variety of perspectives and opinions, and that is narrow enough for you to write it about in some depth.
2. Review the research you have done on the topic, supplementing it with more research as needed to develop an informed position on your issue. Since you will need to emphasize appeals to logos in your paper, choose sources that emphasize appeals to logos. You should integrate a minimum of three scholarly sources into your paper, and these sources should present varied perspectives on the issue. You are welcome to use sources that were required reading or that you included in your literature review.
3. Create a sentence outline that previews the content and structure of your paper. State your controlling idea (i.e., your thesis or claim), and then outline how you will arrange your supporting points. Remember, these should be your ideas. Emphasize appeals to logos, and show that you have considered the complexity of the issue. Be sure to address opposing arguments.

4. Compose a formal essay that argues for your researched position on the issue. Support your claims with appeals to logos: demonstrate that you have “done your homework” (that is, your scholarly research), that you understand the subject and have considered it with some complexity, and that you are able to respond to arguments opposing your position on the issue. Use APA-style documentation. The final draft should be 4-5 double-spaced pages and should meet the standards listed in the grading section below.

Note the specific audience for whom you are writing at the top of the first page of your essay.

Due Dates: The final draft of this paper is due on Tuesday, October 31. Due dates for workshop drafts are listed in the syllabus. Workshop drafts are important for you and for your classmates who learn with you. Each time that you come unprepared for a workshop will result in a .5 reduction (on a 4.0 scale) from your grade on the final draft of this paper.

Grading: The researched position paper is worth 15% of your final grade. I will grade your project holistically, taking all of the components together into account—with attention given to content and rhetorical appeals as well as to structure, coherence, and conventions of format, style, grammar, and usage. A quality researched position paper for ENG 101 will:

- ✓ Argue thoughtfully and skillfully for your researched position on a relevant and debatable issue related to language variation.
- ✓ Emphasize appeals to logos by integrating scholarly research to support your claims and by showing that you understand the subject and have considered it with some complexity.
- ✓ Structure the paper in clear, cohesive manner that supports the purposes of the paper and facilitate communication with the intended audience.
- ✓ Employ appropriate conventions of format, style, grammar, and usage to support the purposes of the paper and facilitate communication with the intended audience.
- ✓ Document in APA style all sources whose words, illustrations, or ideas are cited or used in the paper.
- ✓ Demonstrate an ethical approach to writing processes and products.
- ✓ Exhibit a developed and accurate understanding of the principles addressed in class, in the assigned readings and activities, and in my responses to your work.



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