ENG518 Assignment 1 Solution Fall 2026

Research Methodology in ELT (ENG518) | BS Applied Linguistics | Assignment 1 | Fall 2026 | Total Marks: 20

Question: Selecting an appropriate sampling technique helps a researcher obtain relevant data. A researcher wants to explore the challenges faced by secondary-school English teachers who have at least five years of experience teaching writing skills. Which sampling technique would be most suitable for this study and why?

Answer: Purposive Sampling (Criterion Sampling)

The most suitable sampling technique for this study is purposive sampling, specifically criterion sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability technique in which the researcher deliberately selects participants who possess particular characteristics that are directly relevant to the research question. In criterion sampling, the researcher sets clear criteria in advance and includes only those participants who meet them. Here the criteria are fixed by the study itself: the participant must be a secondary-school English teacher and must have at least five years of experience teaching writing skills.

First, only teachers who meet these criteria can provide relevant data. The study explores challenges in teaching writing, and such challenges can only be described from direct, sustained experience. A teacher who has taught writing for one year, or who teaches a different subject, cannot speak about these challenges with the same depth. Criterion sampling guarantees that every participant is information-rich for the exact question being asked.

Second, the study is exploratory and qualitative in nature. Its aim is to understand the challenges in depth, not to measure how common they are across a whole population or to produce statistically generalizable numbers. Purposive sampling is designed for this kind of depth: it trades representativeness for richness of data, which is exactly what an exploratory study needs.

Third, probability sampling would be unsuitable here. A complete and accurate list of all secondary-school English teachers with five or more years of writing teaching experience may not exist, and random selection from a general teacher population would include many teachers who do not meet the criterion. That would waste time and resources and could still miss the most experienced voices, while adding nothing to the depth of the findings.

Fourth, purposive sampling is practical for this study. The researcher can recruit through schools, head teachers and professional networks, selecting teachers who meet the criteria. If eligible teachers are hard to reach, snowball sampling can be added as a supplement, with participants recommending other experienced colleagues, but the core technique remains purposive criterion sampling.

One limitation should be noted honestly: because participants are chosen by judgment rather than at random, the findings cannot be statistically generalized to all English teachers. The researcher should therefore state the selection criteria clearly and report them transparently so readers can judge the transferability of the findings.

In conclusion, purposive criterion sampling is the most suitable technique because it matches the participants to the research question. It ensures that the data comes from experienced secondary-school English teachers who have actually faced the challenges of teaching writing skills, which is the only way this exploratory study can obtain relevant and meaningful data.