Thesis writing workshop

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# Thesis structures:

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1. Acknowledgements
2. Abstract
3. Introduction
   1. Problem statement
   2. Contributions
   3. Thesis Outline
4. Background and Related Work
5. Motivating example (if exists) (?)
6. Case studies (?)
7. Conclusiion
8. Future Work

Some people would combine literature review etc. in the introduction chapter

This is the template most people use:

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Maybe use one fo the research questions as each of the chapters

Or Literature Review or

Each chapter needs a clear purpose

e.g. Literature review – revew existing studies and tell audience what we already know. Justify the motivation behind the study, and identify/using explicit language to signal the gap in the existing literature, therefore given this gap (necessity for doing current research)

e.g. Chapter 3 reporting your result to one of the key research questions. Purpose – to report the key findings to that question. Might need to resetate the research question you try to answer, and the key findings.

# Abstract

Brainstorm – what needs to be in an abstract?

*Students say:*

*A brief summary of the contents, e.g. main findings*

*Overview of the findings*

## Teacher says:

Overview of the research:

* Context
* Gaps in the existing field
* Aims of your project / research / topic / question
* How you’re going to address it (briefly introduce the method)
* Using this method, what are the findings/
* Given these findings, what is your interpretation gving the field? (Significance)
* How will your findings contribute to the field?

Questions to ask yourself:

* Is the topic clear?
* Are the *what, why and how* clear?
* Does it present the key findings?
* Is the contribution clear?
* Is it persuasive?

## Example:

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First sentence gives the context, gives importance of emerging fields of research.

However the gap has not been specifically stated / not straightforware, it’s not very clear.

But the aim is clear, the method is clear, and the procedure (what has been done) is clear, but what exactly has been found & implications are unclear.

So should have a speciric, distinct description of the thesis in your abstract.

These keyword/phrases will help with linking sentences:

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We want to tell a coherent story of what, why and how we’ve done it!

# Introduction

Justify the research!

* Context
* Issue
* Literature review (brief?) – depends if you have a separate chapter for literature review. If so, keep this short
  + What is known
  + What is not known
  + Why the issue is important
  + If separate chapter:
    - in this intro:
      * What is the current situation like?
      * What we do know about this study?
    - In chapter:
      * What is the gap?
      * Why do we need to do this study?
* Aims
* Contribution to the field
* Thesis outline

To think about:

* Is the significance clear?
* Are the what, why and how clear?
* Does it present the key findings?
* Is it persusasive?
* What differences are there between the abstract and introduction?

Example:

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How do they review the literature?

The whole first paragraph is justifying the necessity of doing this research – why it’s important

Then it briefly reviews the literature – didn’t give a detailed description, but they reviewed existing work. They just synthesized / gave a very succinct summary about what’s out there right now. … “A common observatioin”… they compared the studies and drew this conclusion. “… Methods have been proposed whwere….” “The methods for these are …”

Divided the task, then very clearly specified the aim of the project – the motivation, what we know about it, and how we’re going to do it.

Also the outline / structure of the thesis.

# Literature Review

**Make sure to add a transition sentence! “This chapter provides an overview… “ “This chapter will answer the research question of…”**

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Literature review – present your synthesized

Finding or shared thing you’ve found by reviewing a group of studies.

“Relatively few studies have produced…”

So it demonstrates you’ve read those studies and you’re evaluating them. You’re not actually summarising each report!

Shared argument, present that first, then reference literature too support aht argument.

e.g. “A common thread is that …” “A recent study by found that…” “This thesis

Quality of literature review – examine the first sentence of each paragraph. By assessing them, you reflect on them – “does the flow of these first sentences tell the audience a very clear idea of the necessity of doing this pieice of research?”

Subtitles in a literature review

1. Definition,
2. Identification,

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Used to introduction research aims/questions and hypothesis

What we know, what we don’t known, then necessity of doing this study

# Results

Restate the research problem (questions or hypothesis)

A systematic descriptoino of your results

Subtitles – give the different topics apparent in your results.

Re; research question, what are the keys messages you want to tell the audience?

So many findings, don’t record every single one. Only the most significant ones!

Focus on how to order them, present in different paragraphs. What is the evidence from the literature?

A visual presentation – tables, charts, figures

Describe the figures as well

# Discussion

* Explain what the results mean. You decide what’s best for you
* Need to explain / interpret what the findings mean
  + “Findings have demonstrated… “ “and this is inconsistent/different/consistent to a previous study”
  + Compare the findings to existing literature (refer to previous tudies). Show how results relate to the field.
* In doing so, you’re persuading the reader of your contribution to the field. Of your study’s significance in spite of limitations.
  + Acknowledge the limitations of your finding

# Conclusion

Summary of key findings

Importance of your study

Implications for the general area (generalisability)

Limitations and future studies

# Paragraph sturcutre

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Transition sentence summarising paragraph and linking to the next.

Not looking for a big mac!

Too many ideas in one paragraph. Not digestable!

Or barely any claims, with no reference to literature!

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# Subheadings, paragraphs and cohesion

Subheadings can structure the chapter

Also looking at how you link between paragraphs!

Have lniks between findings – how to organise the findings into a cohesive piece! Coherent story and link them. Use the flow. Paragraph 1 about idea 1, Paragraph2 about idea 2, but 1 and 2 are logically linked.

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