Converting Research into Practice

DBA

Doctor of Business Administration
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Instructor - Dr Alice Te

Day 4 - 14 January 2024

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What we have covered in Day 3

- Sharing of your interested area of Research
- Some Contemporary Management Topics
- AI Applications in Business and HRM
- How to do a Pilot Study

Day four: Jan 14

How to write a Dissertation – a Practical Guide

Concerns of Examiners

Homework – Draft YOUR research proposal

What is a Good Dissertation

Framework of a good doctorate thesis

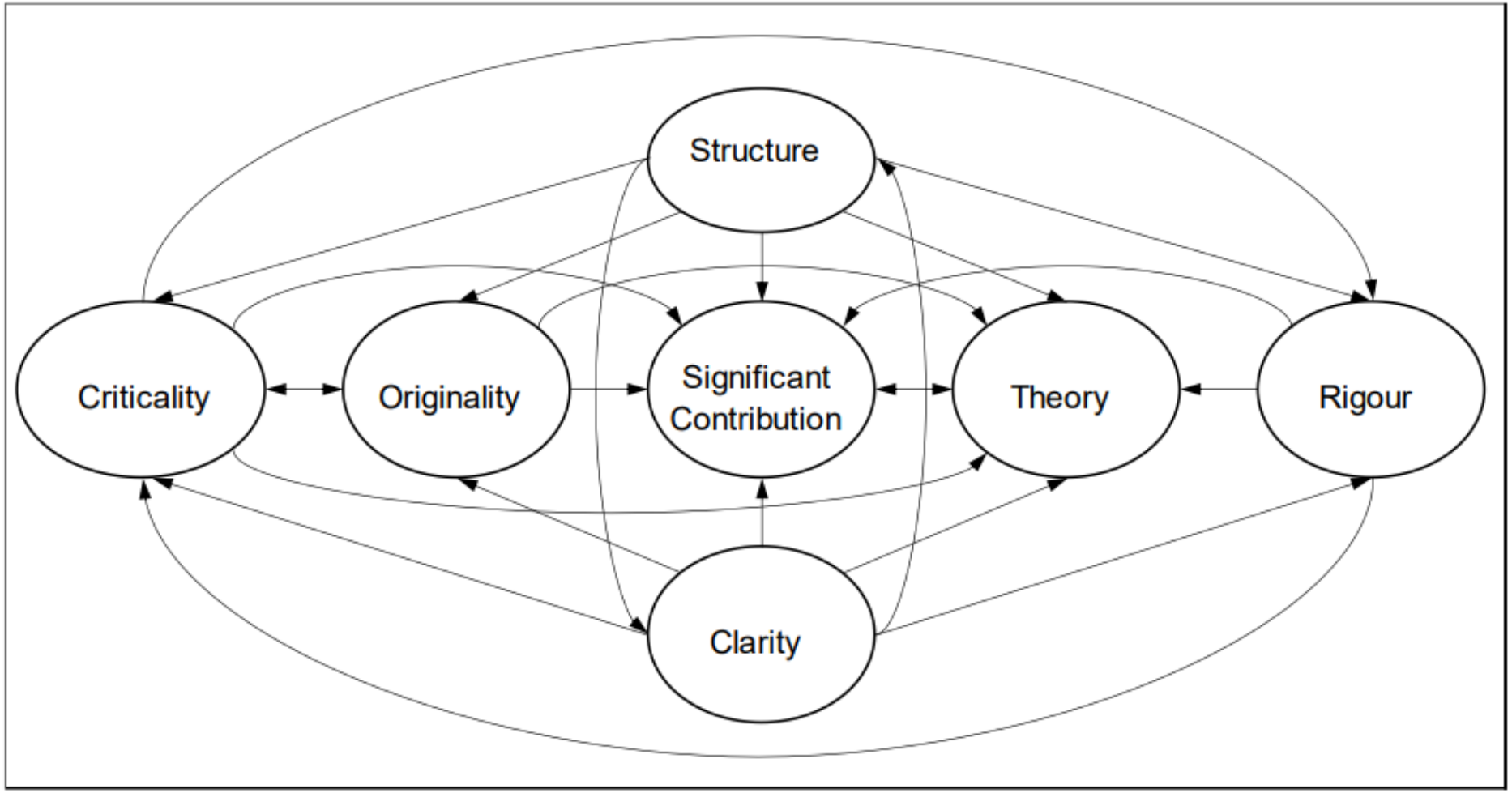


Figure 1. The Seven Attributes Framework (SAF).

De Vita & Begley (2023). A framework of 'doctorateness' for the social sciences and postgraduate researchers' perceptions of key attributes of an excellent PhD thesis, accepted by *Studies in Higher Education* (ISSN: 1470-174X) on 04/11/2023. DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2023.2281540.

What is a good doctorate thesis

- ‘It’s Not a Nobel Prize” (Mullins and Kiley, 2002: 369)
- Originality can suitably be demonstrated by adding to an existing academic debate, in the study’s design, knowledge synthesis and implications (Wellington 2010).
- It is depth not breadth that matters:

  ‘Although one of the expectations of a doctorate thesis is that it contains something novel as its centre piece, this is often confined to a narrow sub-area of a field.’ Rüger (2016: 2)

FIGURE 2.1 The essential elements of a research proposal

© M.Denscombe. Research Proposals.
Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill 2012

Assessment Profile

The following questions aim to focus your attention on some key communication criteria you need to consider in writing a reader-friendly dissertation.

A. Overall Communicative Success

How clearly and consistently information is presented throughout the dissertation and how easy it is to follow the ideas in the text

Assessment Profile

1. Purpose

- Is the purpose of the research clearly stated at the outset?
- Has the need for this research been clearly established?
- Are the research questions clearly and explicitly stated?
- Are the questions answerable? Are they appropriate for DBA?
- Do you create or apply a theoretical or conceptual model appropriate to the research domain in question?

Assessment Profile

2. Audience **(explicitness)**

- Is the general purpose and justification for the research clear to the non-specialist?
- Does the work assume knowledge which would only be accessible to someone with a doctorate degree in the area concerned?

3. Organization

- Is the text well organized?
- Is the organization consistent with the overall purpose of the research?
- Are 'facts' synthesised and related to concepts and models?
- Are findings related to existing knowledge in the area under investigation?

Assessment Profile

4. Signposting

- Are titles and sub-titles informative?
- Is the organization of the dissertation, chapter, or section clearly signaled to the reader

5. Consistency of argument

- Are central concepts and constructs underlying the research operationally defined?
- Is their use in the writing consistent with the way in which they have been defined?
- Is there consistency in the research outcomes?
- If not, does the author evaluate on conflicting findings?
- Are the arguments consistently presented?
- Are threats to the internal and external reliability and validity of the research acknowledged?

Assessment Profile

B. Substantiation

How the work of others is referred to and how the author's own claims are presented

1. Use of sources

- ✓ Is appropriate language used when referring to the work of others?
- ✓ Is it evident why all the sources have been cited?
- ✓ Are similarities of findings of others pointed out?
- ✓ Are conflicting findings of others acknowledged, evaluated?
- ✓ Is the discussion of others' research clearly organized according to major themes relevant to the problem being investigated?
- ✓ Have all sources been adequately and consistently referenced?
- ✓ Has the relative importance of others' findings been indicated?
- ✓ Has source material been satisfactorily paraphrased?
- ✓ Are direct quotations mainly short and not too numerous?

Assessment Profile

2. Status of claims

- ✓ Is appropriate language used for making claims about own/others' work?
- ✓ Are the limitations of own/others' work acknowledged?
- ✓ Is appropriate language when criticising the work of others?

Assessment Profile

C. Discourse elements and features

How information is introduced and developed within and across paragraphs

1. Topic development

- Is the central topic of each paragraph readily identifiable?
- Is the central topic of the paragraph fully developed within the paragraph?
- Do all the sentences within a paragraph relate to the central theme or topic?

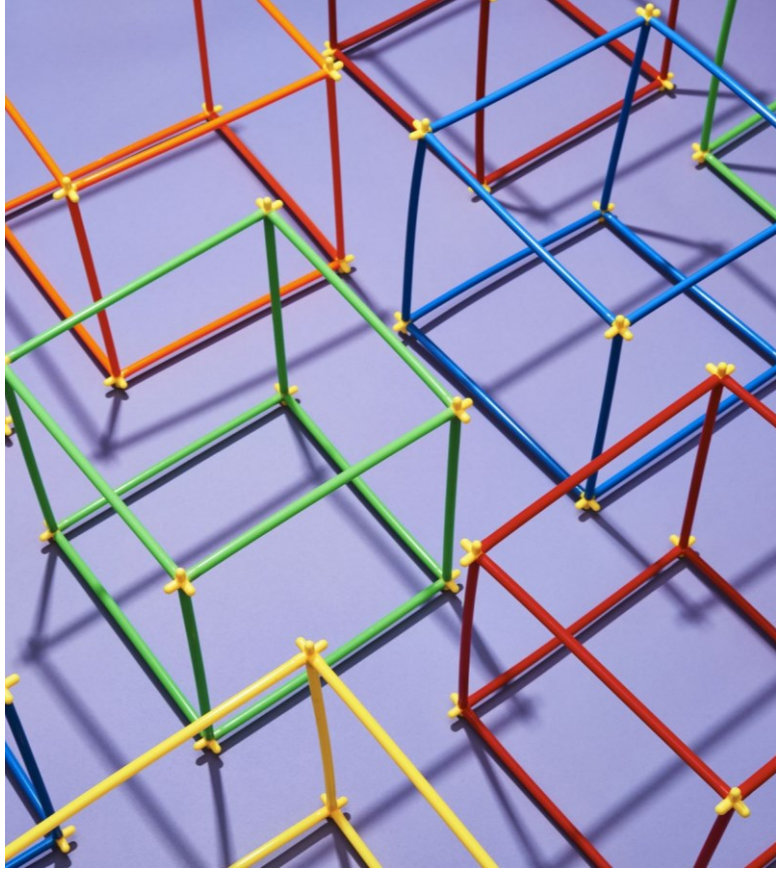
Assessment Profile

2. **Cohesion**

- Are the relationships among ideas across sentences clear?
- Are pronoun references correct and unambiguous?
- Have ideas been ‘tied together’ using given-new structure?
- Does the choice of vocabulary help tie text together?
- Does the writer rely too heavily on sentence connectors?

3. **Clause structure**

- Do main clauses carry the important information?
- Has information been well combined (coordinated, subordinated) in sentences?



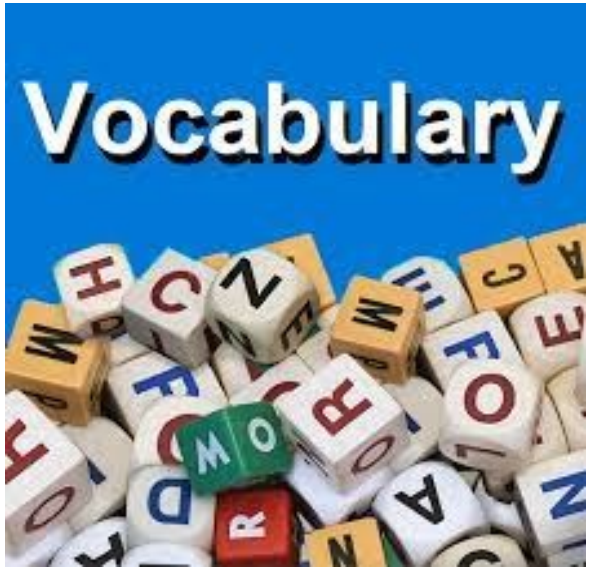
Assessment Profile

4. **Grammatical choices**

- Has the active voice and passive voice been used appropriately?
- Do tense choices clearly distinguished between ongoing and completed events as well as habitual and one-off occurrences?

5. **Vocabulary**

- Does the writer show an awareness of subject-specific vocabulary?
- Is non-subject-specific vocabulary correctly used?
- Is the choice of vocabulary appropriate for formal academic writing?



Assessment Profile

D. **Editing**

How well the work has been proof-read and edited

- Are there missing ‘s’es on 3rd person singular verbs?
- Are there missing ‘s’es on plurals?
- Are past and present participles (-ed and –ing) used correctly?
- Are adjectives and adverbs confused?
- Has the document been spell-checked?
- Is the spacing before and after punctuation marks correct and consistent?
- Are all citations correctly punctuated and acknowledged with page numbers?
- Is the list of references complete and consistently presented?

Key features to consider in writing your thesis

Your audience

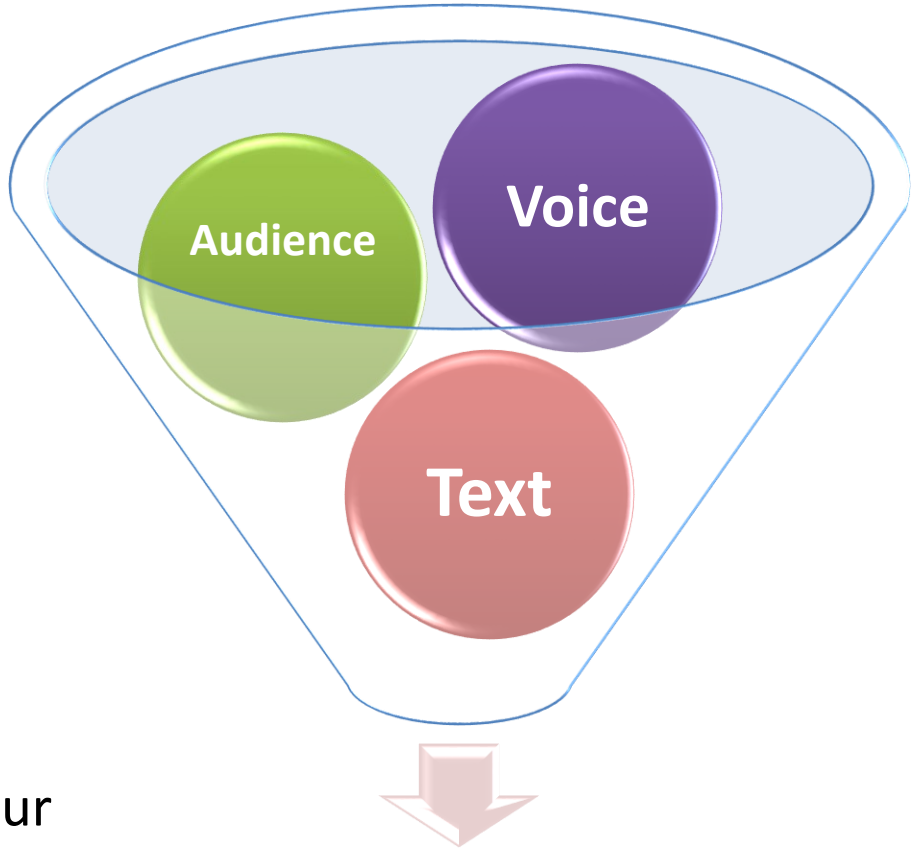
- Who will be reading it?
- Who is the target audience?
- The secondary audience?

Your voice

- How will your voice be heard?
- What is appropriate in your field?

Text

- How will you structure the text to make it reader-friendly for your audience?
- What is the most appropriate approach in your field?



Dissertation

The audience

Talking about your research

Explain what your research is about to other students

1. What is the general field of your research?
2. What is the particular topic within this field that you are interested in?
3. What specific questions or problems are you interested in?
4. Why are these questions/problems important?
5. In what way is your research useful to ordinary people who are not researchers?
6. Have similar questions already been asked by other researchers?
7. What is already known about this topic? What is less known?
8. How will you find out more about this topic?
9. What will your sources of data be?
10. What methods of investigation will you use?
11. What stage have you reached in your research?
12. Do you anticipate any problems?

How to write a Dissertation

Let’s discuss

1. When do you start writing your dissertation?
2. What are the biggest difficulties you think you will encounter in writing your dissertation?

Thesis structure and the research process

A thesis is a record of your research work, which usually involves six major phases:

1. deciding on an area of research
2. identifying important questions within it that have not yet been answered by previous research
3. designing a study that will seek to provide answers to these questions and carrying it out
4. presenting the results/findings of the study
5. analyzing/ interpreting the results/findings
6. drawing inferences and conclusions from your findings

Traditional Simple Structure of a thesis

Your Research Work	Chapter	Function of the Chapter
Identifying a research area in which you are interested. Identifying and exploring problems in this area and their importance.	1. **Introduction**	Identify research area and its importance. Identify problems within this area and explain your interest in them.
Reading around the research area, identifying theoretical frameworks and gaps in the Research	2. **Literature review**	Identify and review relevant literature and theory. Identify a gap in the research and explain how your research will fill the gap.
Specifying research questions. Identifying an appropriate theoretical framework. Devising a method for a specific study that you will carry out.	3. **Methods**	Describe your research questions, your theoretical framework and key concepts, and the methods and materials used in your study
Carrying out a study that aims to answer your research questions and analyzing the results to produce findings	4. **Results/ Findings**	Describe the results and findings of the study that you have carried out.
Considering the meaning and significance of your findings in relation to previous research.	5. **Discussion**	Discuss and interpret your findings with reference to the literature review.
Reflecting on the overall contribution of your study to knowledge, its limitations and possibilities for future research.	6. **Conclusion**	Discuss the contribution of your thesis to knowledge in your field, the limitations in your work and possibilities for future research.

Signposting

- refers to the ways in which writers guide the reader through a piece of writing — not just at the beginning, but throughout. The longer a piece of writing is, the more guidance a reader needs.
- Thesis writers often include more signposting in their theses than they would in other kinds of writing, simply because they do not want to take the chance that their examiners will miss what they want to say

Signposting

- From the logic connecting sentences and paragraphs to the coherent sequence of sections and chapters, examiners expect a rational flow that avoids a chaotic jumble of information. This is also why it is deemed important to signpost.
- Signposting is part of what is known as the ‘meta-text’, where one writes about what one is writing (Golding, 2017)

Signposting at various levels

Title of a thesis	Does the title clearly **explain** what the thesis covers? Is it too broad or not specific enough?
Titles of chapters	Do the chapter titles help you understand how the thesis is organized? Do they show the functions of the chapters (e.g. introduction, literature review)? Do they accurately **describe** the content?
Titles of sections within chapters	Are the chapters divided into sections with **sub-headings**? Is a numbering system used? Are the levels of the sub-headings clearly distinguishable? Do the sub-headings help you to see how the chapter is organized?
Introductory paragraph at the start of a Chapter	Does each chapter begin with a paragraph **explaining the purpose** of the chapter and its organization? Are references made to the previous or later chapters? Are references made to numbered sections within the chapter?
Introductory paragraph **at the start of a Section**	Does each **major section** begin with a paragraph explaining its purpose and organization (including sub-sections
Topic sentences of Paragraphs	Does each paragraph **begin** with a topic sentence that indicates the content of the paragraph
Chapter/section summaries	Does each chapter end with a **summary** of the content of the chapter? Does a long section end with a section summary?

Thesis Titles

- A title should summarize the main idea of the thesis simply and if possible, with style.
- It should be a concise statement of the main topic and should identify the concepts/variables/issues under investigation and the relationship between them.
- A title should be fully explanatory when standing alone.
- Avoid using abbreviations in a title; spelling out all terms helps ensure accurate, complete indexing of the thesis.

Thesis Titles

Questions to consider when composing thesis titles:

1. What you are studying – this should include
   - o the general area or topic of research and
   - o the variables or theoretical issues and their relationship [the researchable part]
2. How you want to study it – [methodology / methods]
3. What your research context is [temporal and/or spacial]

Examples of titles

1. A study of the relationships between listed companies' environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting, company value and investment risk in Hong Kong
2. A study on the relationship between transformational servant leadership and employee engagement in the service industry
3. The impact of Work-Family and Family-Work Conflict on employees' work outcomes: a moderated mediating model
4. A study on the influence of Work From Home on the work-life balance of female employees in Hong Kong
5. A study of Open Innovation in Small and Medium Enterprises in Hong Kong
6. A study of the rewards-based crowdfunding for technology innovation start-ups in China
7. Development of a new funding model for philanthropic foundations

Examples - four more

1. Residential satisfaction and behavioural intentions: a study of private housing in Hong Kong
2. The impacts of service quality, customer satisfaction and perceived price fairness on the behavioural loyalty of Hong Kong business and non-business air travellers towards airline companies
3. A study of the use of Zoom/Teams training as an effective mode of training for the financial advisors in Hong Kong
4. Towards building a holistic management framework for social enterprises in Hong Kong

Ways to create a gap and focus the research

Three basic approaches

A. Negative (less negative – use a comparative statement)

- Few studies have focused on . . .
- Previous research has been limited to X situation . . .
- Although considerable research has been devoted to X, rather less has been paid to...

Ways to create a gap and focus the research

B. Raise a question, hypothesis or need

- However, it remains unclear whether . . .
- The findings suggest X might be X in X situation . . .
- If these results could be confirmed, they would provide strong evidence for . .

Ways to create a gap and focus the research

C. Extend previous knowledge

- The recent developments in X clearly have potential. In this paper, I demonstrate…
- The literature shows that X is useful for Y. This paper uses X to . . .
- [State a result of previous research with X approach/ method, etc.] This research utilizes the X approach to/for . . .

How to do Literature Review

How to do Literature Review

TASK 1 Focusing on YOUR research

Your Topic/Title:

_____

_____

1. Name 3 key researchers/authors in your specific area of research.

   Name: _____

   Why is he or she important? _____

   What is the connection between his/her work & your research

   _____

Focusing on your research

2. Name 2-4 of the most important journals in your field.

   _____

   _____

3. What do you do when and after you read a relevant article? How do you ‘keep track of’ hundreds of articles?

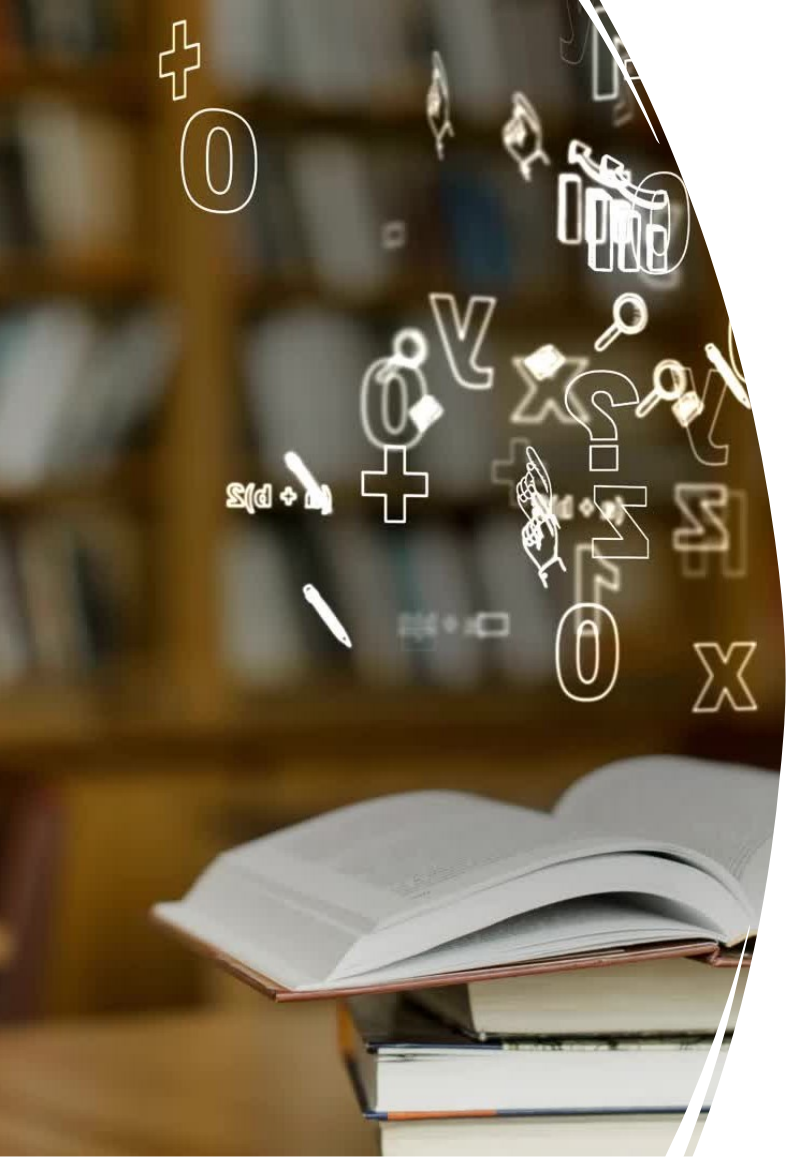
   _____

   _____

4. What will you/do you do to keep your literature review up-to-date throughout the years?

   _____

   _____



Steps in preparing to write your literature review

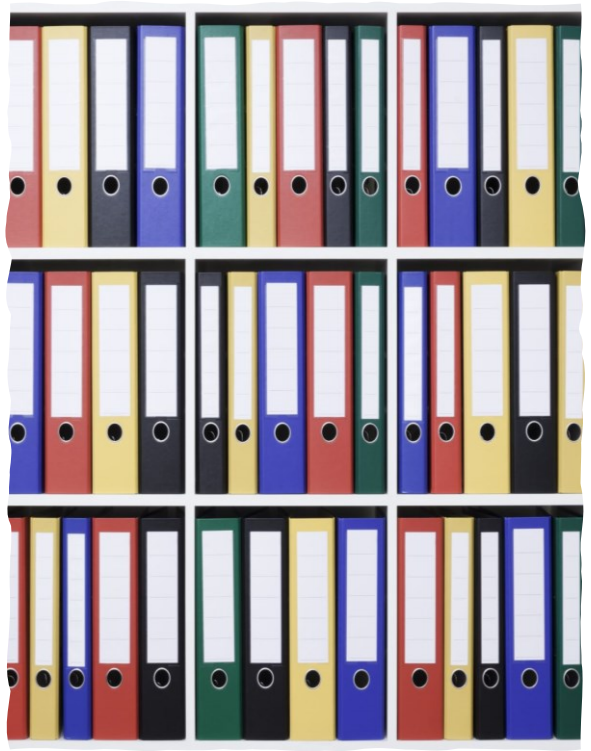
Step 1 Locate relevant literature

Some strategies

- Identify key authors and journals. Find state-of-the-art articles
- Use Google Scholar (and other computer searches)
- Login in to the University portal, go to the Library for your online search for better access
- Arrange for an ALERT so that the Table of Contents of new issues of your favorite journals are sent directly to you via email
- Scan Tables of Contents from key journals, books and e-books
- Check reference lists from articles, books and chapters (and follow links)
- Read primary sources (avoid the popular press and check acceptability of other web sources with your supervisor)

Adapted Cone & Foster, 1993

Step 1 Locate relevant literature



Read critically

- Identify relevant themes in the literature
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of individual articles
- Collect copies (hard or soft) of articles. Highlight and annotate
- Get started on a systematic means of BRIEF note-taking as soon as possible
- Check out Endnote or other program to see if it would be useful for you

Prepare to write

- Investigate expected length and format of the literature review
- Make a preliminary outline
- Organize the literature you will cover
- Limit the scope of the review to the topic at hand

More Practical Tips on how to Read Critically

When I read an academic text, I

1. Try to work out what the author is aiming to achieve
2. Try to work out the structure of the argument
3. Try to identify the main claims made
4. Adopt a skeptical stance towards the author's claims checking that they are supported by appropriate evidence
5. Assess the backing for any generalizations made
6. Check how the author define their key terms and whether they re consistent in using them
7. Consider what underlying values may be guiding the authors and influencing their claims
8. Keep an open mind, willing to be convinced
9. Look out for instances of relevant or distracting material, and for the absence of necessary material
10. Identify any literature sources to which the authors refer, that I may need to follow up

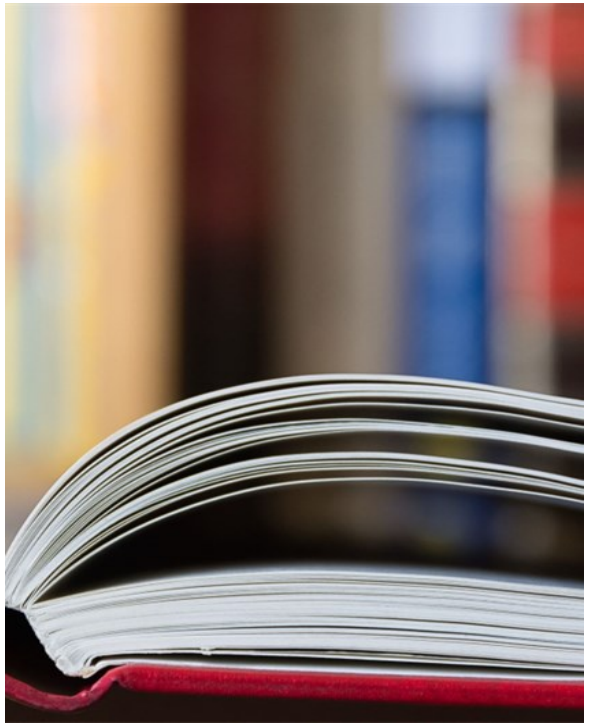
Step 2 Reading, summarizing and critiquing previous

Summarizing a previous study

- What are the major research questions or hypotheses in the study?
- What were the main findings of the study?
- Why was it important to carry out the research?
- What other research studies have been conducted in the same area?
- What is the relationship between this study, other studies and your own project?

Seliger & Shohamy, 1989

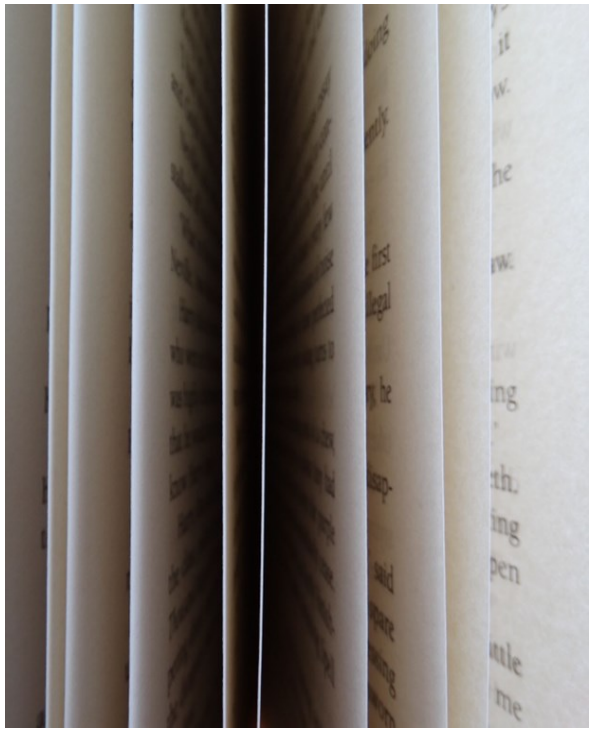
Step 2 Reading, summarizing and critiquing previous



Summarizing research methods

- What research design was used in the study?
- What were the main variables in the study?
- What data was collected for the study?
- Describe the population, sample, and selection procedures for the sample.
- Describe the data collection procedures used in the study.
- Were issues of reliability and validity considered?

Step 2 Reading, summarizing and critiquing previous



Analysis of the data

- How was the data analyzed in the study?
- Were the analytic procedures quantitative, qualitative or both?
- Would you be able to re-analyze the data on the basis of the information provided about the analytic procedures?

Step 2 Reading, summarizing and critiquing previous

Analyzing findings

- What were the main findings of the study?
- How do the findings relate to previous research on the topic?
- What conclusions does the researcher reach on the basis of the findings?
- What are the implications of the findings?
- What recommendations does the researcher make based on the findings and results of the study?

Step 2 Reading, summarizing and critiquing previous

Critiquing previous research

- Is the research problem clearly stated?
- Are the variables clearly described and defined?
- Is the design of the study appropriate for the particular research question?
- Are the research instruments appropriate for the particular study?
- Are the data analysis procedures appropriate for the particular study?
- Was the author consistent in the way results are analyzed?
- Are the conclusions, implications, and recommendations warranted by the results?

Purposes of reviewing the literature

You have to defend themselves against three major challenges that can be summed up by these questions:

1. Is your research original?
2. Is your research worthwhile?

Also, in your thesis or at your oral examination,

3. Are you an expert in your field?

The concept of a literature review is closely related to these questions. It is through your review of literature (which may or may not be contained in a chapter called 'Literature Review'), that you can show the sense in which your research is both original and worthwhile.

Purposes of reviewing the literature

1. **Showing that your research is original**

   Originality in postgraduate research can mean one of several things:

   - it addresses questions that have not been asked before
   - it addresses questions that have been asked before, but have not been adequately answered
   - it addresses old questions from a new theoretical perspective, or in the light of new information
   - it addresses old questions in a new context
   - it applies earlier research findings in a new way

Purposes of reviewing the literature

2. **Showing that your research is worthwhile**

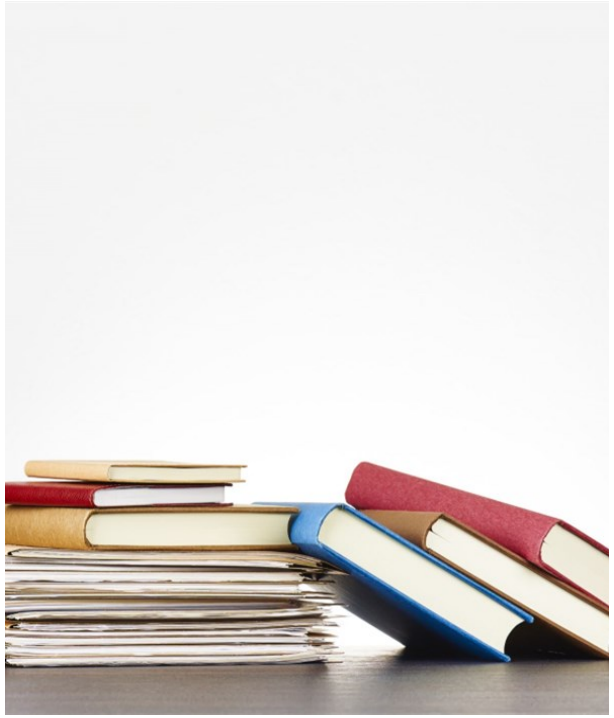
One possible problem with original research is that there may be a very good reason why nobody has attempted it before. The issues involved may be trivial, the questions may be unanswerable or the methods proposed impractical. You therefore need to show that your research is worthwhile, in the sense that it can make a significant contribution to knowledge.

Purposes of reviewing the literature

3. Proving that you are an expert

Examiners as gatekeepers to the admission of new knowledge.

Examiners of theses (as well as reviewers or editors of publications) play a gate-keeping role in the human quest for new knowledge. As such, when reviewing a thesis, they tend to check if:



Purposes of reviewing the literature

- there is a theoretical basis for the study and whether it, in turn, contributes to theory in some way, however small
- the candidate is familiar with important specific studies to date
- the research design and data collection and analysis procedures adopted by the candidate are sound
- the findings can benefit the lives of ordinary people or their environment in some way, potentially or immediately

To persuade examiners or other reviewers that your work does meet the high standards for new knowledge, you will have to enlist the support from the research community in your field by citing the work of other researchers at every stage of your study.

TASK 2: Checking YOUR literature review knowledge

___ 1. The preparation of a literature review is a three-step process: finding the relevant literature, reading, and then writing up the review.

___ 2. Your literature review should be as long as possible to persuade your reader that you have read very widely.

___ 3. You need to include all of the previous research that relates to your topic.

___ 4. You can safely ignore literature that is not directly related to your topic.

___ 5. Your literature review is important because it demonstrates that the findings, theory or analysis that you will present are a contribution to a cumulative process.

___ 6. Your literature review needs to explain clearly which potential areas for inclusion have not been covered in the review and why they have been omitted.

___ 7. Your literature review should discuss problems and/or controversies within your field.

___ 8. Your literature review should be presented in chronological order.

___ 9. Your literature review can help you discover conceptual traditions and frameworks used to examine problems.

___ 10. Your literature review should focus on very recent publications because they are likely the most relevant.

___ 11. Your literature review should help you reveal gaps in the existing body of research.

___ 12. In your literature review you should critically evaluate each piece of work included.

Adapted from Swales & Feak, 2000:117

Some advices

1. **Select** the theoretical work and reports of studies most relevant to your project

   remember to review methodologies as well as theory and empirical studies

2. **Avoid** a series of unrelated summaries of recent research (not to give a lecture)

3. **Accept conflict**: Seek out and acknowledge conflicting studies

   Don't fail to notice them or try to ignore them

4. **Create your research space** for the reader

   Identify the `**gap**': are you replicating, adding, extending recent work or challenging it?

5. Use **references** carefully for clear purposes - either theoretical or empirical studies

6. **Structure** your literature review according to some topic-category or logic – e.g. chronology, hierarchy of importance

7. Provide "**Closure**" and "**Integrity**": Ask 2 questions:

   How does it all relate to my **research questions** (RQs)?

   Have I **demonstrated**:

   - how it all relates to my RQs?

   - how my RQs evolved out of that reading and reflection?

8. **Review** stage: Consider how your **Literature Review** fits into the overall **structure of your thesis**

How does a student/author use the literature to demonstrate that the research is original and worthwhile?

1. Acknowledge the work and ideas of others in order not to be accused of plagiarism
2. Demonstrate familiarity with the field in order to establish membership in a particular academic community
3. Define key terms and concepts in the field/discipline
4. Summarize relevant up-to-date findings from other studies
5. Evaluate/analyze other researchers' work to show support or to refute someone else's claims about his/her findings
6. Discuss competing theoretical frameworks and methodologies
7. Support your methods and findings to give more authority to your claims
8. Show weakness or limitations of previous research
9. Create a research space by showing what has already been done and what has not been done in your area

TASK 3 Analyze a Balanced Critique of the Literature

Is it necessary to be balanced?

How to make the literature balanced?

Example

Title: The Impact of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance: A Balanced Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to explore the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance. Leadership is a critical factor in shaping the effectiveness and success of organizations, and understanding the impact of different leadership styles can provide valuable insights for managers and practitioners. This review aims to present a balanced analysis of the existing literature, examining both the positive and negative effects of various leadership styles on organizational performance.

Section 1: Transformational Leadership

- Definition and key characteristics of transformational leadership.
- Studies highlighting the positive impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction.
- Counterarguments and studies pointing out potential drawbacks of transformational leadership, such as its potential to create dependency on leaders and hinder innovation.

Example

Title: The Impact of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance: A Balanced Literature Review

Section 2: Transactional Leadership

- Definition and key characteristics of transactional leadership.
- Research demonstrating how transactional leadership can provide clarity, structure, and performance expectations, leading to improved organizational outcomes.
- Critiques of transactional leadership, including its potential to foster a transactional exchange mindset rather than intrinsic motivation and long-term commitment.

Section 3: Servant Leadership

- Definition and key characteristics of servant leadership.
- Studies highlighting the positive impact of servant leadership on employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors.
- Counterarguments and research discussing the potential challenges of implementing servant leadership in hierarchical organizations and its impact on decision-making efficiency.

Example

Title: The Impact of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance: A Balanced Literature Review

Section 4: Authentic Leadership

- Definition and key characteristics of authentic leadership.
- Research indicating the positive influence of authentic leadership on employee trust, commitment, and ethical behavior.
- Criticisms and studies highlighting the challenges of assessing and measuring authenticity, as well as potential risks of authentic leaders being perceived as self-righteous or inflexible.

Section 5: Situational/Contingent Leadership

- Definition and key characteristics of situational/contingent leadership.
- Research exploring the effectiveness of different leadership styles based on situational factors, such as task complexity or follower readiness.
- Debates surrounding the practicality and applicability of situational leadership models in real-world organizational contexts.

Example

Title: The Impact of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance: A Balanced Literature Review

Conclusion:

This literature review provides a balanced overview of the impact of different leadership styles on organizational performance. It highlights the strengths and weaknesses of each style, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of leadership and its contextual nature. By considering the findings and insights from this review, managers and practitioners can make informed decisions about leadership approaches that align with their organizational goals and foster positive outcomes for employees and the organization as a whole.

Note: This exemplar demonstrates a balanced literature review by presenting a comprehensive analysis of multiple leadership styles, discussing both their positive and negative aspects, as well as acknowledging potential criticisms and debates within the literature. A balanced literature review aims to provide an objective and impartial assessment of the existing knowledge and perspectives, allowing readers to develop a well-rounded understanding of the research topic.

Example

But, what is missing?

- References with citations
- Key authors
- How it relates to your research topic
- ……

Citing Your Sources

Some basic definitions

- A citation is a quotation or other reference to an authoritative source in the text of a paper used to support a point or argument.
- A reference list is a list of items to which you have referred (or mentioned in the body or text of your paper).
- A reference list is not a bibliography — which can include more general sources that you may have consulted but are not mentioned in the thesis.

Citing Your Sources

- The most basic principle is there must be a direct match between sources (books, articles, etc.) that you cite in the text of your thesis and items you list in your reference list.
- Every source you cite in your thesis must be found in your reference list.
- Every source you list in your reference list must be cited (i.e., directly mentioned) in the body of your thesis.

A quick quiz on your current knowledge in citation and referencing

Fill in the table with the choices provided (A, B, C, D, and E).

Purpose	Means
Referring to others' ideas	
Acknowledging sources of information	
Providing additional information	
Critiquing others' ideas	
Avoiding plagiarism	

A Using footnotes or endnotes
B Using in-text citations OR compiling a list of references
C Using words of appraisal
D Quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing or using words of attribution
E Using in-text citations AND compiling of list of references

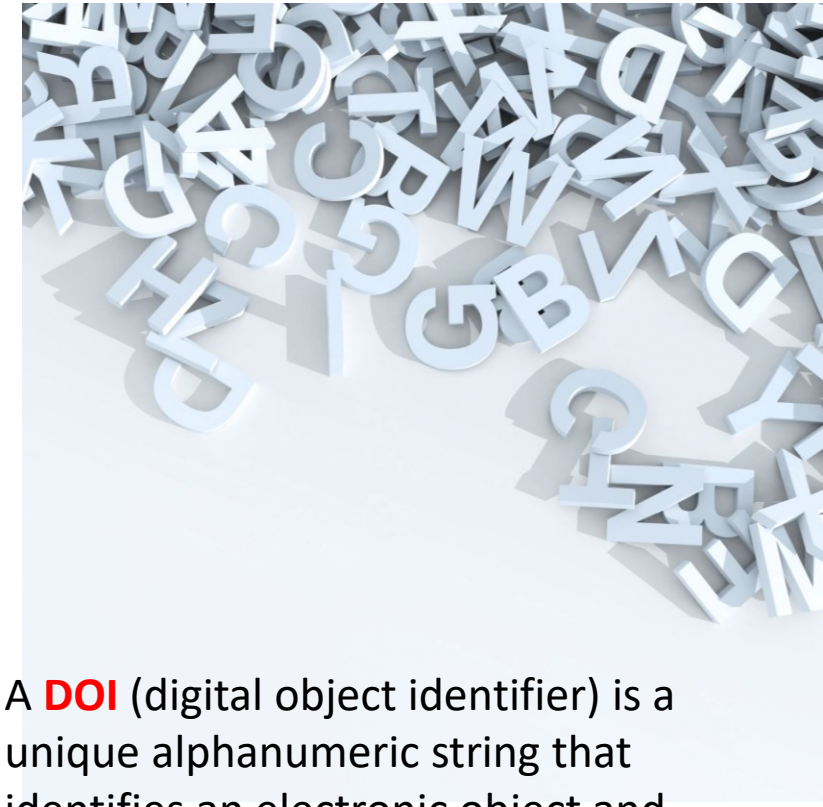
A quick quiz

1. How are citations presented in the main text (thesis or article)?
   a) surname and year of publication
   b) numbers
2. Where is detailed reference information given?
   a) at the bottom of the page
   b) at the end of the thesis or article
   c) both (a) and (b)?
3. Are authors' names included in the written text?
   a) no
   b) rarely
   c) often

A quick quiz

4. How are online sources given in the list of references?
   a) DOI
   b) URL
   c) None are given

5. How are sources ordered in the list of references?
   a) alphabetical
   b) by order of first appearance in the text
   c) There is no separate list at the end - only footnotes.



A **DOI** (digital object identifier) is a unique alphanumeric string that identifies an electronic object and provides a persistent link to its location on the Internet.

A **URL** (universal resource locator). Is the address on the World Wide Web (a retrieval or accession date is likely needed if it is likely to change over time (e.g., wikis)

How to cite Other Authors

Four ways

1. Foregrounding the author (Strong author focus)

   Henderson (1999) argued that universities are the guardians of intellectual freedom and the search for truth.

By starting your sentence by referring to Henderson, you are making him a more important source in your text. This often leads into an evaluation of Henderson's claim.

2. Backgrounding the author (Weak author focus)

   Universities are the guardians of intellectual freedom and the search for truth (Henderson, 1999).

How to cite Other Authors

3. “2nd-hand” citations

Very often, you are tempted to cite a reference 2nd-hand – i.e. when you come across it in someone else’s work.

> In those days, universities were regarded as the guardians of intellectual freedom and the search for truth (Henderson, 1999, cited in Nunan, 2010, p.13).

Question:

Which one should appear in the reference list, Henderson (1999) or Nunan (2010)?

How to cite Other Authors

4. Using citations to support a list of points/claims

In introductory paragraphs, where you want to quickly establish background knowledge in the general area of your study, it is common to pack a range of issues into a single sentence.

Find an example

Abundant research evidence has accumulated in support of Cummins' hypothesis. A large proportion of it has taken place in either Canada (Cziko, 1976; Swain, 1976), or in the western and northern part of the continent, with immigrant Mexican (Modiano, 1968) and Hispanic children (Walters, 1979) and indigenous populations (Leslie, 1977).

Which verb tense to use

Fill in the blanks with the verb in a proper tense.

1. In Brown's study (1998), the respondents _____ (ask) about what levels of …… Respondents _____ (feel) that …… However, the evidence _____ (appear) to be confined to levels 1 and 2.
2. In a different study conducted in Hong Kong, Ho (1998) _____ (identify) the need to evaluate English language training at this level.
3. Giving vaccination to children _____ (be) controversial for a variety of reasons (citation). Some _____ (worry) that vaccination will lead to … (citation), while others _____ (argue) that ….. (citation).

Which verb tense to use

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2. In a different study conducted in Hong Kong, Ho (1998) _identified_ (identify) the need to evaluate English language training at this level.
3. Giving vaccination to children _has been_ (be) controversial for a variety of reasons (citation). Some _worry_ (worry) that vaccination will lead to … (citation), while others _argue_ (argue) that ….. (citation).

Which verb tense to use

4. A number of research methods _____ (devise) to explore the question of …. (citation)
5. Understanding of the nature of aircraft hijacking _____ (change) since the 9/11 events.
6. Psychologists _____ (be) the pioneers in studying behaviour change. Their research _____ (reveal) that positive feedback gives more motivation than punishment. When applied to the classroom, educationalists _____ (argue) that this is only one part of the picture. Brown's 1985 study, for instance, _____ (show) the importance of a two prong approach using both positive and negative feedback.

Which verb tense to use

4. A number of research methods _have been devised_ (devise) to explore the question of …. (citation)
5. Understanding of the nature of aircraft hijacking _has changed_ (change) since the 9/11 events.
6. Psychologists ___are____ (be) the pioneers in studying behaviour change. Their research __has revealed____ (reveal) that positive feedback gives more motivation than punishment. When applied to the classroom, educationalists ____ argue____ (argue) that this is only one part of the picture. Brown's 1985 study, for instance, ____shows_____ (show) the importance of a two prong approach using both positive and negative feedback.

To summarize

- The reporting verb referring to a single completed study must be in the _____ tense.
- _____ tense can be used when what has been written (e.g. points out/pointed out, or describes/described), rather than what was done, is being reported.
- When you want to discuss a debate which is currently taking place, and has not been settled, you would also use the _____.
- The _____is used to refer to whole areas of study or the general trend of the research.
- The _____is used to point out the gap or research space that is to be filled – identifying what has “till now” or “not yet” been accomplished.
- The _____is also used to indicate that a time frame with a definite starting point, but no end (i.e. continuing through the present).

To summarize

- The reporting verb referring to a single completed study must be in the _past__ tense.
- _Present (agree) / Past (not agree)__ tense can be used when what has been written (e.g. points out/pointed out, or describes/described), rather than what was done, is being reported.
- When you want to discuss a debate which is currently taking place, and has not been settled, you would also use the ___present___.
- The _ present perfect_is used to refer to whole areas of study or the general trend of the research.
- The _present perfect_is used to point out the gap or research space that is to be filled – identifying what has “till now” or “not yet” been accomplished.
- The _present perfect_is also used to indicate that a time frame with a definite starting point, but no end (i.e. continuing through the present).

Which verb tense to use

The author's choice of verb tense tells the reader about his/her stance towards the research being reported.

- When you want to say the issues or views raised by an author are still relevant or current in your opinion, you will likely use the _____ tense.

However, if for whatever reasons – you are discussing early work, or you are trying to create a research gap for yourself by diminishing the relevance of a writer's work

  - you may want to distance yourself from someone's work/findings, you are likely to use the _____ tense.

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  - you may want to distance yourself from someone's work/findings, you are likely to use the ___past___ tense.

Which reporting verb to use?

The choice of verbs – not just tense – helps us to indicate our stance towards the author.

Which one of the following two examples expresses a favourable stance, identifying with the authors cited and which one expresses an unfavourable stance distancing yourself from an author/researcher?

1. Jackson (1992) proposed that the teaching of vocabulary lists prior to the introduction of a reading text would increase pupils' retention of information from that text.
2. Graham (1991) established that television viewing of more than three hours per night adversely affects marital relations.

Reporting on Findings

Verbs	Researcher's interpretation/attitude towards the original author's findings
	Neutral
	The finding is generally accepted as true.
	The finding was unexpected.
	The finding was not central to the study.
	The author was tentative or unsure about the finding.

Choices:
observe, identify, suggest, note, demonstrate, find, establish, show, discover, indicate, prove

Reporting on Findings

Verbs	Researcher's interpretation/attitude towards the original author's findings
identify, find	Neutral
demonstrate, establish, show, prove	The finding is generally accepted as true.
discover	The finding was unexpected.
observe, note	The finding was not central to the study.
suggest, indicate	The author was tentative or unsure about the finding.

Choices:
observe, identify, suggest, note, demonstrate, find, establish, show, discover, indicate, prove

Reporting on Opinion

Verbs/phrases	Researcher's interpretation/attitude towards the original author's opinions
	Neutral, often used when the opinion is not controversial or it is a matter of fact.
	I agree with the idea I am reporting.
	The opinion is open to discussion.
	I do not agree with the opinion.
	The original author was tentative or unsure about the opinion.

Choices:
claim, point out, report, suggest, assert, argue, explain, conclude, state, note, propose

Reporting on Opinion

Verbs/phrases	Researcher's interpretation/attitude towards the original author's opinions
report, explain, state, note	Neutral, often used when the opinion is not controversial or it is a matter of fact.
point out	I agree with the idea I am reporting.
argue, conclude	The opinion is open to discussion.
claim, assert	I do not agree with the opinion.
suggest, propose	The original author was tentative or unsure about the opinion.

Choices:
claim, point out, report, suggest, assert, argue, explain, conclude, state, note, propose

Words/phrases of appraisal (evaluative verbs/phrases)

Positive	Negative
well-founded well-substantiated well-supported verified strong grounds for there is substantial evidence comprehensive in-depth ……	sweeping ill-founded biased groundless one-sided speculative ……

Conjunctions – connecting words

Comparison

also, equally, as well as, by comparison, in the same way, similarly, in a similar way, likewise, just as, comparingly, comparatively …

Similar

again, another, next, besides, also, moreover, furthermore, in addition to …

Contrast

contrarily, on the contrary, conversely, instead, yet, however, notwithstanding, nevertheless, otherwise, except, in contrast, despite, rather, meanwhile …

Result (cause and effect)

as, because, thus, since, then, hence, so, therefore, due to, resultantly, accordingly, as a result, consequently, accordingly, undoubtly …

Conclusion

in conclusion, to conclude, in summary, as a consequence, as a result, this illustrates, this shows …

Constructing a Literature Review

- When you construct your literature review, you will be attempting to show that your research is both original and worthwhile.
- place it within a body of previous related research
- show that it is original, unique or significantly different from previous research

Good literature reviews, therefore, work towards a summary of ‘what we know’ and ‘what we don’t know’ and the identification of a ‘research gap’.

Key Features of a Good Literature Review

- ✓ The literature review needs to be relevant and focused
- ✓ The review needs to be organized thematically
- ✓ The organization should be signaled in an introductory paragraph
- ✓ The literature review should be up-to-date
- ✓ The literature review should be critical
- ✓ The literature review needs to be brought to a close
- ✓ The research gap should arise from the literature review

Cooley & Lewkowicz, 2003:22-28

Structure of a Literature Review

Like all academic writing, a literature review must have an introduction, body, and conclusion

The introduction should include:

- the nature of the topic under discussion (the topic of your thesis)
- the parameters of the topic (what does it include and exclude)
- the basis for your selection of the literature

The main body could include relevant paragraphs on:

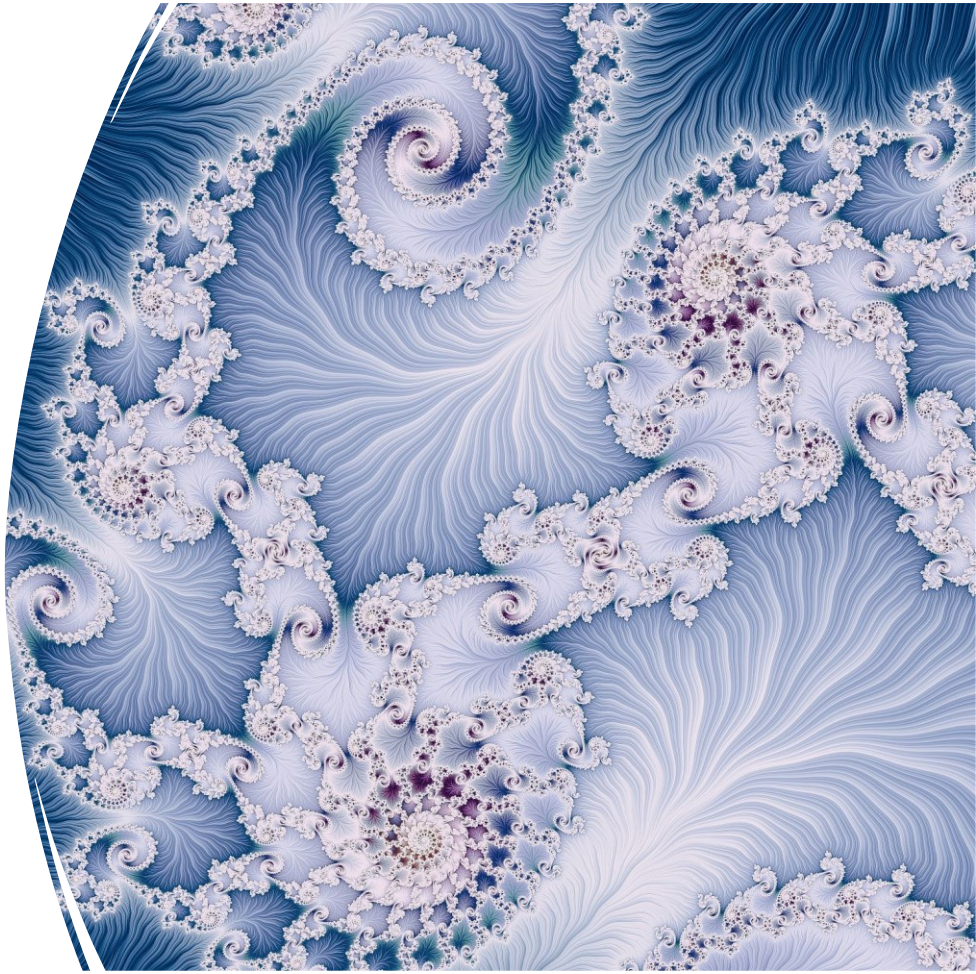
- historical background, including classic ones
- current mainstream versus alternative viewpoints, including differing theoretical assumptions, and competing interests
- definitions in use
- current areas of research focus
- current discoveries about the topic
- principal questions that are being asked
- general conclusions that are being drawn
- methodologies and methods in use

The conclusion should include:

- a summary of major agreements and disagreements in the literature
- a summary of general conclusions that are being drawn
- a summary of where your thesis sits in the literature

(Remember! Your thesis could become one of the future sources on the subject for later research students)

Methodology



Methodology and Method

What's the difference between methodology and method?

Methodology: Tell you why use a certain method or methods

- "Methodology refers to the theoretical paradigm or framework within which the researcher is working; to the stance he or she is taking (e.g., choosing a quantitative or qualitative paradigm) and the argument that is built in the text to justify these assumptions, theoretical frameworks, and/or approaches as well as the choice of research." (Paltridge & Starfield, 2007:135)
- The methodology develops an explanation as to why the research method(s) under discussion has (have) been chosen.

Methodology and Method

Methods:

1. How data were collected
   - Choice of instruments

For example:

- Qualitative research: interviews, participant observation, discourse analysis
- Quantitative research: questionnaire survey
- Methods and material used in a laboratory or other experimental settings will require detailed description

2. Description of the procedure

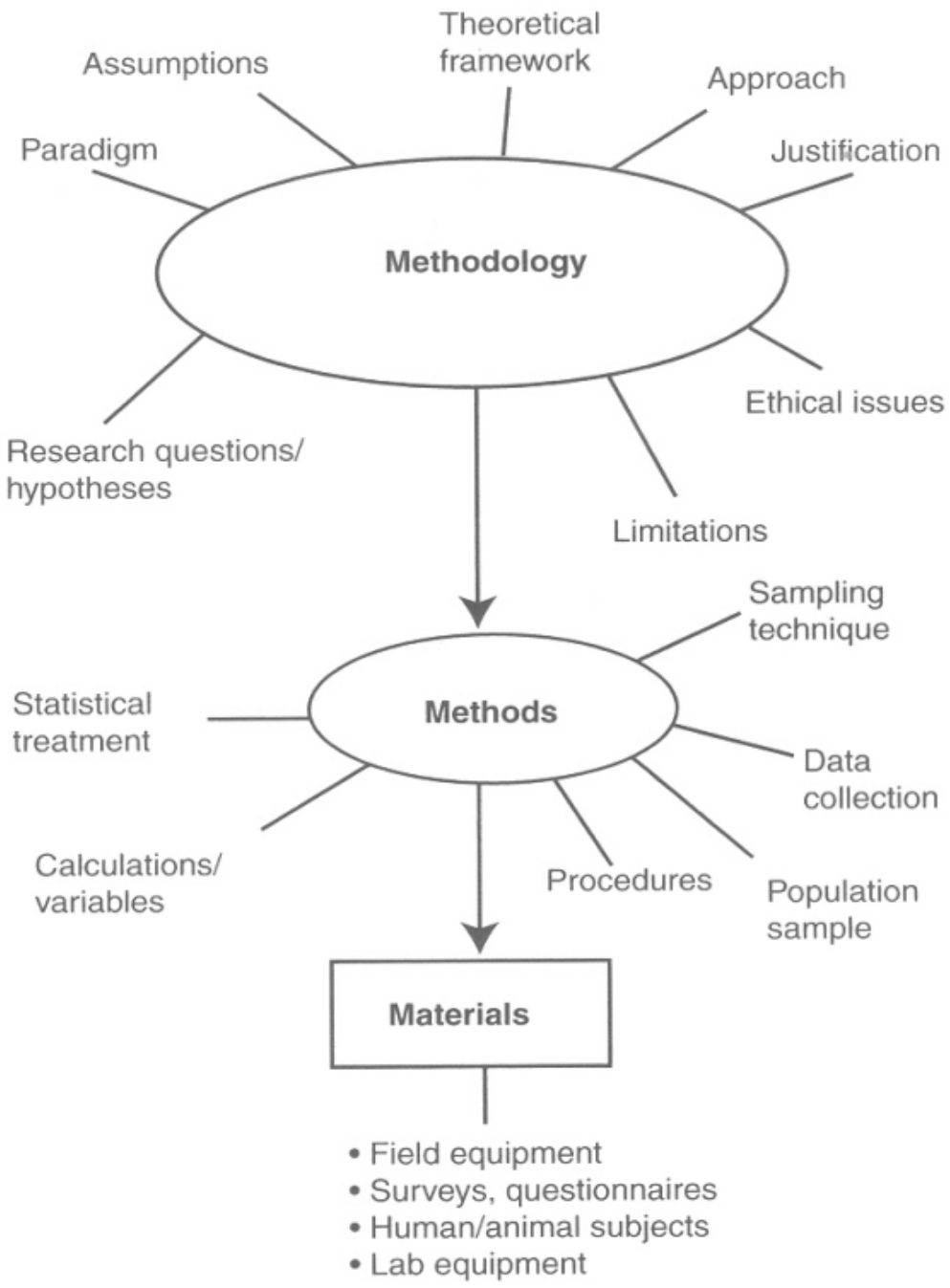
   Replicability of study is an important consideration for detailed description of methods and procedures

3. How data were analyzed

Three main sectors in a Methodology Chapter

- Introduction – looks back/links to previous chapters and previews what is to come in the chapter
- The MAIN BODY is divided into sections/sub-sections based on the specific methodology used. At a minimum, it should:
  - Refer to methods of previous studies.
  - Describe how research was carried out or data collected
  - Describe how data was processed or analyzed
  - Justify the approach and specific procedures, etc. in relation to theory, previous research, and the research gap, not only describe what was done. It may also mention constraints or raise various difficulties encountered
- Summary – looks back to key points, but more important leads directly into the next chapter on results

Visual Map of Typical components of a Methodology chapter



Paltridge & Starfield 2007:123

Writing about Data

The concept of Data

Data is a keyword in postgraduate research.
A thesis without data is not really a thesis.

Different kinds of data:

1. Data that is collected:

   data is ‘gathered’ or ‘collected’, using experimental methods, surveys and interviews, observations, etc.

2. Data that is found or selected:

   the works of a particular author, documents in an archive

   the data is ‘constructed’ – e.g., a selection is made from a collection of documents, or certain parts of these documents are extracted and re-arranged.

Data – singular or plural?

- In traditional English grammar, ‘data’ is the plural form of ‘datum’. However, in common modern usage, it may be treated as either a plural or a singular mass noun.
- As a plural it refers to specific individual facts, statistics or pieces of information, and thus takes a plural form of the verb, e.g., “The data were analyzed . . .”.
- As a mass noun, it refers to a body of information in a collective or cumulative way and takes a singular form of the verb, e.g., “This data was collected . . .”.

Results, Findings and Discussion

- Data rarely comes in a form that can be directly transferred to the printed page and be understood by other people. You have to write about it.

Three steps:

1. reporting results
2. summarizing findings, and
3. commentary, that is discussing/interpreting results and findings

Reporting Results

The concept of **results** may apply more readily to research where the data are processed in order to produce numerical or statistical outcomes.

- In this kind of research, the results are often reported in the form of tables or graphs.
- The important point to remember is that tables and graphs do not 'speak for themselves'. You usually have to summarize the key information in words.
- Failing to do this (or failing to make clear connections between your writing and the tables or graphs it describes) is a common weakness in postgraduate theses.

Reporting Results

Use of tables and figures: enable authors to present a large amount of information efficiently and to make their data more comprehensible.

- Table usually shows numerical values or textural information arranged in an orderly display of columns and rows.
- A figure may be a chart, a graph, a photograph, a drawing, or any other illustration or non-textual depiction

How to discuss Tables or Figures

- Discuss tables/figures in text:

  An informative table/figure supplements (rather than duplicates) the text.

  In the text, refer to every table/figure and tell the readers what to look for.

- Discuss only the table's/figure's highlights; if you find yourself discussing every item of the table/figure in the text, the table/figure is unnecessary.

Summarize Findings

- If your data have ‘results’, your ‘findings’ are generalizations about the phenomenon based on those results.
- For example, you have administered a test to 100 males and 100 females. Your ‘result’ may be that the average scores were 78 marks for the males and 80 marks for the females out of 100 marks. Your ‘finding’ would be that the females performed better on this test than the males.

Common Problems

Two common failings in theses are:

1. skipping over the results to go directly to the findings and
2. reporting only the results, but no findings.

- When you have both results and findings, it is usual to report the results first and then summarize the findings that are relevant to them, before moving to the next set of results

Qualitative Research

- In qualitative research, there are often no obvious 'results' and your 'findings' often consist of statements that 'emerge from' or 'describe' the data.
- For example, you have interviewed 20 males and 20 females on their experience of taking a test. Your finding may be that the males report greater anxiety than the females.
- In this kind of research, authors often report findings and then provide evidence for them from their data.
- The major findings may also be the topics of separate chapters or sections.
- A common weakness in this kind of writing is failing to keep a close relationship between the findings and the data.

Discussing the Findings & Results

- Discussion is an important concept in postgraduate research and many theses have a chapter with this title.
- Discussion means stepping back from your results and findings and attempting to explain them in the context of:
  - ✓ the results and findings in other studies and
  - ✓ the conditions in which the research took place.

- The writer is selective and orders the data to guide the reader to his or her intended understanding. Thus the thesis writer needs to

✓ Draw out significance of the data

✓ Link any tables or figures to the written text

✓ Highlight significant trends and comparisons

In this way, the meaning/understanding or ‘argument’ is built.

Three major steps

1. Presenting meta-textual information
   - Present preparatory information by previewing, linking, providing background information, refers back to methodology
   - Point to location of tables, figures and graphs
2. Presenting results
   - Present results (findings)
   - Present procedures
   - Restate hypotheses or research questions
   - State what the data are and highlights data for reader's attention
   - Provide evidence, e.g., stats, examples, photographs, tables, etc
3. Commenting on results
   - Begin to interpret results and make claims for meaning and significance (may point to contribution to the field)
   - Make comparison with previous studies (often for justification of method or procedures)
   - May comment on strength, limitations or generalizability of results

Paltridge & Starfield, 2007

Discussion Chapter

1. Move 1 *Background information*
2. Move 2 *Statement of results*, or statement about the significance of the present research
3. Move 3 *(Un)expected outcome*, in which the writer comments on whether the results is expected or not.
4. Move 4 *Reference to previous research or earlier discussion in the paper*, writer compares his/her results, procedures, objectives, assumptions, or generalisations with the previous literature/research.
5. Move 5 *Explanation of results*, often, but not always, writer suggests reasons for unsatisfactory or surprising results, or results different in literature.
6. Move 6 *Generalisation*, writer makes generalisable claims or discusses generalisability, or limits to generalisability, raises/discusses questions indirectly related to research.
7. Move 7 *Recommendation*, writer makes suggestions for future research.
8. Move 8 *Outlining parallel or subsequent developments*, writer summarises data from a period subsequent to the one covered in their article, or about data closely related to their topic.

Holmes, 1997

Hedging Your Claims

In a Discussion section, the researchers tell readers how they believe their findings can be interpreted; that is, they are making claims about their own findings.

As it is always possible that other researchers could give a different interpretation, all these statements are made tentative.

- The claims made are ‘hedged’; in other words, the words have limited the claims they make by using certain words that make the claims more tentative.
- The use of these words is one way that a writer has of showing that he/she is not stating a fact, but making an interpretation.

Hedging Your Claims

Reasons for Hedging

- You need to be modest. The studies or experiments that you have conducted may not provide a definite answer to the questions you posed or be the only explanation for the findings you have noted. If you do not show some modesty, you will sound arrogant and are in danger of annoying your readers. In being modest, you acknowledge that your findings are only a point along the way to greater knowledge and that you cannot give the same weight to the interpretation of your data as you can to established facts.
- You need to be cautious to avoid the embarrassment of being proved wrong after making claims that are too strong. Being cautious will also help protect your reputation and that of your supervisor. If later studies, based on new findings or technological advances, show that your interpretation was not, in fact, correct, you will look quite foolish if you have stated, categorically, that yours was the definite answer

Some examples of Hedging

Making Claims

Weaker	Middle	Stronger
Might result in	May result in	Will result in
It is possible that	It is very likely/probably that	It is certain that
Would seem to have	Seems to have	has
May have contributed to	contributed	caused
suggests	indicates	shows

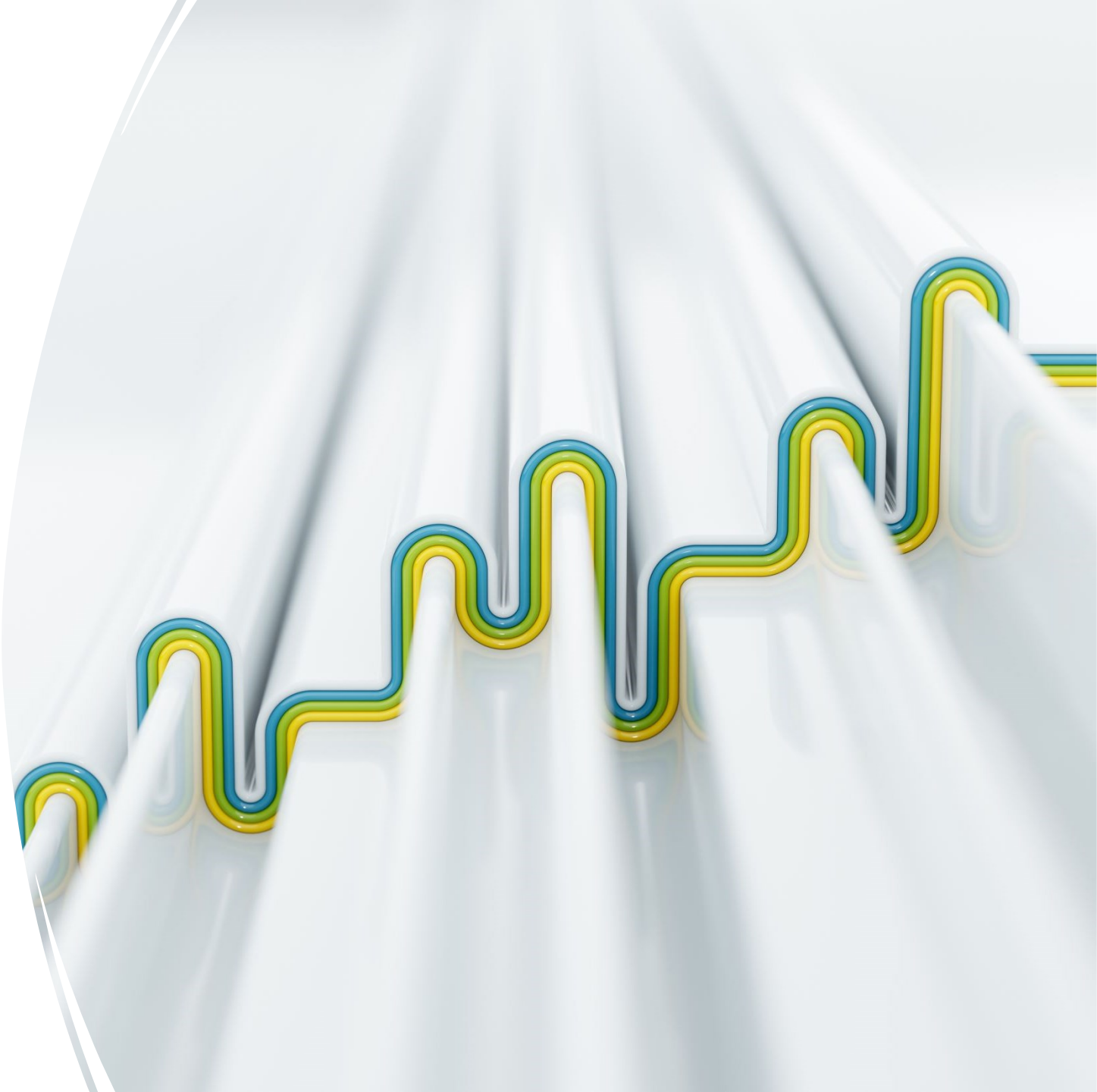
Hedging Devices

Hedging Devices	Examples
Verbs	indicate, seem, suggest, appear, imply, tend to, it can be inferred that
Adverbs	probably, possibly, potentially, hypothetically, largely
Adjectives	likely/unlikely, mostly, partly, basically, seemingly, mainly, substantially, considerably
Modal verbs	may, might, can
Modal nouns	possibility, tendency

Some Reference books

- Martyn Denscombe (2012) Research Proposals: A practical guide, Open University Press.
- Linda Cooley and Jo Lewkowicz (2003) *Dissertation Writing in Practice: Turning Ideas into Text*, HKU Press.
- Miranda Legg, Kevin Pat, Steve Roberts, Rebecca Welland, Letty Chan, Louisa Chan, and Wai Lan Tsang (2017) *Academic English Skills for Success*, Revised Second Edition, HKU Press
- Vernon Trafford and Shosh Leshem (2008) *Stepping Stones to Achieving your Doctorate: By focusing on your viva from the start*, Open University Press.

Conclusions, Abstract and the Voice of the Author



Abstract

- The main thing about an abstract is that it should be readable independently of the thesis.
- It is a summary of the thesis that is often read in abstracting journals, databases, etc.
- Aims, research questions, methods, results, findings and implications can all be included.
- You may also think about this: do you want people to read your dissertation? If so, think about why other researchers would want to read it (an innovative method, an interesting finding, etc.) and emphasize that.
- Should be written last after you have completed the whole dissertation

Abstract

What is to be included in an abstract?

- introduction to the area covered in the study
- the aim of the study, objectives and RQs
- a brief description of the method and/or approach
- a brief description/summary of the main findings
- significance of the study
- conclusion

Introduction

- When writing an introduction, always keep the idea of ‘introducing’ in mind. You should be trying to prepare the reader for what is to come and encourage the reader to continue (or at least put your examiner in a good mood).
- How did you get interested in this research? Why is it interesting and why are you interesting as a researcher?
- It is a common mistake to confuse the introduction with the abstract.
- An introduction is not a summary – it is invitation to read on.

Conclusion

On top of summarizing your thesis, you have to:

1. State the contribution of the research (How has it ‘filled’ the research gap identified earlier in the thesis? How has it added to our knowledge?)
2. Identify the limitations of the research (NOT too long).
3. Make suggestions for further research (but be brief).

- A conclusion can show your reflection on what you have done and a way of pointing forward to the future.
- You can try to assess objectively how your research ‘fits in to’ developments in the field as a whole.

Make your Voice Heard

How do writers ensure their voices are heard in academic texts?

- Metatext – talking about the text (thesis) through signposting, TOC, numbering, introductions, topic sentences, conclusions, . . .
- Taking a stance – annotating or commenting on their claims, especially in terms of accuracy and credibility using hedges, boosters, and attitude words . . .
- Engagement markers & self-mentions – directly addressing the reader or mentioning themselves (the authors) in their writing

Interactional ways to involve reader in the argument

Category	Function	Examples
Hedges	Withhold author's full commitment to proposition, statement or claim Mark the author's reluctance to present information categorically or 'as fact'	might, perhaps, possible, likely, suggest
Boosters	Emphasize force or author's certainty in proposition, statement or claim Express certainty and emphasize the force of propositions, degree of agreement or certainty of 'fact'	in fact, definitely, it is clear that
Attitude markers	Express author's attitude to a proposition, statement or claim Express author's appraisal of propositional information, conveying surprise obligation, agreement, importance, etc.	unfortunately, I agree, surprisingly. interestingly
Engagement markers	Explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader Explicitly address readers by focusing their attention on key points or by including them as participants in the text through second person pronouns	consider, note that, you can see that

Adapted from Hyland, 2004: 139-140

Verb bank: Bloom's higher order thinking verbs

(numbered in order of difficulty beginning with most basic)

1. KNOWLEDGE
Know
Define
Memorize
Repeat
Record
List
Recall
Name
Locate
Recite
State
Relate
Collect
Label
Specify
Cite

2. COMPREHENSION
Restate
Summarize
Discuss
Describe
Recognize
Explain
Express
Identify
Review
Match
Translate
Paraphrase
Convert

3. APPLICATION
Exhibit
Interview
Apply
Use
Dramatize
Illustrate
Calculate
Experiment
Brainstorm
Change
Solve
Simulate
Employ
Demonstrate
Practice
Operate
Show
Make
Predict
Relate

Verb bank: Bloom's higher order thinking verbs

(numbered in order of difficulty beginning with most basic)

4. ANALYSIS

Interpret
Analyze
Differentiate
Compare
Contrast
Scrutinize
Categorize
Probe
Investigate
Discover
Inquire
Detect Infer
Inspect

Classify
Arrange
Group
Organize
Examine
Survey
Dissect
Inventory
Question
Test
Distinguish
Diagram
Point out

5.SYNTHESIS

Compose
Plan
Propose
Produce
Invent
Develop
Design
Formulate
Arrange
Assemble
Construct
Create

Rewrite
Set up
Prepare
Imagine
Hypothesize
Incorporate
Generalize
Originate
Predict
Contrive
Systematize
Rearrange
Eliminate

6.EVALUATION

Judge
Decide
Appraise
Evaluate
Rate
Compare
Value
Revise
Conclude
Select
Criticize
Assess

Measure
Estimate
Infer
Deduce
Score
Predict
Choose
Recommend
Determine

Round up

Title

1. Research area/topic
2. Variables or theoretical issues and their relationship
3. Research context (time/site/participants) [when the research is context-specific]

Abstract

1. Purpose of the study
2. Methods used
3. Main findings
4. Conclusion
5. Significance/implications

Introducing your thesis

Step 1 Identify a research area

a) by showing that the general research area is important, central, interesting, problematic, or relevant in some way AND/OR

b) by providing background information about the topic

Step 2 Review previous research on the topic

Step 3 Point out a gap in current knowledge on that topic

Step 4 Explain what you hope to do fill the gap

a) by outlining purposes/aims, or stating the nature of the present research or research questions/hypotheses

b) by defining the scope of the study (optional)

c) by defining terms (optional)

d) by stating value of research (optional)

e) by outlining the theoretical framework/position (optional)

f) by describing the methods used in the study (optional)

g) by indicating the structure of the thesis and providing previews of each subsequent chapter

Reviewing the literature

- Select and discuss the theoretical work and reports of studies most relevant to your project - remember to review methodologies as well as theory and empirical studies
- Define key terms and concepts in the field/discipline
- Summarize up-to-date and relevant findings from other studies
- Evaluate/analyze other researchers' work to show support for it or to refute someone else's claims about his/her findings
- Show weakness or limitations of previous research
- Create a research space by showing what has already been done and what has not been done in your area
- Are you replicating, adding, extending recent work or challenging it?

Introducing methodology and methods

- Methodology: Why use a certain method or methods
- Methods: How
  1. How data were collected/found/selected: Choice of instruments, sample size & Procedures
  2. How data were analyzed

Reporting results

1. Organization
2. Use of tables and figures

Summarizing findings

- If your data have ‘results’, your ‘findings’ are generalizations about the phenomenon based on those results
- In qualitative and text-based research, your ‘findings’ often consist of statements that ‘emerge from’ or ‘describe’ the data. The major findings may also be the topics of separate chapters or sections.

Discussing results and findings

- Step back from your results and findings and explain them in the context of:
  - the results and findings in other studies and
  - the conditions in which the research took place

Three major steps

- Move 1: Stating the finding
- Move 2: Relating the finding to previous research and identifying similarities and/or differences
- Move 3: Accounting for the differences

Concluding your thesis

- Summary of your research
- Spelling out of the significance
- Statement of the limitations
- Suggestions for further research

Additional steps

- Implications of the study
- Recommendations
- Concluding remarks (a positive note)

References/Bibliography/Works cited

- Be accurate and consistent.

Examples of thesis

Search in UTS library from your senior classmates

Select those fields which are of your interest

- Towards developing a holistic strategic management in the Hong Kong Police Force
- The Quality of Environmental KPIs Disclosure in ESG Reporting for SMEs in Hong Kong
- … …

Concerns of Examiners

Major Steps

Confer your DBA degree

DBA
Doctor of Business Administration
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

What is expected from a Thesis Examiner

Example 1

- Examiners should explain in detail how the student's work meets the requirements for originality and scholarship, or how it failed to do so
- full instructions must be included of any changes required to the thesis

What is expected from a Thesis Examiner

Example 2

The examiners should take account of the following aspects:

- Its quality as a work of substance
- Its originality of thought and judgement
- Its quality as contribution to knowledge
- Its demonstration of techniques and its presentation

What is expected from a Thesis Examiner

Example 2

A. Give comments on originality, significance and methodology of the research, and quality of results, clarity and lucidity of presentation and adequacy of references
B. Recommendations for revision - specific required changes, additions, etc. which may be noted on the thesis
C. Suggestions for consideration for future possible study

Assessment Criteria

Criteria	High Quality Thesis	Low Quality Thesis
Thesis topic & approach	Significant and challenging topic	Trivial, “too obvious”
	Fusion of originality of the approach with realization of significant contribution to the field	Questionable originality, not convincing approach
Literature review	Expert use of the literature in design of the study and discussion of the findings	Inadequate coverage or focus of the literature of the research topic
	Thorough and clear synthesis of the literature	Inaccuracies/omissions in referencing
Methodology	Detailed, clear	Missing key components
Results & discussion	Logical, coherent and convincing arguments	Superficial, disintegrated
Communicative competence	Answer questions of examiners in a professional and academic way	Lack of clarity, evasive responses

DBA - Doctor of Business Administration

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→ no regret

Make it a good or satisfactory quality academic document

Homework
Draft YOUR Research Proposal

help you do the Assignment

Key Questions

1. What is the key concept(s) of your study?
2. In what way(s) is your study significant?
3. What is the research aim(s)?
4. Name one theory that you will discuss in the literature review.

SEE YOU
NEXT CLASS