

# Cognition and Semiotics

MA Cognitive Semiotics, Fall 2020

Lecture 9

Mon Nov 2nd

# Overview

- Today's lecture: Cognition and Semiotics Writing Bootcamp
  - Exam
  - Disposition and guidelines
  - References
  - Peer feedback
  - Writing bootcamp!

# Final Exam in Cog & Sem (2020)

- The exam consists of a written, set take-home assignment – the student is given a **question at the beginning of the exam via Digital exam** (a selection from a number of questions)
- Length: **9-13 standard pages** (1 page = 2400 characters incl spaces)
- The examination is conducted in either English or Danish, according to the preference of the student. External co-examiner
- Duration: **1 week** (May 21-28<sup>th</sup>)
- Questions?

# Written papers: disposition

- The papers that you've read typically takes a disposition from experimental/empirical research, i.e. EX 1
- However, your exam paper – and the assignment – will rather take it's disposition from theoretical research, i.e. EX 2:

## EX 1

Title  
Abstract  
1 Introduction  
    1.1 Subsection 1  
    1.2 Subsection 2  
2 Methods and materials  
    2.1 Participants  
    2.2 Materials/stimuli  
    2.3 Procedure (protocol)  
    2.4 Analysis  
3 Results  
4 Discussion  
5 Conclusion  
6 References

## EX 2

Title  
Abstract  
1 Introduction  
    1.1 Subsection 1  
    1.2 Subsection 2  
2 Literature review  
    2.1 A  
    2.2 B  
4 Discussion/theoretical analysis  
5 Conclusion  
6 References

For the Assignment today, this will will of course be a much more condense version

# Written papers: disposition

- For the exam, you will be given *a broader topic* and *some specific subquestions to discuss*, whereas for this assignment you will discuss a specific paper in limited space
  - A snapshot of the exam paper, as it were
- But the overall **progression** and development of the two, take very similar shapes, with **individual sections** that serve **distinct purposes** and aims for what they should contain
- **Pro tip:** In Word, use the function for **document navigation** using styles:
  - Make sure that you open the pane called “**navigation pane**”
  - Every time you have new title, format it using the **styles** (which you can customise) for e.g. Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.
  - This way you can easily and quickly move around in your document
  - And produce a ToC that automatically updates page numbers

# The assignment

- To give you enough time, we'll have a in-class writing bootcamp today – and go over the **expectations**
- It will be graded (everyone must submit this assignment; it's **500-1000 words max**, excl. references in APA)
  - To go over topics from the last to lectures
  - To tick off exam preparation and feedback
  - Guide you on how written exams work well
- I'll be available for questions!
- Following submission, we'll do an anonymous peer-review round, where we review each other's papers and give feedback

Deadline will be 6/11

# The assignment

- Check out the following papers – and review **one in detail**:
  - Derex et al (2019) *Causal understanding is not necessary for the improvement of culturally evolving technology*
  - Fay et al (2008). *The fitness and functionality of culturally evolved communication systems*
  - Nölle et al (2018). *The emergence of systematicity: How environmental and communicative factors shape a novel communication system*
- Choose 1, and answer the following:

Transmis. chain  
on Technology

Communication:  
Internal factors

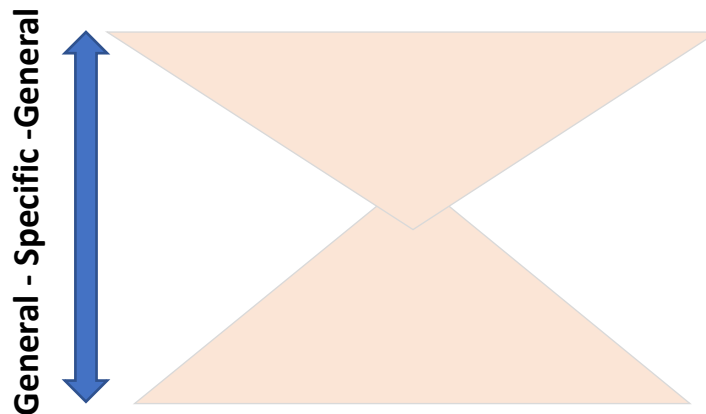
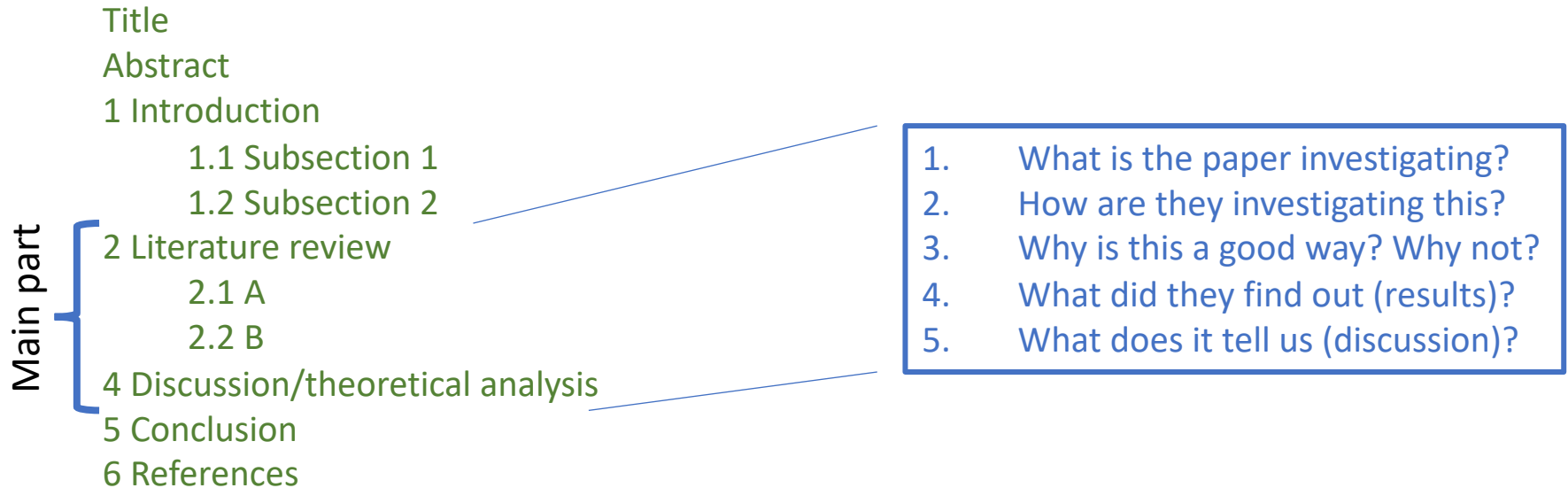
Communication:  
External factors

1. What is the paper investigating?
2. How are they investigating this?
3. Why is this a good way? Why not?
4. What did they find out (results)?
5. What does it tell us (discussion)?

- Include the First Author last name in your document title to indicate which paper you're reviewing

Save as..  
"Derex et al."

# Situating the assignment and the progression





# Assignment: Introduction

- The “why?” section:
  - Introduces the motivation for the study (theoretical and/or empirical) and relates it to existing research in the field
- The introduction starts out by presenting the research question in a general way and then becomes increasingly specific...
- It can be useful to let this be the last thing you write (or rewrite it after other parts are done)

# Introduction - flow

**General/abstract framing:** which kind of (real-world) phenomenon/issue are we dealing with? (importance)

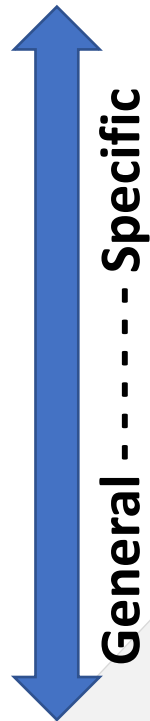
Existing theoretical and empirical approaches of relevance – (debates or controversies)?

More specific/concrete instantiation of the topic and **how it is investigated** in this study

(leading to the research questions)

Specific - - - - General

# Discussion - flow



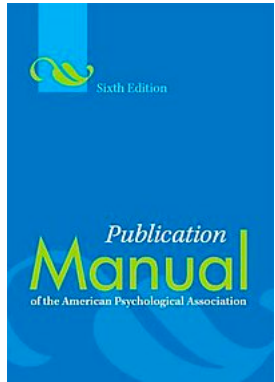
Summary  
of the results  
- What did they find?

Was it an appropriate way of  
investigating the question in every way?  
(Possible shortcomings of the work, potential critique  
that one could have, what could have been done differently?)

What does the results mean/what do they suggest? (This is  
where you start *interpreting* (rather than just objectively describing)  
(What other experimental findings and literature does this relate to?)

What does this mean for the theoretical background that the study was built on on?  
What does it tell us? (Does it relate to the real-world?)


# References

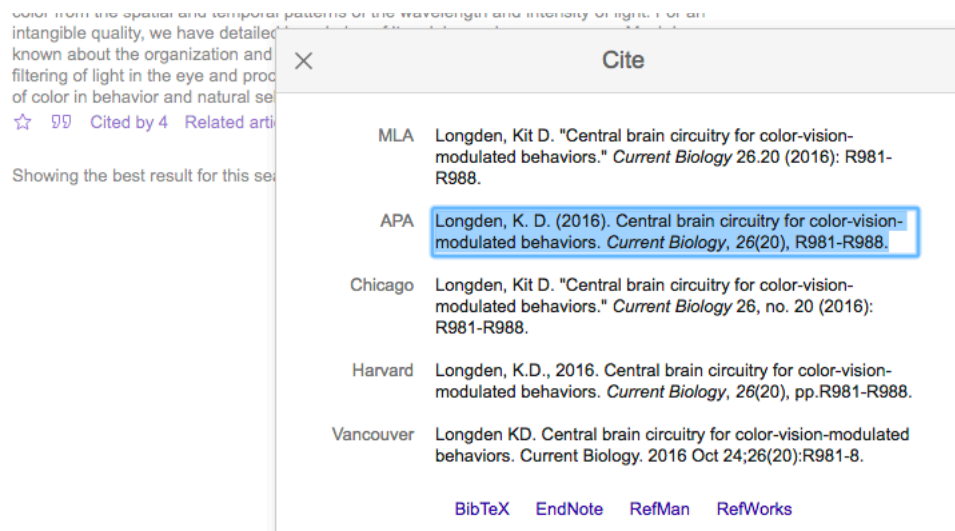


- Anyone using a reference tool, like Endnote?
  - It's free on the library website – but takes a bit of practice
- For **references** use a style guide called APA
  - The APA is The American Psychological Association's style guide: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- Broadly: in text use last name and year, and if more than three then use et al: ..**by Olsen et al. (2019)** or **(Olsen et al., 2019)**
- In the literature list:
- For articles, only the *journal name* is in *italics*
  - Fx: Longden, K. D. (2016). Central brain circuitry for color-vision-modulated behaviors. *Current Biology*, 26(20), 981-988.
- For books, only the *book title* is in *italics*
  - Fx: Tomasello, M. (2009). *The cultural origins of human cognition*. Harvard university press



# References

- You can also use Google Scholar to generate references in the right format for your reference list
  - copy the title, then go to [www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com), then paste in the title in the search field, find the right one. Then you click the citation icon: 
  - Copy-paste to your reference list



# The assignment

- You're expected to answer these 5 question (order may vary) and to do it in **500-1000 words max** (excl. reference list)

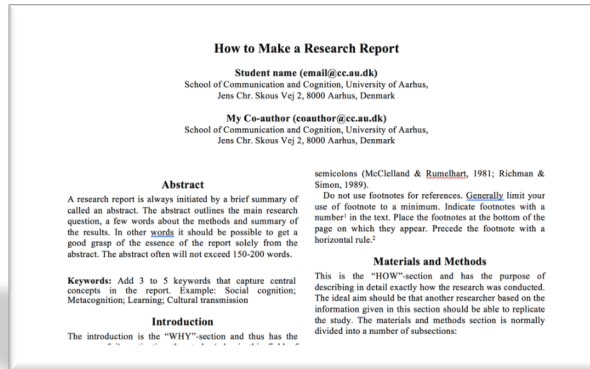
- No need to add your name
- BB will do it
- **Include the paper's First Author last name in your document title to indicate which paper you're reviewing**

Save as..  
"Derex et al."

1. What is the paper investigating?
2. How are they investigating this?
3. Why is this a good way? Why not?
4. What did they find out (results)?
5. What does it tell us (discussion)?

- Then submit it as a **Word document** using the link on Blackboard under assignments for Class 09
  - Anonymous feedback and grade
- Following submission, we'll do an anonymous peer-review round, where we review each other's nameless papers and give feedback – on 2 other assignments!

## Study something cool and write it up!



### Re-write to adapt changes

- Journal specifications
- Co-authors' comments



**Journal editor** receives manuscript and sends

- to 2-4 expert reviewers
- awaits their (free) work

REPEAT



**Peer Reviewers** read the article and provide feedback and advice

- reject, revise and re-submit, accept

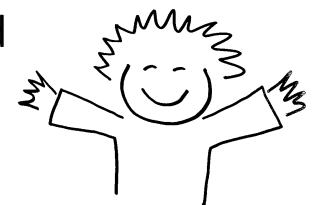
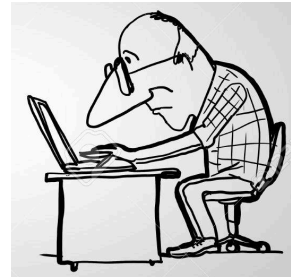
### Re-write to adapt changes

- Editors requests
- Reviewers' comments
- Resubmit with coverletter



### Final decision to Reject/accept

- Normally after several rounds - and months/years
- If peer and editorial standards are met, published for the world to see!



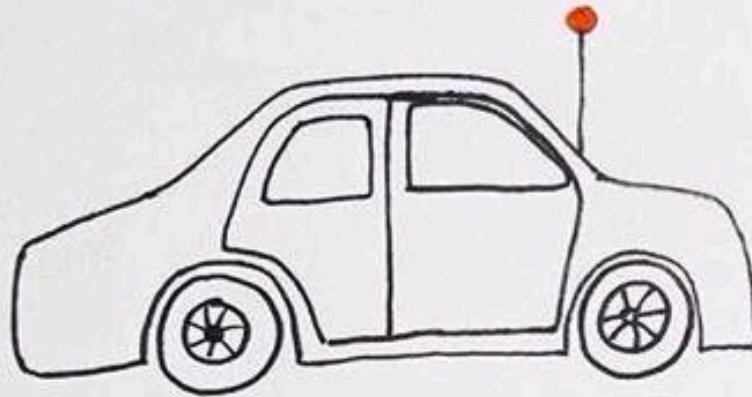
# Reviewing a journal article

- The Review is a **critical reading of the manuscript** and include **constructive recommendation** (suggestions, requirements) for how to improve it before publication
- It can target all components:
  - *The conceptual framing*
  - *Terminology*
  - *The literature review*
  - *The materials and methods*
  - *Results*
  - *Discussion*
  - *References*
  - *Figures and tables*
  - *Suppl information* (appendix)
- Your lecturerers and scientists generally are thus used to very critical (sometimes brutal) feedback on their precious work
  - The trick is to know that "**it's just work**" and has nothing to do with you personally

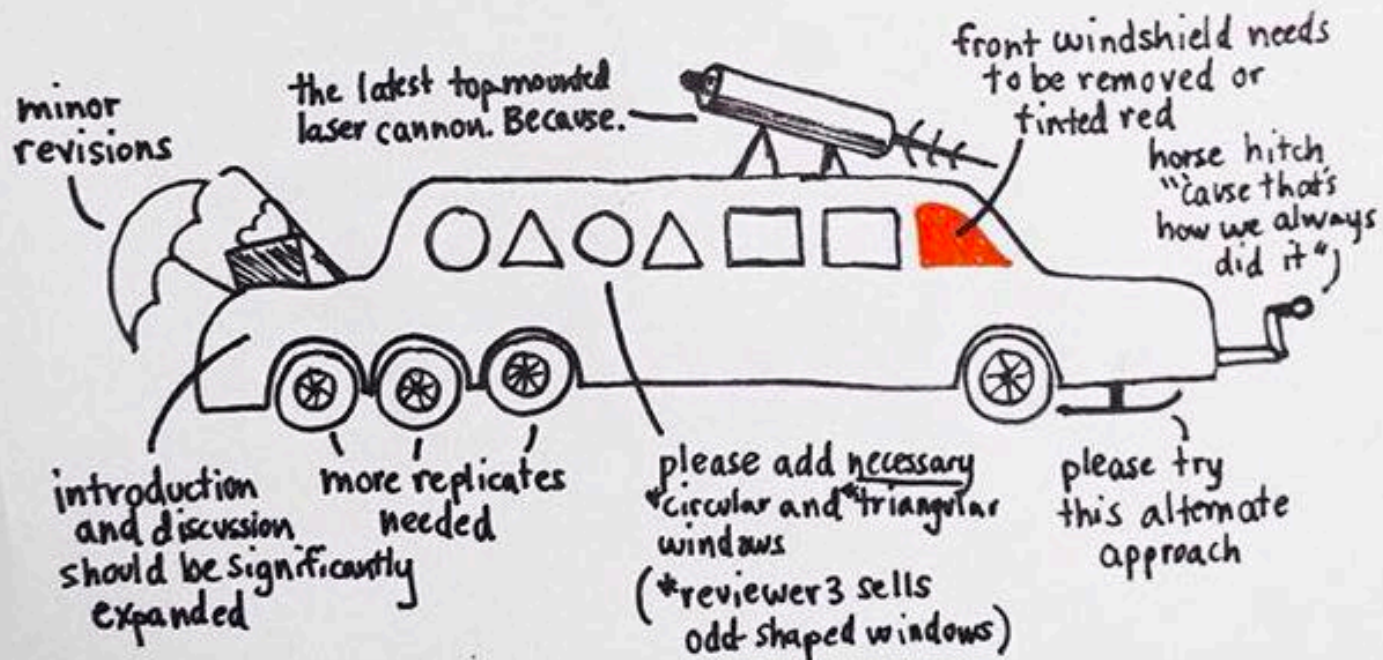




Your manuscript as submitted



... and after peer review and revision



# Peer feedback task

- For the feedback round, each student will be select **2 other assignments** from a dropbox folder (preferably choose ones that do not already have comments)
  1. Write short comments **on the positive parts** that you found identify
  2. Write suggestions for **improvements** (simplifications, clarifications, inconsistencies or potential problems)
- *Throughout both reviews, try to be polite but constructive*
- The reviews are also **an opportunity** to see how others have approached their topic, **be efficient and use what has been learned** in your own exam paper
- **Disclaimers:** It's just an assignment = opportunity for learning
- A quick guide will follow next time

# Questions?