

All ears for change: Transformative practices in Exploratory Action Research

Webinar handout

by Jittima Duangmanee, Patcharin Kunna, Thanyasiri Sittirach, and Damkerng Mungthanya

What is EAR?

EAR or Exploratory Action Research is a practical and teacher-friendly approach that enables educators to investigate and enhance their own teaching practices systematically. This method is particularly designed to help teachers in challenging environments by engaging them in research that improves their professional development and understanding of classroom dynamics. It's a process that empowers teachers to take control of their own improvements through thoughtful, structured inquiry into their teaching methods and student interactions.

What are the differences between Academic research and Exploratory Action Research (EAR)?

Academic research and exploratory action research (EAR) are different. Academic research focuses on creating new theory that can be used widely and follows strict rules. EAR, on the other hand, is about solving real problems in specific classrooms. It's more flexible and directly helps teachers improve their teaching quickly. While academic research aims for insights that affect many, EAR looks at immediate changes to help students and teachers right away. - Exploratory Action Research: More flexible and informal, tailored to personal teaching practices and immediate classroom needs.

What are the basic methods of EAR?

<https://www.britishcouncil.or.th/en/programmes/teach/asean2024>





Exploration phase

- A. Plan to Explore: Identify an issue in your teaching and formulate a guiding question.
- B. Explore: Gather data through observations and feedback.
- C. Analyse and Reflect: Analyse the data to uncover patterns and reflect on possible changes.

Action phase

- 1. Plan to Change: Decide on specific actions to address the identified issue from the exploratory stage.
- 2. Act: Implement the planned actions in your teaching or classroom setting.
- 3. Observe: Closely monitor the effects of these actions, gathering data and observations.
- 4. Reflect: Analyse the outcomes, determining effectiveness and areas for further adjustment.

Useful resources

1. "A Handbook for Exploratory Action Research" by Richard Smith & Paula Rebolledo.	
2. Facebook Group: Teachers research	
3. Thanyasiri's Poster: How can I improve my students' writing skills?	
4. Damkerng's Poster: Enhancing Student Engagement in Reading Lessons Through Collaborative Group Activities and Technology Integration	

References

Smith, R., & Rebolledo, P. (2016). *A Handbook for Exploratory Action Research*. British Council. Available at: British Council TeachingEnglish

Smith, R., & Rebolledo, P. (2022). A Handbook for Exploratory Action Research. *ELT Journal*, 76(2), e1. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccz025>