

- Additionally, the study does not ..., which often raises questions about the validity of ...
- Indeed, this study does not adequately detail (= consider) X.
- Instead of X, we need to understand Y.

Adjective and noun collocations

Additionally, the following **adjective and noun collocations** feature prominently in reviews of studies:

- **analysis (of)**: accurate, close (careful), comparative, comprehensive, critical, detailed
- **approach (to)**: alternative, balanced, basic, conceptual, current, major, proposed
- **description (of/ about)**: brief, broad, comprehensive, current, detailed, general
- **evidence (of)**: anecdotal, contradictory, further, scarce, strong, supporting
- **examination (of)**: brief, close (careful), comprehensive, detailed, further, thorough
- **explanation (for)**: alternative, adequate, contradictory, credible, detailed, possible
- **framework (of)**: conceptual, conventional, emerging, established, proposed, theoretical
- **research (on/ in/ into)**: comprehensive, focused, extensive, recent, scant, scarce
- **results (of)**: contradictory, empirical, exploratory, preliminary, previous, reported, significant
- **studies (of/ on/ into)**: ample, extensive, focused, numerous, present, recent.

Examples:

- Using this method, an **accurate analysis** can be made.
- The work presented here is intended to complement existing methods, not replace the **current approach**.
- This paper is one of the few providing **detailed description about** how qualitative data were collected.
- The present study provides a **theoretical framework** and **exploratory results on ...**

- Some **anecdotal evidence** suggests the situation may be changing for those involved in management.
- A **thorough examination of** the applicability of these techniques in this context can be found in this research proposal.
- An **alternative explanation** focuses on several factors.
- Little **comprehensive research in** the logistics discipline has been conducted.
- Our **empirical results** are based on UK company data for the period 1991–2000.
- There was a trend to conduct **extensive studies on** job attitudes and performance.

Adverb and adjective collocations

The following **adverb and adjective collocations** may also be useful when discussing studies:

- **(in)adequately** addressed
- **carefully** reviewed
- **deeply** concerned with
- **equally** important
- **extensively** investigated/ researched/ reported
- **generally** accepted/ represented
- **scientifically** informed/ justified/ valid
- **traditionally** associated with
- **well-constructed/ developed/ documented/ established/ explored**
- **widely** applied/ debated/ discussed/ explored/ investigated/ held/ known.

3. The Methods Section

3.1. Language for stating the study's purpose in Methods sections

Below are examples of "purpose" statements commonly found in Methods sections. These can be placed either at the **beginning** or **end** of a sentence.

To + infinitive (at the beginning or end of a sentence), in order to + infinitive, for this purpose, with this aim in mind, with the intention of, for the sake of

- **In order to develop a deeper rapport** with participants, thematic interviews will be selected ... as opposed to ... / **In order to organize data**, a password-protected excel spreadsheet will be used throughout the collection process.
- **To test the hypotheses**, I plan to conduct a study in ... subsidiaries in X. I consider X to be an ideal setting for this study for the following reasons ... / We propose a number of criteria **to determine** ...
- **For this purpose**, we will employ an independent sample of ... employees working at a large software company in X.
- **With this aim in mind**, we will attempt to ...

3.2. Language for justifying the choice of methods

Justification language

Common **vocabulary for justifying the choice of methods** includes:

Verb and noun collocations

Allow / permit smb to do smth / to avoid smth / to ensure smth/ to compensate for smth/ to provide a way to do smth/ to provide a way or means of (+ V-ing) + Modal verbs (can, must, should, would)

- This data source **will allow us** to test the hypotheses ...
- Changes in tax policy **provide another good way to** establish ...
- **To ensure accurate results**, both data sets will be scrutinized and checked for consistency.
- With these models in mind, **we can better understand** the distribution of ...
- Policies like public spending and tax policies **should/ must be analyzed** ...
- More data points **would provide** a better means of examining X ...
- One way to **avoid this/ compensate for** this is to ...

Adjectives

To be necessary/ appropriate

- This procedure **is appropriate when** ...
- A more intricate approach **is necessary** to establish the causes of ...

Additional phrases

By doing, we will be able to ... / Thereby (+ Ing)/ This is chosen because ... / The benefit (advantage) of this is/ would be that ...

Also, authors will often refer to published research as a way to **justify the choice of a method**:

- According to/ in accordance with Springfield (2014), we will ...
- Following Berge (2015), we plan to ...
- In line with Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) expectancy-value model of attitudes, we will ...
- Grounded in a study by Smith (2010), we will ...
- Based in part/ partly on a study by Tailor (2014), we will ...
- (Slightly) adapted from Smith (2015), this approach will allow us to ...
- With some modifications/ changes/ adjustments to Stevens' theory (Stevens, 1989), we will ...

Note that in-text references should be provided in brackets (and then listed in the References section) to indicate the source to which you are referring.

Examples:

- Based on this tradition (*references*), we want to emphasize that ...
- Following recommendations by ... (*references*), I will also center all the continuous variables in the model before regression analyses.
- Grounded in the literature reviewed (*references*), we will perform ...
- We will test our hypothesis using hierarchical linear modeling (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992).

3.3. Language for describing data collection and analysis procedures

Tense use

In research articles the Past Simple is predominantly used when describing data collection and analysis methods. However, **Present** and **Future Simple/ Would + Infinitive** are more appropriate when describing proposed data collection and analysis methods in research proposals. Both active and passive voice can be used, as in the examples below:

- The experiment will be conducted in two phases. First, ... Second, ...
- A questionnaire will be developed and translated into Italian.
- I will draw on data from 50 subsidiaries to test the direct effects of top manager nationality on language policy.

Passive vs. active voice

The use of the **passive voice** is especially common in descriptions of procedures (e.g., steps to be completed in a certain order, under specific conditions, etc.). Note that the **Present Simple Passive** is common when conventional procedures established in a research area are described (especially in hard sciences, medicine, psychology, etc.):

Examples:

- The metal is then heated to a temperature that is below the lower critical temperature.

It is advisable to switch to **Future Simple** when you want to show what you are planning to do in your study to separate this from the standard procedures applied in your area:

- To account for these differences, two questionnaires will be developed ...

On the other hand, although **passive voice** is a typical feature of academic writing, continuous use of the passive voice may result in writing in which the reader loses sight of who the agents are or may perceive the text as overly monotonous. To avoid this, the **active voice** can be used, especially when one's own commentary on different aspects of their research is provided.

The use of the **active voice** is in fact quite frequent. It can alternate with the passive voice to ensure a better "flow," as in this extract from a study in **the field of psychology**. Note that Past Simple is used to describe what was done in the study.

Changing Environments by Changing Individuals: The Emergent Effects of Psychological Intervention

During the administration of the intervention, **students received** sealed envelopes with writing materials from their teachers, who were blind to intervention condition and the research hypotheses. In silence, **students in the intervention condition wrote** about their most important values, such as friendships or artistic ability, while **students in the control condition wrote** about their least important values (see the supplemental material in Cohen et al., 2006, for details). After approximately 15 min of writing, **students placed** the materials back in their envelopes, and **the materials were returned** to the researchers. **Students believed** they were participating in a regular classroom writing exercise and were unaware that the exercise was a psychological intervention or part of a research study (**Psychology**).

Source: Powers, J., Cook, J., Purdie-Vaughns, V., Garcia, J., Apfel, N., & Cohen, G. (2016). Changing environments by changing individuals: The emergent effects of psychological intervention. *Psychological Science*, 27(2), 150–160.

Also, note that if there is a choice between **I/ we pronouns** when the active voice is used, "we" tends to sound more appropriate when one writes in collaboration with other authors rather than as a single author. The pronoun «I» may figure in published academic writing (especially in mathematics, psychology, etc.), however, it is safer to avoid the use of «I» and «my» so as not to sound too assertive and individualistic unless this is a norm in your field.

Linking words

A variety of linking words are commonly employed to discuss data analysis methods and specific procedures.

Indicating order or sequence

Prior to/ before + noun/ V-ing, next, during, after (that), on + noun/ V-ing (on obtaining the samples)

- The variable will be transformed logarithmically **before** the analysis.
- **Next**, to test the hypothesis we will create a model ..., which ...
- **After** the introductory stage, we will have several discussions with participants about ...
- **On** obtaining the data, I will perform statistical analyses to evaluate ...

Showing cause and effect

As a result, consequently, because, because of/ due to smth

- **As a result**, the adjustment process takes longer in response to ... than in response to ...
- **Consequently**, much of our knowledge of causal effects must come from non-randomized observational studies. / Research is inconsistent in uncovering relations between X, Y, and, **consequently**, Z.
- **Because of time constraints**, we only study X.
- This is justified **because** the amounts of ... are not too different for the ... campaigns.
- **Due to the limited amount of existing research** about ..., a qualitative inquiry is needed to explore this interrelationship.

3.4. Language for outlining the study's scope and limitations

Limiting language

The language used to indicate **the scope and limitations** of a study tends to build on negative verb forms, as well as words and phrases that are negative in meaning. **Present and Future tenses** are most common:

- In this study, we **do not attempt** to address/ cover ...
- This study **does not/ will not/ cannot** examine ...

Nouns

The following **nouns** often feature in statements about the study's limitations, the first four of them being quite similar in meaning:

Boundaries, constraints, limitation(s), restriction(s), scope

- This study places the age **boundary** between 7 and 14 years old, in between those years, the degree of acquiring ability varies by person (MICUSP).
- Time **constraints** of one semester require less time than may be ideal for an ethnographic study.
- An important **limitation** of these verbal instruments is that emotions, and especially the type of subtle low intensity emotions that are evoked by products, are difficult to verbalize.
- These **restrictions** reduced the initial sample from 120 to 100 firms.
- Although the **scope** of this paper does not permit detailed comparison of the X and Y editions, it is worth noting that the differences are considerable.

Adjectives

The following adjectives can be useful in discussing the limitations of the research. These can be used with "too" or "very" for emphasis. Negative prefixes can be used as well:

Complex, complicated, difficult, impossible, limiting, limited, (not) generalizable, less likely

- We do not go beyond **complex** graphical representations of network structures, as these are **complicated** to map accurately in any given situation.
- If planning problems are modeled as systematic and blind search through a tree of actions, the problem quickly becomes computationally **too/ very difficult**.
- Whether this value represents an increase or decrease over past years is **impossible** to say without historical data.
- Scaling beyond 1024 nodes has not been tested, though memory constraints and duration of simulation could also be a **limiting** factor.

- This study's **limited** demographic makes it less **generalizable** to employees in other organizations.
- However, respondents may be **less likely** to seek medical help if they are younger than 15.

Verb phrases

To be bound by, be limited/ restricted to, be limited by, to (not) allow/ permit smb to do smth

- The analysis here **is bound by** the scoring rubric that exists.
- **There is bound to be** disagreement about the precise extent of governmental authority; determining the correct line is not my goal here.
- Because our objective is to examine trading by insiders motivated by foreknowledge of company disclosures, the transactions included in the study **are limited to** open market purchases and sales by officers and directors.
- Also, participants **are limited by** their level of ability to use more complex words while answering the questions.
- Finally, the current results **are restricted to** certain topics and to certain health questionnaires being used.
- Although experience may **allow us to** acquire an appreciation of some statistical laws (*references*), it does not seem to do so for regression.

Additional phrases

Beyond/ outside the scope of + noun

- Closer scrutiny of these approaches is **beyond the scope of** this review.
- The discussion of the above issues is, however, **outside the scope of** the present paper, as will be explained later.

Linking words of contrast

Linking words of contrast are often used to show to describe a study's limitations. These may include:

Although, despite/ in spite of + noun (or V-ing), while/ whereas

- **Although** the proposed research will provide a general knowledge of the relationship between X and Y, further research will need to be conducted to examine these connections.
- **Despite** the fact that all shoppers are included in the overall population that this study represents, using a random sample of all shoppers is beyond the capabilities of this project. Therefore, the study will use a convenience sample of shoppers predominantly within ...
- **While** the results should correlate to the overall population, this study's small scope make it less generalizable to the entire population.
- **Therefore**, the study will use a convenience sample of students predominantly within the College of Business at the Hattiesburg campus of The University of Southern Mississippi.

4. The Expected Outcomes Section

4.1. Language for discussing the study's significance

Positive language

The language used to describe expected outcomes and significance (value) of the proposed study is that of positive evaluation. **Hedging structures** are quite common as the author only hints at how the study can be useful in advancing the research in the field or contributing to the academic community. Note that stronger claims are typically made with the help of the **Present or Future Simple tenses**, while the use of modal verbs (e.g., "may," "might," and "could") and verbs such as "appear/ seem to" and "tend to" suggests a more cautious interpretation of the study's value.

Verb and noun collocations

Here are examples of **verb and noun collocations** than are typically used to talk about the significance of a study:

- to add **to** the body of research **on/ knowledge about** ...
- to advance smth (research/ knowledge in the field of...)

Appendix E

The Methods Checklist

Content
<i>The author:</i>
1. starts by restating the study's purpose (optional)
2. outlines the overall approach to conducting the study (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods research design) in light of the stated purpose
3. provides a justification for proposed data collection methods and specific data collection instruments (with reference to previous studies)
4. presents a justification for proposed data analysis methods (with reference to previous studies)
5. articulates specific procedures for obtaining and analysing the data (setting, timeframes, etc., where applicable)
6. indicates the scope and major limitations of the approach.
Organization
7. Paragraph division is coherent and effective.
8. The paragraphs have a clear structure.
9. Appropriate headings and subheadings are used (if applicable).
10. Appropriate linking words and conjunctions are used to connect ideas within and between paragraphs.
Language
11. Move-specific grammar and vocabulary structures are varied and appropriate to the author's communicative intentions in the Methods section.
12. The use of tenses and verb forms (active and passive) is aligned to specific communicative functions conveyed in this section.
13. The overall language use follows established sentence formation, style, grammar and vocabulary use conventions.
14. The text is free of major spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors.
Format
15. All cited sources are acknowledged properly in in-text references and the list of references following the APA style conventions.

Appendix F

The Expected Outcomes Checklist

Content
<i>The author:</i>
1. reasserts the study's significance by pointing to its theoretical (and practical) implications
2. introduces preliminary findings (where applicable)
3. discusses ways to share the future findings with a larger community.
Organization
4. Paragraph division is coherent and effective.
5. The paragraphs have a clear structure.
6. Appropriate headings and subheadings are used (if applicable).
7. Appropriate linking words and conjunctions are used to connect ideas within and between paragraphs.
Language
8. Move-specific grammar and vocabulary structures are varied and appropriate to the author's communicative intentions in the Expected Outcomes section.
9. The use of tenses and verb forms (active and passive) is aligned to specific communicative functions conveyed in this section.
10. The overall language use follows established sentence formation, style, grammar and vocabulary use conventions.
11. The text is free of major spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors.
Format
12. All cited sources are acknowledged properly in in-text references and the list of references following the APA style conventions.