# **Assignment - Action Research Design Outline**

**Assess Digital Learning Instruct (EDLD-5315-D21)**

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## ***I. What is the topic of your action research?***

The topic of my action research is to evaluate the **effect** of a blended learning environment called Explorers of the Forest of Reading and Writing on the motivation, reading comprehension, and Spanish writing performance of second-grade bilingual students. This project originates from my innovation plan (EDLD 5305) and addresses the need to strengthen bilingual literacy by integrating digital tools and physical learning centers. According to Christensen, Horn, and Johnson (2017), disruptive innovation in education occurs when technology is not used as an add-on, but to transform the learning experience. In line with this vision, Explorers of the Forest is designed as an immersive space that combines narrative, play, and digital resources to foster motivation.

Likewise, Mertler (2019) points out that action research must begin with authentic problems in teaching practice, transforming the classroom into a laboratory for continuous improvement. In my case, the main challenge is the low motivation and participation of students in reading and writing within a bilingual context, which justifies exploring the **effect** of a blended environment on these processes.

## ***II. What is the purpose of your study?***

The purpose of this study is to understand the **effect** that a blended learning environment, designed through Explorers of the Forest of Reading and Writing, has on the motivation, reading comprehension, and Spanish writing performance of second-grade bilingual students.The aim is not only to measure academic outcomes but also to analyze how the integration of digital tools with physical learning spaces can create meaningful experiences that encourage children to read and write with greater interest and consistency. As Fink (2013) notes, significant learning environments must connect students’ interests with authentic experiences that spark curiosity and engagement. In this sense, my study seeks to demonstrate that reading and writing can become more engaging experiences when combined with narratives, play dynamics, and technology. In my classroom, I have observed that students often disengage during traditional reading and writing activities. By integrating digital platforms, such as iReady, and hybrid literacy centers, I aim to create meaningful experiences that spark their curiosity and persistence.

Furthermore, Fullan (2011) emphasizes that real educational change occurs when teachers critically reflect on their practices to transform them, not only in terms of immediate achievements but also in the learning culture they foster. Therefore, this study aims to serve as a tool for redesigning my teaching practice, while also providing valuable evidence for other educators interested in implementing blended models that promote bilingual literacy in similar contexts.

## ***III. What is your fundamental research question?***

***Main Research Question:***What **effect** does the implementation of a bilingual blended learning environment, Explorers of the Forest of Reading and Writing, have on the motivation, reading comprehension, and Spanish writing performance of second-grade students?

***Sub-questions:***

1. In what ways do blended activities affect students’ motivation toward reading and writing in Spanish?
2. How does the use of interactive digital resources affect students’ active participation during literacy activities?
3. To what extent do students transfer reading strategies between English and Spanish during blended activities?
4. What evidence from digital and physical portfolios demonstrates the **effect** on students’ progress in Spanish writing production?

As Mertler (2019) and Creswell & Creswell (2018) point out, a well-developed action research question must focus on authentic problems of teaching practice and allow for the evaluation not only of immediate outcomes but also of the processes that produce them.

## ***IV. What is your research design?***

The design of my research is **mixed methods** because I need to understand both the **academic outcomes** and the **motivational and participatory processes** that explain them.

* **Quantitative component:** will measure immediate results in reading comprehension and writing through diagnostic and post-tests, analytic rubrics, and reading fluency records (WCPM). It will also include reports from digital platforms such as iReady and Amplify, which show time on task, lessons completed, and achievements reached.
* **Qualitative component:** will capture students’ voices and experiences through Likert-type surveys adapted for second grade, structured observations, anecdotal notes, and both digital and physical portfolios.

This comprehensive approach aligns with Creswell and Creswell (2018), who emphasize that mixed methods are particularly valuable in complex educational contexts where results cannot be explained solely through numbers but also require insights into perceptions and experiences. Likewise, Mertler (2019) highlights that action research is strengthened by triangulating multiple data sources, as this provides a more holistic and valid view of the **effect** of educational innovation on teaching practice.

## ***V. What is the most appropriate type of data to collect?***

The most appropriate type of data for my research is **mixed methods**, organized into two categories:

* ***Lag measures (academic outcomes):***
  + Diagnostic and post-tests of reading comprehension.
  + Analytic rubrics to evaluate Spanish writing (ideas, organization, vocabulary, conventions).
  + Reading fluency records (WCPM – words correct per minute).
  + Reports from digital platforms (iReady, Amplify) on time on task, lessons completed, and levels achieved.
* ***Lead measures (motivational and participatory processes):***
  + Likert-type surveys adapted for second-grade students (administered at three points: pre-test, mid-test, and post-test). These surveys will enable me to capture students’ feelings about reading and writing, which I have noticed vary significantly depending on the format of the activity.
  + Structured observations and anecdotal notes on attitudes and persistence.
  + Digital and physical portfolios that demonstrate progress in reading and writing.
  + Participation checklists for hybrid activities.

According to Mertler (2019), action research is enriched when teachers connect diverse types of data to understand not only the results obtained but also the processes that generate them. Similarly, Creswell and Creswell (2018) note that triangulating quantitative and qualitative data enhances validity and provides a more comprehensive view of the educational **effect**.

## ***VI. What types of measurement instruments will you use?***

To address my research question, I will use **both quantitative and qualitative instruments**, aligned with the dimensions of my innovation plan: motivation, reading comprehension, and Spanish writing performance.

* ***Quantitative instruments:***
  + Diagnostic and post-tests of reading comprehension, to evaluate progress in literal and inferential reading.
  + Analytic rubrics for Spanish writing, with clear criteria (ideas, organization, vocabulary, conventions) that ensure validity and reliability (Brookhart, 2013).
  + Reading fluency records (WCPM), to document accuracy, speed, and prosody in oral reading.
  + Reports from digital platforms (iReady, Amplify), which provide objective data on time on task, lessons completed, and level achieved.
* ***Qualitative instruments:***
  + Likert-type surveys adapted for second-grade students, administered at three points (pre-, mid-, and post-test) to measure motivation.
  + Structured observations and anecdotal notes, to record attitudes, persistence, and confidence in reading and writing activities.
  + Digital and physical portfolios, integrating evidence of students’ work, their progress, and their participation in the blended environment.

The combined use of these instruments will enable **data triangulation**, thereby strengthening the validity and reliability of the results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Moreover, Mertler (2019) emphasizes that in action research, instruments must be practical and contextualized so that teachers can obtain meaningful information that immediately informs and improves their practice.

## ***VII. What is the focus of your literature review?***

My literature review will focus on **four main strands** that support both the design and evaluation of my innovation plan Explorers of the Forest of Reading and Writing:

1. ***Bilingual literacy in elementary education:*** research that examines how students develop reading comprehension and writing in contexts where two languages are learned, and the role of cross-linguistic transfer between English and Spanish (August & Shanahan, 2017).
2. ***Blended learning and digital literacy:*** studies on how blended environments, which combine face-to-face and digital instruction, can strengthen motivation and literacy outcomes among elementary students (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2017).
3. ***Motivation and engagement in early literacy:*** theories and evidence that explain the relationship between motivation, self-efficacy, and students’ willingness to read and write, with an emphasis on the use of interactive resources that promote engagement (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000).
4. ***Action research as a framework for teacher improvement:*** the importance of action research in generating contextualized evidence that transforms educational practice and fosters teacher professional reflection (Mertler, 2019; Fink, 2013).

This focus will allow me to **bridge the pedagogical and academic dimensions**: not only measuring the **effect** of the blended environment on reading and writing outcomes but also understanding how motivation and learning culture influence students’ literacy habits in a bilingual context.

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