

Researching the Stereotypes of People Around Me

Researching the Stereotypes
of People Around Me:
An Introductory Thesis Writing Course
for International Students

By

Stephanie Ann Houghton

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

Researching the Stereotypes of People Around Me:
An Introductory Thesis Writing Course for International Students,
by Stephanie Ann Houghton

This book first published 2014

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2014 by Stephanie Ann Houghton

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system,
or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or
otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-6540-0, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-6540-1

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	vii
Note to the Teacher	ix
1. What is Research?	1
A typical task plan and the main parts of a thesis	
MINI-THESIS: PROJECT OVERVIEW	
The cover page and the table of contents	
Defining stereotypes and identifying possible research questions	
2. Defining Stereotypes across Disciplines.....	7
Exploring variation between dictionary definitions of key terms	
Exploring varying definitions of key terms across disciplines	
Developing a working definition of a key term	
Identifying core meaning across definitions	
3. Defining and Reflecting upon Stereotypes	15
The nature of stereotypes	
Self-reflection: My ideal English teacher	
Self and other: Comparing and contrasting stereotypes	
4. Exploring and Illustrating Stereotypes.....	27
Self-reflection: Your stereotypes of Americans, British and Koreans	
Some Chinese university students' stereotypes of Americans, British and Koreans	
Self and other: Comparing and contrasting stereotypes	
5. The Transmission of Stereotypes and Critical Incident Analysis	33
The transmission of stereotypes through connotation and colour	
Summarising an extract	
Analysing critical incidents based on stereotypes	
6. Introduction.....	41
Analysing the content of an Introduction	
List of steps to follow in your Introduction	
Analysing and assessing sample Introductions by applying specific criteria	
MINI-THESIS: WRITING THE INTRODUCTION	
7. Literature Review.....	49
Analysing the content of a Literature Review	
Referring to the work of others	
Analysing and assessing sample Literature Reviews by applying specific criteria	
MINI-THESIS: WRITING THE LITERATURE REVIEW	

8. Research Methods 1	61
Defining and distinguishing questionnaires and interviews	
Good and bad question types	
Eliciting stereotypes: Approaches and techniques	
Answering, analysing and evaluating a questionnaire	
9. Research Methods 2	71
MINI-THESIS: QUESTIONNAIRE STRUCTURE	
MINI-THESIS: PARTICIPANT SELECTION AND RESEARCH ETHICS	
MINI-THESIS: QUESTIONNAIRE AND FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW	
ANALYSING AND ASSESSING SAMPLE RESEARCH METHODS SECTIONS	
BY APPLYING SPECIFIC CRITERIA	
MINI-THESIS: WRITING THE RESEARCH METHODS SECTION	
10. Data Analysis	81
Coding and interpreting qualitative data	
Defining and distinguishing analysis and interpretation	
Steps in qualitative data analysis	
Analysing and assessing sample Data Analysis sections by applying specific criteria	
MINI-THESIS: WRITING THE DATA ANALYSIS SECTION	
11. Data Presentation	95
Defining and distinguishing fact and interpretation	
Language use when describing fact and interpretation	
Using data to illustrate points	
Analysing and assessing sample Data Presentation sections by applying specific criteria	
MINI-THESIS: WRITING THE DATA PRESENTATION SECTION	
12. Discussion	119
Analysing the content of a Discussion section	
Strategies for writing the Discussion section	
Analysing and assessing sample Discussion sections by applying specific criteria	
MINI THESIS: WRITING THE DISCUSSION SECTION	
13. Conclusion	125
Analysing the content of a Conclusion	
Analysing a combined Discussion and Conclusion section	
Analysing and assessing sample Conclusions by applying specific criteria	
MINI-THESIS: WRITING THE CONCLUSION	
14. References and Appendices	133
Defining and distinguishing source types, references and appendices	
Writing references according to a given style	
MINI-THESIS: WRITING THE REFERENCES AND COMPILING THE APPENDICES	
15. Mini-Thesis Grading Sheet	141
MINI-THESIS: ASSESS YOUR OWN MINI-THESIS BY APPLYING SPECIFIC	
CRITERIA	
References	143

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the students who took part in the project that led to the publication of this book, and for letting me use extracts from their work for the benefit of future students.

I also want to thank the editorial staff at Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their professionalism and support.

—Stephanie Ann Houghton
29 July 2014

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

This textbook was developed for the benefit of international students in their penultimate year of study who are planning to write a graduation thesis in English related to stereotypes in their final year with little or no prior knowledge of the subject, or of thesis-writing itself. While many such books tend to provide general advice with illustrative examples, this book aims to help students to develop their thesis-writing skills *through experiential learning* by conducting a research project based on questionnaire and interview-based research, and reporting on it in a mini-thesis, the length of which has been left to the teacher's discretion.

This textbook was developed in a classroom research project that was conducted during a thesis writing course, and includes extracts from students' work with their consent. More broadly, it results from my own research into the development of intercultural pedagogy that bridges theory and practice, and in particular from one of my co-edited books (Houghton, Furumura, Lebedko & Song, 2013), which explored theoretical understandings of stereotypes and ways of addressing them through education. Since many extracts from that book have been included in this textbook to illustrate some of the teaching points, Houghton, Furumura, Lebedko & Song (2013) can be used as an accompanying handbook for extensive reading, although it is not necessary as this textbook stands alone.

1. WHAT IS RESEARCH?

Overview

- ♦ A typical task plan and the main parts of a thesis
- ♦ MINI-THESIS: PROJECT OVERVIEW
- ♦ The cover page and the table of contents
- ♦ Defining stereotypes and identifying possible research questions

Task 1

What is research? Read and discuss the two definitions below.

Cambridge Dictionaries Online

- ♦ Research is “a detailed study of a subject, especially in order to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding”

Oxford Dictionaries Online

- ♦ Research is “the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions”

Task 2

Check the meaning of the words in the table and underline them in Passage 1 below.

	English word	Translation into your language
1	spiral	
2	reliable	
3	backtrack	
4	cautious	
5	circular	
6	linear	
7	cycles	
8	investigation	
9	revise	
10	alternatively	

Passage 1

Research can be conducted in many different ways, but it always seeks “planned, cautious, systematic and reliable ways of finding out or deepening understanding” about the matter under investigation. (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2001: 5) Research may be conceptualised as a fixed, linear series of stages, with a clear start or end, perhaps allowing for different routes to be taken between particular stages. Alternatively, it can be conceptualised as a circular process with various entry and exit points, which allows for the possibility for backtracking to review and revise earlier stages as the research project progresses. More complex research designs conceptualised in this way may incorporate a number of cycles any of which may influence later cycles during the research process. Having reviewed and distinguished such approaches, they suggest that research is best conceptualised as being spiral in nature. Within this view, research “is cyclical, can be entered at almost any point, is a never-ending process, will cause you to reconsider your practice, will return you to a different starting place”. (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2001: 9)

Task 3

A thesis is basically a long essay that reports on a research project. A thesis tends to be circular in nature insofar as it often starts with a specific research question, describes how it was investigated, and presents research findings that enable the researcher to answer the research question. It also tends to be spiral in nature in that old research questions can often generate new ones that propel the researcher forward into further research. Structurally, theses can be very similar. The main parts of a thesis are listed below. What kinds of information should you put in each section? Match the thesis sections listed on the left of the table below to the section descriptions listed on the right. Write the answer in the column shaded grey.

Thesis Section			Section Description	
1		Introduction	A	Describe how you designed and conducted the research project to collect data to help answer your research question.
2		Literature Analysis	B	Present the results of data analysis objectively perhaps using charts and tables to help readers understand easily
3		Research Methods	C	Describe how you analysed the data you collected.
4		Data Analysis	D	Provide extra supporting information not needed in the main thesis such as raw data
5		Results	E	Present the research question and explain why it is interesting and important.
6		Discussion	F	Provide a list of the sources you used (e.g. books, journals, internet sources etc.)
7		Conclusion	G	Analytically review what other people have already written about the topic to show your research question has not already been answered.
8		References	H	Discuss the results by making links back with the academic literature giving your opinion. Answer the research question clearly

9		Appendices	I	Summarise the thesis and its main conclusions perhaps identifying the limitations of the project and possibilities for future research.
---	--	------------	---	---

Task 4

What is a stereotype? Read and discuss the two definitions provided below.

Cambridge Dictionaries Online

- ♦ A stereotype is “a fixed idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong”

Oxford Dictionaries Online

- ♦ A stereotype is “a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing”

Task 5: Mini-Thesis Overview

Read the passage below and answer the questions beneath.

In this course, you will conduct a research project related to stereotypes to help you to develop your research skills. You will write up your research in a mini-thesis. The purpose of the project, adapted from Houghton, Lebedko and Song (2013), is to help you to explore the stereotypes of those around you through questionnaire and interview-based research with one or more interviewees. Researchers usually set their own research question(s) based upon a preliminary reading of the academic literature but examples of the kinds of research question(s) you might investigate are presented below. Whatever research question(s) you set, you must investigate them consistently throughout the project and answer them clearly at end of your mini-thesis. Here are examples of a main research question and a related sub-question: “What kinds of stereotypes do people around me hold of Japanese, Russian, Chinese, British and American people?” and “What are the sources of their stereotypes?” You will investigate question(s) of your own by developing a questionnaire and distributing it to a group of your choice. You will then analyse the data to draw preliminary findings before investigating the data in more depth through individual and/or focus group interviews with a view to answering your research question(s) clearly at the end of your mini-thesis.

Questions

1. What is the purpose of the project?
2. From whose research is this project adapted?
3. What kind of research instrument will you develop and distribute to a selected group of people?
4. Having analysed the questionnaire data, what will the next stage of data collection be?

Task 6

The cover page of your thesis should contain your name, the title of your mini-thesis and your student number. After the cover page, you need to present the Table of Contents (TOC). Look at the three examples below. Which one do you think gives the reader the clearest overview of the contents of the thesis, and why?

Table of Contents 1

1. Introduction	3
2. Literature review	3
3. Research Method	5
4. Data Analysis.....	5
5. Results	5
6. Conclusion.....	12
7. References	13
8. Appendices	13

Table of Contents 2

1. Introduction	2
2. Literature Review	2
3. Research Methodology.....	2
4. Data analysis.....	3
5. Results.....	3
6. Conclusion.....	6
7. References.....	6
8. Appendices	
• Appendix 1: Questionnaire.....	7
• Appendix 2: Data Analysis Practice Sheet.....	8
• Appendix 3: Interview Transcription.....	11

Table of Contents 3

1. Introduction	2
2. Literature review	2
3. Research methodology	2,3
4. Data analysis	3
5. Results	3 to 8
6. Conclusion	8

Task 7

Read the list of possible research questions below. Find two that do *not* focus on stereotypes. Rewrite them to focus them clearly on stereotypes.

	Possible research questions
1	What kinds of stereotypes do people have of minority groups in my hometown?
2	What are the main minority groups in country X?
3	How do stereotypes against group X differ between generations in my local area?
4	How are women treated in country X?
5	What stereotypes do I hold of group X?
6	Which news stories seemed to influence people's stereotypes against group X in 2013?
7	How do people manage their own stereotypes in intercultural communication?

Task 8

What interests Fumi about stereotypes, and why? Read and discuss Passage 1 below.

Passage 1

People seem to have a lot of stereotypes when they don't much know about another culture. I am interested in four main areas related to stereotypes. Firstly, what kind of stereotypes do foreigners have of Japanese girls? This interests me because when I talked with a French friend of mine, he said he found it difficult to date Japanese girls because they are so shy. I agreed with him somewhat, but his point of view seemed rather stereotyped because there are certainly many Japanese girls who are not shy these days.

Secondly, what kind of stereotypes do foreigners have of Japanese people? As far as I know, stereotypes may be positive, neutral or negative in nature, but I am interested in learning more about other kinds of stereotypes, and how to classify them. Thirdly, what kind of stereotypes do foreigners have of Chinese people? I am interested in this because one of my stereotypes of Chinese people has always been that they are loud, but is it true or not? Is my stereotype right or wrong? I would like to reflect on my own stereotypes to learn more about the way I think, and how to manage my own stereotypes. Fourthly, what kind of stereotypes do Japanese and Korean people have of each other, especially in my generation? I am interested in this question because Japan and Korea still have serious historical disagreements that continue to undermine communication today.

To overcome such problems, we need to understand them. Understanding the relevant stereotypes is an important first step to developing mutual understanding, no matter how uncomfortable it might be. I am also interested in gender issues related to stereotypes. For example, what kind of stereotypes do men and women have of the opposite sex? Finding out more about that might help me to understand gender bias better. And what kind of stereotypes do people have of gay and lesbian people? In my view, they just love people who are the same sex as them, but some people misunderstand them or even feel prejudiced against them. Again, to solve the stereotype-related problems, we need to understand the roots of such attitudes.

Task 9

What interests you about stereotypes, and why? Make a list of possible research questions below. Also explain why the questions interest you, and why you think they are important.

	Possible research question	Why it interests you
1		
2		
3		
4		

2. DEFINING STEREOTYPES ACROSS DISCIPLINES

Overview

- Exploring variation between dictionary definitions of key terms
- Exploring varying definitions of key terms across disciplines
- Developing a working definition of a key term
- Identifying core meaning across definitions

Task 1

What does the term 'stereotype' mean to you? Write a definition in the box below without checking the dictionary. Then, discuss your definition with your group. Did everyone write the same definition or not?

What is a stereotype?

Task 2

If you check the meaning of the same word in various dictionaries, you may find some variation between the definitions, which may cause misunderstandings if you assume that words have fixed meanings. Read Extract 1 below. What similarities and differences can you find between the definitions? Does there seem to be a core definition common to them all or not? Make notes in the table beneath the extract.

Extract 1

Any attempt to understand and deal with stereotypes presupposes an understanding of the essential meaning(s) of the term. Stereotypes have been defined by scholars from a range of disciplines, each capturing the nature, content and functions of stereotypes in interpersonal, interracial, intercultural and international relationships. However, I'd like to cite some dictionary definitions here as they usually offer information about the origins, the more basic

meanings and the everyday usage of the concept. The following descriptions of stereotypes are taken from some online dictionaries:

Online Etymology Dictionary

1798, "method of printing from a plate," from Fr. stéréotype (adj.) "printing by means of a solid plate of type," from Gk. stereos "solid" (see sterile) + Fr. type "type." Noun meaning "a stereotype plate" is from 1817. Meaning "image perpetuated without change" is first recorded 1850, from the verb in this sense, which is from 1819. Meaning "preconceived and oversimplified notion of characteristics typical of a person or group" is recorded from 1922. Stereotypical is attested from 1949. (stereotype, n.d.)

Oxford Dictionaries

1. a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing:
2. a relief printing plate cast in a mould made from composed type or an original plate. (stereotype, 2012)

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language

1. A conventional, formulaic, and oversimplified conception, opinion, or image.
2. One that is regarded as embodying or conforming to a set image or type.
3. Printing A metal printing plate cast from a matrix molded from a raised printing surface, such as type. (stereotype, 2000)

Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged

1. (Communication Arts / Printing, Lithography & Bookbinding)
 - a. a method of producing cast-metal printing plates from a mould made from a form of type matter in papier-mâché or some other material
 - b. the plate so made
2. (Communication Arts / Printing, Lithography & Bookbinding) (Psychology) another word for stereotypy
3. an idea, trait, convention, etc., that has grown stale through fixed usage
4. (Sociology) a set of inaccurate, simplistic generalizations about a group that allows others to categorize them and treat them accordingly. (stereotype, 2003)

Dictionary.com

1. a process, now often replaced by more advanced methods, for making metal printing plates by taking a mold of composed type or the like in papier-mâché or other material and then taking from this mold a cast in type metal.
2. a plate made by this process.
3. a set form; convention.
4. Sociology, a simplified and standardized conception or image invested with special meaning and held in common by members of a group. (stereotype, n.d.)

All of these definitions include the primary meaning, and the metaphorical meaning of the word “stereotype”. Originating in 1798 from the field of technology, the word stereotype refers to the method of printing from a plate, or the printed image thus produced. Since the plate is usually metal cast from the same mould, the printed image is inevitably fixed, formulaic, and conventional, with a set form or image; as no distinction or change is involved in the process, what is stereotyped is the same. When applied to people, stereotypes take the whole social groups as possessing the same traits. And when the same stereotypes are duplicated through various channels of media and interpersonal communication, those stereotypes become widely shared, leaving little to no room for individuation and diversity. A notable point is that in *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, the metaphorical meaning of stereotype as “conventional, formulaic, and oversimplified conception, opinion, or image” is placed first as the primary meaning. Indeed, it is from this meaning of stereotype that scholars from sociology, psychology, linguistics, media studies and other fields have embarked on the exploration of this pervasive, and often times detrimental practice, in human society. (Song, 2013: 86-88)

Similarities	Differences

Task 3

People, including students and researchers, may sometimes have different working definitions of key terms used in the academic literature, which may cause misunderstandings if readers assume that such terms have fixed meanings. Researchers from various disciplines (i.e., academic fields) who are studying a particular phenomenon may understand a key term such as ‘stereotype’ in different ways. This means that when you read the work of other researchers, you have to pay attention to ways in which terms are defined and used. In any case, you have to define the key terms you use in your thesis carefully and clearly to help readers to understand exactly what you mean when you use them. And you should use the terms consistently yourself throughout the thesis to avoid causing confusion. Which disciplines are concerned with stereotypes? Using words from the table below, read and complete the sentences beneath to define some disciplines that are concerned with research into stereotypes. You can check the answers in the passages that follow.

Some academic disciplines concerned with stereotypes	
Sociology	Psycholinguistics
Social psychology	Ethno-linguistics
Cognitive linguistics	Memetics
Semiotics	

1. (.....): studying the concepts of memes and the way they are imitated and transmitted in culture
2. (.....): studying signs and symbols, and their function in both artificial and natural languages as well as signs and symbols of communicative behavior expressed both in language and nonverbal communication
3. (.....) **or psychology of language**: studying the mental aspects of language and speech, linguistic ideologies and the influence of psychological factors that enable humans to acquire, understand and produce language
4. (.....)/**ethnic linguistics**: studying language as an aspect of culture, the influence of language on culture and vice-versa, and cultural/ethnic identity
5. (.....)/**Cognitive linguistics**: studying the relationship between cognition and the human mind, linguistic behavior and cognitive abilities, and the way language reflects patterns of thought
6. (.....): studying aspects of individuals and people's emotions, social perception and interactional behavior
7. (.....): studying society, individuals, groups and human social interaction. (Lebedko, 2013a)

Task 4

Read the passage below, and answer the questions beneath.

Defining Stereotypes across Various Disciplines

Stereotype definitions vary depending on the trends in scholarly research and approaches. Since the intercultural communication paradigm is becoming more fundamental and multidisciplinary, and as scholars draw on findings from related disciplines in the humanities, it is essential to include views on stereotypes from a variety of these contiguous fields. Lippmann's (1922) basic definition of stereotypes as "pictures in our heads" (p.3) remains the generally accepted and classical sociological definition to date. They are reinforced in the following way:

In some measure, stimuli from the outside, especially when they are printed or spoken words, evoke some part of a system of stereotypes, so that the actual sensation and the preconception occupy consciousness at the same time... If what we are looking at corresponds successfully with what we anticipated, the stereotype is reinforced for the future, as it is in a man who knows in advance that the Japanese are cunning and has the bad luck to run across two dishonest Japanese. (Lippmann, 1922, p.54)

According to Bottom and Dejun (2007), however, there is evidence that by the start of the 20th century, and in the early 1920s, the words stereotype and stereotypic had been in use before the term was introduced by Lippmann (1922) in expressions metaphorically meaning "mental process" such as *stereotyped* combinations, "*stereotypic*" thought, and *stereotyped* (p. 6). Lippmann redefined the term stereotype to mean "[a] preconceived and oversimplified idea of the characteristics which typify a person, situation, etc.; an attitude based on such a preconception and a person who appears to conform closely to the idea of a type" (cited from Bottom & Dejun, 2007, p.6). This definition is less well-known than the one presented above. (Lebedko, 2013a)

1. Why do stereotype definitions vary?
2. How did Lippmann define stereotypes in 1922?
3. Was the word 'stereotype' used before 1922?
4. How did Lippmann redefine it?
5. Why do think researchers definitions sometimes vary?
6. Do you think it is important for everyone to define terms in the same way? And do you think it is possible?

Task 5

Check the meaning of the words in the table and underline them in Passages 1-4 in Task 6 below.

	English word	Translation into your language
1	ethnocentric	
2	reverse	
3	prejudice	
4	oversimplified	
5	inter-group	
6	folklore	
7	category	
8	derogatory	
9	trait	
10	slur	

Task 5

Read Passages 1-4 below about ways in which stereotypes are viewed within four different disciplines and answer the questions beneath.

Passage 1

In **linguistics**, theoretical interest has recently turned to the study of language representations of stereotypes considered to be cognitive constructs. Stereotypes are often realized by ethnophaulisms/ethnic slurs (derogatory or disparaging words) creating negative mental images of alien groups in linguistically diverse patterns such as transformations, associations, metaphorical and metonymical transfer (e.g., *rom* 'gypsy' (from *Romany*); *acey* 'Englishman' (Russian from English 'I say'); *aizer* 'a person from Azerbaijan'; *cent* 'North American' (Fofin, 2008, pp. 46-49). Stereotypical invectives are often applied to minorities. Many stereotypes are linguistically represented in folklore by sayings, proverbs, and idioms such as 'to see Indians' meaning "to be in a delirium" and 'to be a regular Indian' meaning "to be an habitual drunkard" according to Mieder (1995). (Lebedko, 2013a: 7)

1. How can stereotypes manifest themselves in language patterns?
2. Who are stereotypes often applied to?

Passage 2

Sociology (studying society, individuals, groups and human social interaction) defines stereotypes as cognitions held by one social group about another social group (Elligan, 2008), or as oversimplified standardized images (Moore, 2006). Psycho-sociology focuses on psycho-sociological functions ascribing negative characteristics to the stereotype regarded as stable, reinforcing prejudices and stipulating the barriers in communication according to Bartmiński (2009), the head of the Ethno-linguistic School of Lublin (Poland), who also highlights the unstable and changeable character of stereotypes and the connection between hetero-stereotypes (perception of others) and the history of neighboring countries. For example, immediate neighbors perceive Poles negatively, but the farther away the country, the more positive is the stereotype. Wide-ranging, research-generated illustrations are presented below.

Lithuanians consider Poles cunning and arrogant; Belarusians think Poles are haughty and loving domination; Russians earlier saw them as rioters and later as trading Catholics; Germans viewed them as poor, retarded thieves... For French, Poles are hardworking Catholic-alcoholics; for Americans, they are silly, but industrious and hospitable traditionalists (Bartmiński, 2009, p.15). (Lebedko, 2013a:6)

1. In what kind of images are stereotypes contained, according to Moore (2006)?
2. What do stereotypes reinforce, according to Bartmiński (2009)?

Passage 3

Social psychology (studying aspects of individuals and people's emotions, social perception and interactional behavior) treats stereotypes on the basis of the relationship between individuals and groups, considering them to be central factors of any society and of importance in inter-group perceptions. "These perceptions of groups are called stereotypes" according to McGarty, Yzerbyt and Spears (2002, p.1), who developed three guiding principles for understanding stereotypes: (a) "stereotypes are aids to explanation" implying that their formation may help the perceiver make sense of a situation; (b) "stereotypes are energy saving devices," implying that they may reduce the cognitive effort of the perceiver; and (c) "stereotypes are shared group beliefs" (p. 2), implying that norms of social groups and views are shared by the perceiver. Social psychology also treats stereotypes as units on which ethnocentric perception is based; a form of social perception or unique perceptual experience (Stewart & Bennett, 1991). Generalizations ignoring subtle differences among members of groups, individuals in a society and the application of broad categories can all lead to stereotyping. Stewart and Bennett (1991) offer the following illustration:

It occurred in the Portland, Oregon Rose Parade, where a float was entered honoring Sapporo, Japan, Portland's sister city. Dignitaries flown from Japan were quite upset when they observed that some of the young women waving from the float were Chinese, not Japanese. The parade director, when questioned on the point, responded with a statement of stereotypic perception: "Japanese...Chinese—close enough" (p.164). (Lebedko, 2013a:6-7)

1. What kind of relationship do social psychologists interested in stereotypes tend to focus on?
2. What tends to be ignored in the stereotyping process?

Passage 4

Cognitive linguistics (studying the relationship between cognition and the human mind, linguistic behavior and cognitive abilities, and the way language reflects patterns of thought) regards the stereotype as a mental category that people easily apply to all members of that category. “A stereotype is, thus, a socially determined minimum set of data with regard to the extension of a category” (Geeraerts, 2006, p.157). Pinker (2003) assumes that “...people’s ability to set aside stereotypes when judging an individual is accomplished by their conscious, deliberate reasoning” (p.205). However, being distracted or in need to respond quickly, people “... are more likely to judge that a member of an ethnic group has all stereotyped traits of the group” (p.205). Though stereotypes are relatively stable, they can also be reversed as illustrated below:

During World War II, when the Russians were allies of the United States and the Germans were enemies, Americans judged Russians to have more positive traits than Germans. Soon afterwards, when the alliances reversed, Americans judged Germans to have more positive traits than Russians (Pinker, 2003, p.205). (Lebedko, 2013a: 7)

1. How are stereotypes regarded by cognitive linguists?
2. Are stereotypes completely stable?

Task 7

Read the different definitions and key aspects of stereotypes in the academic fields listed in the table below (Lebedko, 2013a) and discuss them your group. Identify any similarities between them. Do you think a core meaning unites them despite the differences, or not, and why?

Field	Definition of stereotypes	Key aspects
Classical (sociological) definition	Pictures in our heads	Stimuli from the outside, especially when they are printed or spoken words, evoke some part of a system of stereotypes
Sociology	Cognitions held by one social group about another social group; oversimplified standardized images	Human social interaction
Psycho-sociology	Stable, reinforcing prejudices and stipulating the barriers in communication	Psycho-sociological functions ascribing negative aspects
Social psychology	Group perceptions relationship between individuals and groups; units on which ethnocentric perception is based	Aspects of individuals and people’s emotions, social perception
Linguistics	Negative mental images of alien groups in linguistically diverse patterns	Verbal representations of stereotypes; language bases of stereotypes
Cognitive linguistics	A mental category that people easily transfer to all the members of this category	Linguistic behavior; cognitive abilities; the way language reflects patterns of thought

Ethno-linguistics	A mental construct correlating with naïve worldview; a stable complex of naïve beliefs about a nation, reflecting specific features of folk xenopsychology	Language as an aspect of culture; language influence on culture and of culture on language; cultural / ethnic identity
Psycholinguistics	Based on different levels of language, including paralanguage	The mental aspects of language and speech; speech perception and peculiarities of various levels of language
Semiotics	Signs and symbols, their function in both artificial and natural languages; communicative behavior expressed both in language and nonverbal communication	Process and result of communicative (behavior) in accordance with semiotic patterns
Discourse analysis	Cultural ideological statements and overgeneralization	Reading key (the tone of communication)
Memetics	Memes as behavioral rules; generalisations of certain (positive or negative) opinions attached to individuals	Stereotyping based on culturally learned behavioral rules ignoring fixed, assumed, deduced or imagined characteristics

Task 8

Review this unit and develop the definition of stereotypes you wrote in Task 1. Use the paragraphs above to help you.

What is a stereotype?

Task 9

Review this unit independently. Note down any new words, phrases, expressions and sentence patterns you find in the box below.

3. DEFINING AND REFLECTING UPON STEREOTYPES

Overview

- The nature of stereotypes
- Self-reflection: My ideal English teacher
- Self and other: Comparing and contrasting stereotypes

Task 1

Check the meaning of the words in the table and underline them in Extracts 1-5 below, and answer the questions beneath each one.

	English word	Translation into your language
1	flawed	
2	a double-edged sword	
3	attributes	
4	ethnocentrism	
5	distort	
6	valence	
7	exaggerate	
8	bias	
9	self-esteem	
10	prejudice	

Extract 1: Defining stereotypes

The term *stereotype* was originally coined by Lippman (1922) to liken the cognitive stereotyping process to the way a printing press works when it prints the same identical symbols repeatedly, but the definition was later developed by Allport (1954) who explained it as “an exaggerated belief associated with a category”. Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson and Gaertner (1996) review definitions of stereotypes that have been presented since the term was first introduced, noting that earlier definitions tended to focus on their flawed nature, whereas later definitions emphasised their status as necessary cognitive processes that help us make sense of a highly complex world.

Stereotypes can be seen in terms of advantages and disadvantages. Brislin (1986) defines stereotypes as a double-edged sword: on the one hand, a “useful and important aspect of intelligent and efficient thinking” and on the other “any categorization of individual elements concerned with people that mask differences among those elements” (Brislin, 1981, p. 44). Dovidio et al. (1996) more recently defined it as “a generalization about beliefs about groups

unjustified because of faulty thought processes, over-generalization, factual incorrectness, inordinate rigidity, inappropriate attributions, rationalization from prejudiced attitude or discriminatory behaviour”. (Houghton, 2013: 158-9)

1. Who originally coined the word *stereotype*, and when?
2. How did Allport define it in 1954?
3. How did the way stereotypes were viewed by researchers change over time?
4. Why did Brislin describe stereotypes as a double-edged sword?
5. Does the definition formulated by Dovidio and his colleagues focus on the merits or demerits of stereotypes?

Extract 2: How stereotypes are formed

To avoid the potential negative effects of stereotyping processes, one needs to understand the process through which stereotypes are formed. Categories are often based on visually obvious attributes such as race or gender and may vary in saliency, relevance or differentiation according to the social context. Once a category has been set up in the mind, knowledge, beliefs and expectancies are added and individuals within the category are thereafter imbued with the characteristics attached to the category (Hamilton & Neville Uhles, 2000). Such categorisation processes form and maintain the group boundaries that underpin ethnocentrism and prejudice (Brislin, 1986; Levine & Campbell, 1972; Rubovits & Maehr, 1973). Through interaction with people who do not fit into the broader category, category sub-types are set up to account for the differences. Though still general in nature, category sub-types contain more detail than the main category and can have one of two effects upon the main category. They may isolate atypical members from the main category, thus preserving the existing stereotype, or they may “increase perceived diversity of the group diminishing ability to make sweeping generalizations” (Hamilton & Neville Uhles, 2000, p. 469). Thus, stereotype categorisation may or may not break down in response to new information. (Houghton, 2013: 161)

1. How can the negative effects of stereotypes be avoided?
2. What are stereotypical categorisations often based on?
3. What happens after a stereotype has been set up in the mind?
4. What do such categorisation processes form and maintain?
5. Does stereotypical categorisation always break down in response to new information or not?

Extract 3: The effects of stereotypes

Though the very idea of stereotypes is often negatively valenced, their effects are not always bad. Information held in the category can be considered a source of knowledge used to make inferences about people when other kinds of information are not available, which can be useful if the information is correct (Hamilton & Neville Uhles, 2000, p. 466-470), and stereotypes are basic to human thought (Brislin, 1986). Additional adjectives are necessary when referring to wrongs such as prejudicial stereotypes or hostile stereotypes. On the other hand, stereotypes are beliefs that are over-generalized (Barna, 1985) and since the categories become the focus of response, individual elements are glossed over and the information held in the stereotype may be inaccurate.

- ♦ Stereotypes are over-generalized beliefs that can distort perception adversely affecting communication as they disrupt the objectivity of perceptual processing (Barna, 1985).
- ♦ Since they are based upon exaggerated points of difference, stereotypes form a source of inaccurate information (Campbell, 1967; Harding, Proshansky, Kutner & Chein, 1969), distorting perception of the other and increasing the likelihood of misunderstanding.
- ♦ People tend to seek confirmation of stereotypes during interaction, which not only constrains communication but also encourages others to behave in line with the stereotypes thus creating a self-fulfilling prophecy in the process (Hewstone & Giles, 1986).
- ♦ Stereotypes have an adverse effect upon memory, causing people to see and remember behaviour that confirms their stereotypes favouring in-group members and disfavouring outgroup members in the process (Hewstone & Giles, 1986).
- ♦ Stereotypes can lead to inaccurate predictions about behaviour (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1988; Kim & Gudykunst, 1988). (Houghton, 2013: 158-9)

1. Are the effects of stereotypes always negative or not?
2. According to Barna, what is a main problem with stereotypes?
3. Why do stereotypes form a source of inaccurate information?
4. How can stereotypes create a self-fulfilling prophecy?
5. How do stereotypes affect memory?

Extract 4: Stereotypes and group boundaries

In addition to the effects of stereotyping upon individual perception listed above, stereotyping (or categorization) processes also contribute to the formation and maintenance of group boundaries, which relates directly to ethnocentrism (LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Rubovits & Maehr, 1973). Negative evaluations can be accentuated by illusory correlation, a form of cognitive bias, which takes place when distinctive but unrelated events are associated during information processing. Behaviours of out-group members noted and evaluated negatively on different

occasions may bias the observer to associate and remember them as beliefs about the group (Hamilton & Gifford, 1976). This may lead to a tendency to evaluate those members negatively on every occasion thereafter, reinforcing the in-group and out-group distinction, and enhancing the self-esteem of the individual concerned in the process.

Stereotypes thus play a role in the definition of group boundaries. Social Identity Theory suggests that stereotypical categorisations help define group boundaries and lie at the heart of inter-group attitudes. A person's identity consists of both personal and social identity. Personal identity refers to "self-categories that define the perceiver as a unique individual in contrast to other individuals", whereas social identity "refers to social categorisations of self and others, self-categories which define the individual in terms of his or her shared similarities with members of certain social categories in contrast to other social categories" (Turner, 2000, p. 341-343). Social categorisation of people into distinct groups can cause discrimination as the in-group is favoured over the out-group, which is rooted in a basic human need for self-esteem (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy & Flament, 1971; Tajfel, 1982; Turner, 1987), although the universality of this tendency has been questioned by Wetherell (1982). It seems to be generally accepted, however, that stereotypical categorizations do lie at the heart of inter-group attitudes. Negative evaluation of the out-group can be seen as a mechanism for forming and maintaining group boundaries, which relates to the ethnocentric need for positive social identity. (Houghton, 2013: 160)

1. What do stereotypes contribute to the formation and maintenance of?
2. What is illusory correlation and what tendency can it lead to?
3. What is suggested in Social Identity Theory?
4. How can personal and social identity be distinguished?
5. What can the basic human need for self-esteem cause in intergroup relations?

Extract 5: Stereotypes and prejudice

Prejudice, or unfair negative attitude toward out-group members (Dovidio et al, 1996), also relates to group identification processes. Brislin (1986) identifies key aspects of prejudice as pre-judgment based upon labels applied to people originating in factors differentiating people such as race, sex, skin colour, occupation, religion or political affiliation, whereby people are judged based on perceived membership of the labelled category, rather than as individuals. Brislin (1986) highlights the point that prejudicial judgments are evaluative. In addition to making judgments about facts, individuals also make judgments about the goodness, worth or desirability of other people based on the labels applied which are sometimes so strongly held that they are impervious to the introduction of new facts which, from a rational point of view, should affect attitudes towards others. Prejudice thus finds its roots in social categorisation and involves the tendency to evaluate negatively. (Houghton, 2013: 160-1)

1. How did Dovidio and colleagues define prejudice in 1996?
2. According to Brislin, upon what can prejudice be based?

3. On what kind of membership may prejudiced judgments be based?
4. What might people make judgments about?
5. What does ‘impervious to the introduction of new facts’ mean in this context?

Task 2

What would your ideal English teacher be like? Why would you like to have that kind of teacher? Also, what would your ideal English teacher **not** be like, and why? Write a short description of each, with reasons, in the box below and discuss them with your group.

- 1) What would my ideal English teacher look like?
- 2) Why would I like to have that kind of teacher?
- 3) What would my ideal English teacher **not** look like?
- 4) Why would I not like to have that kind of teacher?

Task 3

Read Ayaka’s answers to the questions below, and discuss them with your group. Do you find her reasons acceptable, or not, and why?

Ayaka’s answers

1) What would my ideal English teacher look like?

- My ideal English teacher would be female. She would have white skin, look happy and have a kind expression on her face. She would look intelligent and of course she would be good looking. I wouldn’t care if she wore glasses or not.

2) Why would I like to have that kind of teacher?

- I’m female, so if my English teacher was the same sex as me, I would be able to ask her questions easily and study without feeling anxious because she looks kind. The way she looks would also motivate me to study in class!

3) What would my ideal English teacher not look like?

- My least ideal English teacher would be an Asian man with a strict expression on his face, and whose clothes didn’t look so clean.

4) Why would I *not* like to have that kind of teacher?

- I'm female, so I would feel a little nervous with a male teacher. When I was a high school student, my English teacher was a woman but she was strict and her classes were a little stressful, so I don't want classes like that. Also, I wouldn't want an Asian teacher because I am Asian. I don't want to learn a foreign language from an Asian teacher. I think the impression of cleanliness is generally important for students because they don't want to go near teachers who don't seem clean.

Task 4

Would you like the teachers shown in each of the pictures below¹ to be your English language teacher? Write a number from 1-6 in the **ranking column** of the table below (1 = no, not at all / 6 = yes, very much so) and give reason(s) for your answers in each case.



Picture No.	Ranking	Reason(s)
1 (Asian/female)		
2 (White/female)		
3 (Black/female)		
1 (Asian/male)		
2 (White/male)		
3 (Black/male)		

¹ Source: the Face Research Lab Database <<http://www.faceresearch.org>>