TDA 517

English for Information Technology

Division for Language and Communication

**Reading and Analysis Workbook**

This workbook is intended to help you analyze the readings that we use in the course, both the shared ones (BA theses and conference papers examples) and the ones that you will choose as part of your reading collection. It can also be used to guide you in planning and revising your work.

Most of these points will be brought up during our seminars, but we will ask you to use parts of this workbook to prepare for discussion during the seminars. It is intended to help you develop critical reading skills and reading efficiency, analyze how authors strategically adapt their writing of different types of texts to different audiences, and provide you with a questions and concepts that you can use to plan, produce and evaluate your own writing.

By comparing these different readings, using these questions as a starting point, you should be able to reach a list of useful insights that you can directly apply to your writing.

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Part 1: Understanding the purpose and audience of the text

You might need to research some information on the Internet to answer these questions.

1. Who are the intended readers of this paper? What aspects of the text (content, structure and language) suggest who the readers may be? Be specific.
2. (For conference papers): Where was this paper presented? What information can you find about the conference where this paper was presented?
3. Who goes to this conference? What kind of topics would they be interested to hear about? Why do you think this paper was accepted?
4. After having compared the BA theses and the conference papers, what do you think is the most important purpose of a conference paper? In what ways it is different from a BA thesis? What are the important characteristics of a well-written conference paper? (again consider everything, from style, argumentation and use of references, structure, type of content etc.)

Part 2: Getting a General Overview

First browse through the texts and look at the structure: titles, subtitles, visual elements, and sections. (if you want you can draw or describe this structure below or on a separate page)

1. Considering the purpose and audience of each text, why do you think that the authors organized the texts in these specific ways?
2. Is there a text that has an especially effective organization, in your view? Why? What would you change?
3. Is the structure of the conference papers similar to reports you have written? List any differences and similarities: what motivates them? The topic? The readers? The purpose?

Part 3: Taking a Closer Look

Pick a selection of texts (3-4) from the common texts and/or your collection. Read the following set of questions before reading them a second time. Focus on these questions as you read through each text again, this time more closely.

Content and Rhetoric

1. How do the authors start the paper? What arguments do they use to convince the reader that their study is interesting? Underline the part of the text where you think the authors express their main argument that motivates the paper.
2. What is the purpose of the study? Can you find the sentence where it is expressed? Does it seem appropriate for the venue (type conference, audience)?
3. How do the authors review the existing literature? How do they introduce and comment on previous work in their text? Are there parts that you think are well written? Why? Are there parts that are confusing or ineffective? Why?
4. What methods do the authors use in the study? How do the authors justify their choice of method in the paper?
5. Compare how authors comment on figures and table:
   1. Are there any visuals that are more commented on than others? Why? What different purposes can you identify for different figures and tables?
   2. Closely look at how authors introduce the commentary to the visual in their texts: How do they signal that they are discussing the figure? What do they say first? Do they comment on all the elements in the visual? Why? How does is commentary text conclude?
6. Consider the cohesion (unity) of the text, how it flows together. Does it tell you a good story?

Identify:

12b. Effective transition between sections and paragraphs. What makes these transitions effective?

12a. What kind of linking words and phrases do the authors use in the text? List a few examples of effective “transition language”

1. How do the authors conclude the paper? Do you think it is an effective conclusion for the audience? Why?

Language and Style

1. Identify words that were new to you, or that you found particularly effective (List them here)

Would you be able to use them? Where in your text?

1. Consider the register and tone of the paper: does it seem formal or informal to you? Do you think the style is appropriate for the purpose and audience of the paper? Why?
2. Identify and some examples of effective style in your paper collection (good examples for how to phrase arguments, claims, descriptions and more):
3. Can you find any grammar errors? Where?

Part 4: Summing up and writing your own paper

Based on your reading, analysis and comparison of the texts in your collection (shared texts plus the ones you selected yourself), as summarized in this workbook, write a self-assessment of your own paper (you can use this for your draft, for your final, or to give feedback to other writers).