

Unit 6 Conclusions

Sample reading

Directions: Read the following conclusion and answer the following questions.

Questions:

- 1) What is the author's overarching deduction?
- 2) What are the author's key findings?
- 3) What limitations of the study does the author state and how does he respond to them?
- 4) How does the author end the conclusion and what is his purpose of doing so?
- 5) How does the author transition to the conclusion?
- 6) How does the author transition between different components of the conclusion?
- 7) Would you divide the paragraph into shorter paragraphs? If yes, how?

[1] The data produced through this study reinforce the key findings of others that Chinese university students' expectations, though not necessarily experiences, of formative assessment coincide with those of their peers in the West. [2] Formative assessment appears to be a positive force for the improvement of learning outcomes across educational systems and cultures, even though its definition in practical terms may vary according to the context. [3] Moreover, it carries with it several psychological benefits that can mitigate feelings of anxiety commonly associated with summative assessment. [4] An additional key benefit is that it provides a valuable means of communication between those assessing and those being assessed, leading to a more supportive atmosphere in the classroom. [5] One weakness of the present study is the imbalance in the ratio of undergraduate to postgraduate students. [6] There were also notably more female than male participants, though not to the same extent. [7] It was expected that the number of undergraduate students would exceed that of postgraduate students since other studies encountered the same phenomenon. [8] Further, it also stands to reason that more undergraduate than postgraduate students would be willing, or able, to participate since the latter are more heavily involved in non-classroom-based research and independent study. [9] The higher number of female participants reflects the fact that most universities included in the study have a higher female population. [10] It was likewise hoped a greater number of students who completed the questionnaire would agree to be interviewed, particularly as attendance did not require being physically present. [11] The deepest insights were gained from those participants who were interviewed. [12] A larger number of interviewees would, however, have led to a significantly greater time investment, delaying the completion of this paper. [13] Despite these limitations, this paper makes an important contribution to an under-researched context that is deserving of greater attention from the academic community. [14] Considering China's growing influence globally and the numbers of Chinese students applying to universities in the West, it is likely that investigations into education generally, and formative assessment more specifically, in China will grow in importance and their data in value.

1 The content and structure of research conclusion

Moves	Sub-moves
1. Restatement of aims and methodological approach of study	a. Restatement of aims of study (research questions/hypotheses)
	b. Restatement of key features of research methodology and methods
2. Summary of findings	a. Summary of key findings
3. Evaluation of contributions	a. Significance of findings (for theory and research development)
	b. Significance of findings for practical application
	c. Identification of any limitations
4. Recommendations for further research	a. Recommendations for further research
	b. Justification for 4a

2 Limitations

It is necessary to inform the readers of shortcomings or failures in your research, thus providing a good opportunity for authors to demonstrate that they understand how evidence is evaluated in a particular field. There are two ways to convey limitations:

Type A: stating limitations in one's research scope.

E.g. This paper has examined only the question of ...

Type B: stating that certain conclusions should not be drawn.

E.g. Yet, the findings do not imply ...

Strategies in lessening the negative impact of limitations

It is necessary to inform readers of your limitations; however, there is no need to make these limitations totally negative. That is to say, the limitation can be expressed in a way that sounds less negative. Here are some tips for lessening the negative impact of the limitations:

- 1) To indicate that the limitation is due to the current theories;
- 2) To explain the limitation clearly, that is, in what way the limitation is;
- 3) To explain the consequence of the limitation;
- 4) To discuss possible remedies or recommendation for future research;
- 5) To avoid repeating the strong word "limitation", use alternative expressions.

Exercise 1

Directions: Analyze the strategies adopted in the following Limitations section based on the tips mentioned above.

1) The absence of interior forest specialist species in our data-set, such as the middle-spotted woodpecker, may be related to the small size of the selected forest patches, particularly in Midi-Pyrenees and Centre regions but may also reflect an edge avoidance extending beyond 75 m in the most sensitive birds. Therefore, it would be valuable to repeat this study in other regions enabling the selection of larger forest

patches in order to decipher how long-distance edge effects influence sensitive forest species in forest landscapes with less anthropogenic footprint.

2) However, this study had some limitations that merit consideration in future research. First, the study was conducted using small-diameter, juvenile trees evaluated with a pulling procedure; large trees exposed to dynamic wind forces may not respond in the same manner. Future research should focus on larger trees and subject trees to dynamic loads that better replicate wind gust conditions. In addition, the trunk pulling procedure employed was non-destructive and instead relied on resistance to mild trunk deflection as measure of tree stability.

3) Although this method was based on empirical data showing a strong relationship between deflection resistance and full uprooting force, differences in species and soil conditions warrant caution in extrapolating the results of this study. Further research employing destructive sampling techniques may be necessary to validate our observations of substrate effects on tree stability.

Exercise 2

Directions: Read the following six sentences, in which the writers acknowledge one limitation of their study. Decide which sentences are appropriate and which are not. Discuss why those selected sentences are inappropriate.

1) While the findings support the thesis that most pupils benefit from school uniforms, the number of different reasons given by the participants does not allow a clear conclusion to be drawn as to why.

2) An important aspect of jetlag that was not considered due to constraints on resources was whether and how it affects other common domestic animals, such as cats and birds.

3) The quality of the research presented here is inadequate and readers should consider the results with skepticism before applying them to practical contexts.

4) Some of the opinions voiced by the economists interviewed for this study were unexpected and appear to support the contradictory view that countries benefit more from protectionist policies.

5) Although the final research question remains largely unanswered, the data collected through this study are far more useful than those gathered through others.

6) Athletic organizations are invited to translate the suggestions made here into policy as soon as possible considering the superior research methodology in terms of both reliability and validity.

3 Evaluating a conclusion

Exercise 3

Directions: Read the following conclusion and evaluate it using the checklist that follows. The sentences are numbered for your convenience.

Checklist for evaluating a conclusion:

1) Is the thesis or purpose of the paper reiterated?

2) Are the key research outcomes summarized?

3) Are any shortcomings of the study included and are they explained or justified?

- 4) Is a prediction, suggestion, or an assertion of the broader implications of the findings given?
- 5) Is the text concise, cohesive, logically ordered, and relevant?

[1] To sum up, it has been demonstrated how violence in computer games affects children differently to that on television. [2] One of the key findings points to an inverse correlation between age and the effects of playing computer games with violent content. [3] The data on the effects of watching violent content on television are very interesting. [4] This study's results are contrary to those of many other studies, signifying that further research on the relationship between violent content and behavioral issues in children is urgently needed. [5] Children in many parts of the world are suffering from poverty. [6] Unfortunately, the study suffered several setbacks, such as failing to meet with all parents who volunteered to be interviewed and leaving some of the data unanalyzed. [7] These parents may be interviewed and the remaining data examined for a follow-up study if there is enough time. [8] Another area worthwhile exploring is how media corporations profit from broadcasting advertisements that contain mild violence.