The **SLL&CS** Research Handbook

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

The SLL&CS Research Handbook

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A SLL&CS Publication

July 2012

Preface

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide to students enrolled in the M.Phil./PhD programme of the School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Originally written for the students of the Centre for Linguistics in 2007, this version of the document has been extensively rewritten to meet the needs of a more general audience. A special word of thanks in this regard are owed to Madhu Sahni and Chitra Harshvardhan for their critical reading of the original document, their comments, rewriting and supply of examples relevant to research in foreign languages and translation studies.

In preparing the document, I have consulted and used a number of Internet resources, including The Online Writing Lab at Purdue University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill online resources. Much of the source material has been rewritten and adapted to suit the context of humanities and linguistic research in JNU. Permission to use OWL Purdue has been sought and obtained, and their use in the text and appendices below is with written approval.

Ayesha Kidwai
January 2012

Contents

Chapter 1
What Am I Doing Here?

Welcome to the M.Phil. /PhD programme of the School of Language, Literature, & Culture Studies, and to a completely new world of academics. This handbook is intended as your guide to the research process in general, and dissertation in particular, as well as to allay the unneeded anxiety and feelings of confusion and inadequacy that will almost inevitably plague you over the next few years.

A dissertation is the culmination and the final product of an involved process of research, critical thinking, source evaluation, organisation, and composition. The dissertation serves not only to further the field in which it is written, but also to provide you with an exceptional opportunity to increase your knowledge in that field. The process of writing a dissertation can be one of the more rewarding experiences one may encounter in academics, and is a test of your abilities of diligence, organisation, practice, a willingness to learn (and to make mistakes!), and, perhaps most important of all, patience.

Writing the dissertation will enable you to start developing a set of valuable research and writing skills. Thinking analytically, synthesising complicated information, writing well, and organising your time will all serve you well regardless of the career you embark upon after the dissertation. If you choose a career in academia, the systems of support, research strategies, work schedules, and writing techniques you will learn in this period will help you write books and articles for years to come.

If you take some care in developing your dissertation, the document can be transformed after your degree has been awarded into a book or series of articles that can help launch your academic career. Unlike earlier course papers that just received a grade, your dissertation can be used and revised for years to come.

1.1 Understand what the experience entails

Many people go into research because they have always been "good at

studies", and want to continue with something that brings them success and self-confidence. The dissertation, on the other hand, is a new kind of academic project, unlike anything else you have done, and is the academic project that marks your transition from student to scholar.

Writing a dissertation is a very large, very independent project. It is, by definition, a self-directed process. There are usually no weekly deadlines from professors, no regular discussions with classmates, no reading assignments, no one telling you what to do— you are on your own, writing something longer than you have ever written, and doing it without a safety net. This independence can make the process seem very intimidating

Writing a dissertation is stressful. When you embark on this project, you may begin to ask yourself questions about your future in academia. When you finish your dissertation, you will have to change your life dramatically —you will have to look for a job, begin work as an independent scholar, develop classes, and move out of a community that you have grown to love, and so on. You may also feel like your dissertation will begin to define your professional identity. You may feel like your research interests, your theoretical influences, and your skill as a writer may be evaluated by this first piece of serious scholarship.

Understand that you may experience self-doubt. At various points in the research degree, you may find yourself questioning your commitment to your chosen profession or topic. In that event, consider these tactics:

- *Do some soul-searching*. This may be a time to ask yourself what the PhD means to you, and whether you really want to continue. Remember that what it means to you and what it means to your partner, family, or friends may be very different. Ask yourself "What will make me happy? And why?"
- *Seek help from other sources of advice.* Your supervisor or colleagues in the Centre may be able to help you. Other research scholars, especially those who are close to finishing or have finished, may be helpful.
- *Remember that there is no shame in not pursuing this advanced degree*. Deciding not to continue with a research degree does not mean that you have "quit", or that others who continue to pursue it are smarter, more driven, or more virtuous than you are. Many people lead happy, fulfilling lives, build lucrative and rewarding careers, make important

contributions to knowledge, and generally get along just fine without doing either an M.Phil. or a PhD.

1.2 Time Management

Effective time management can be another way to alleviate some of the external stresses of a research program. Here are a few tips:

Plan each day. Block out the thirty minutes, hour, three hours, or whatever that you want to work on the dissertation. Sometimes the biggest hurdle to time management is not finding big blocks of time in which to work, but remember that what is important is simply starting to work in the available time. When all else fails, try the strategy of working on your dissertation for five minutes a day. Once you work for five minutes (*really* work—no computer games!), you may find that another five minutes would not be so bad. Getting in the habit of working on the dissertation every day, even for a short period, can be an important time management strategy.

Choose a scheduling strategy that works for you. Some people like to schedule their daily dissertation work in terms of hours and minutes worked, and others in terms of "problems solved" or "pages written". Figure out which works best for you, but remember to put in enough of free time to do the other things you like.

Schedule the dissertation work along with the other work you need to do. Do not fool yourself into believing that you can set long stretches of time aside for exclusively the dissertation or the other work – all this will do is cause panic as the time allotted will inevitably be inadequate.

Schedule research work at times most productive for you. Develop rituals of work that might help you get more done. Critically think about your work methods – you may LOVE to listen to music while you write, for example, but if you wind up singing half the time, it is not a strategy worth keeping.

When planning your long-range goals, work backwards. When do you need to turn in the dissertation to the Centre? For PhDs, do not let immediate concerns take over the time you want to devote to this important long-term project. It is easy to let the dissertation (with no regular or immediate deadline) sit on the shelf because something with a more concrete deadline (a presentation to someone's class on a specific date, for exam-

ple) seems to be looming large. Plan for those events in advance, and do not let them eat up all of your dissertation time.

Think about this process as an opportunity to build self-trust. When you make a promise to yourself that you will work for five minutes or an hour, keep it. Become someone you can count on. If you are anxious about the quality of your work, remember that dissertations are not master works. They are your first try at this, and no one's is really all that good, frankly.

Confront the Procrastination Monster. People procrastinate for many reasons, some of which you already know. The key to beating procrastination, though, seems to be figuring out why you are procrastinating, so that you can develop strategies for stopping it. Here is what to do when you do not feel like writing:

- *Make a list of all the little things you need to do for a given section of the dissertation, no matter how small.* Then when you do not feel like tackling something big, you can do something else, like photocopying an article you need, or check citations.
- *Do the more mundane things needed in a dissertation.* Reformat margins; work on the bibliography, tab examples, draw trees and diagrams, etc..
- *Vent your frustration*. Free-write about why you are stuck, and perhaps even about how tired you are of your dissertation/ supervisor, etc. This could even get you past the emotions of writer's block and move you toward creative solutions.
- *If you are really feeling disorganised, clean your workspace.* A clear desk and an organised set of notes can go a long way toward clearing your head and getting you on track, but do not make the office-cleaning-ritual your first choice for procrastination.
- *Emulate the students who are serious workers*. If you do not know who they are, ask your supervisor. Try not to emulate the non-workers in your department – it can be easy to fall into a sort of fraternity of alleged dissertation writers who are bound by the mantra, "I'm not getting any work done".

1.3 Feel and behave like a professional

One of the most important parts of becoming a scholar is feeling like one. The transition from student to scholar is a huge mental step toward completion. Essentially, do things that help you feel like you have a legitimate

place in academia – here are a few tips:

- Think about the dissertation as a nine-to-five job.
- Organize and run Centre-level discussion groups on matters of common interest to your peers and/or specific to a sub-discipline.
- Attend seminars, conferences and workshop, and read broadly in your field. Deliver papers on your research, and engage with the research of your peers.
- Talk with scholars from outside your Centre who do similar work, and engage in intellectual conversations.
- When faculty in the area of your research visit your Centre, make appointments to meet them to discuss your own work. Keep in mind, however, that everyone is very busy, so preferably you ask for such an appointment well in advance, preferably by email. Make sure that you are on time for the appointment and that the visitor has your contact phone number.
- As far as possible, try and teach what you have learnt to others in the same discipline, as teaching a subject is the best way to truly understand what it is. Although a research scholar cannot seek or accept full-time employment, there is no bar to you taking classes and tutorials for free. Remember though that teaching carries with it a huge responsibility, so you must check and crosscheck the content of your lectures. If there is something that you do not fully understand, or a question that you cannot satisfactorily answer, there is no shame in approaching another scholar to help you to resolve the question.

1.4 You are not alone!

In any university, and particularly JNU, everyone knows how you feel! Your teachers, your peers, and your friends – they all know it, because they went through it themselves! Never, ever, undervalue yourself and your work, as all pursuit of knowledge is useful and worth it, if only for those moments when the keenness of your own mind surprises even you!

In a University as engaged as JNU, there are a number of non-official fora that you can raise your individual issues\problems, and do not hesitate to do so. For more egregious problems, such as victimisation, ragging, caste discrimination, sexual harassment, plagiarism and academic dishonesty, and violence, or ethical issues, please approach the University-instituted

bodies for their resolution. Do *not* choose an informal route in these matters or agree to some sort of peer- or teacher-led mediation, as such solutions do not actually resolve the matter in your best interest.

1.5 Check and respect the rules!

Respecting the rules is as much your responsibility as it is your Centre's. Acquaint yourself with the rules and regulations applicable to your enrolment at JNU. Do not rely on the impressions of others or your own – check the actual ordinances and Academic Council decisions, as these are frequently amended, and your informants will most likely be unaware of recent amendments.

Furthermore, the rules relating to your residency in JNU are extremely serious ones, and a violation of them is not only a matter of discipline but also of ethical behaviour. Taking up full-time or part-time employment while being enrolled for a research degree in the University and receiving a scholarship is not allowed by the rules. Keep in mind that this facility has been afforded to you by the millions of Indians who pay taxes on the most basic of necessities, and that to misuse it is to actually cheat their trust.

Chapter 2
Seven Steps to a Research Degree

Although the initial year of the M.Phil./PhD programme may initially appear to be some kind of continuation of your MA days – what with classes, term papers, and so on – this is a significant period of initiation into research. Along with your coursework, begin the processes we discuss here.

2.1 Choose a topic

Your dissertation will give you the opportunity to make an in-depth study of a subject that interests you. For it to be a success, you need to find an interest that is *researchable* – just simply wanting to learn more in an area does not automatically produce a research question. While you must choose something you really do find interesting, ensure that there are genuine questions associated with the topic, that these questions are answerable, and that there are no insurmountable practical difficulties.

You may encounter one of two scenarios when it comes to choosing a topic for a dissertation. In the first scenario, a teacher suggests a list of topics from which you may choose. As the teacher has deemed these topics worthy; therefore, you should be confident in the topic s/he chooses from the list. However, you may also find the topics provided to be limiting; moreover, it is not uncommon for you to have a topic in mind that does not fit with any of those provided. If this is the case, it is always beneficial to approach the teacher with one's ideas.

The second scenario is when the teacher leaves the choice of topic up to you. Typically, assignments and term papers that you did in earlier courses are the areas from which possible topics may present themselves; keep this in mind as you do the M.Phil./PhD coursework, and be on the lookout for a topic that may interest you. Do not be anxious because you think you lack authority or knowledge about the topic chosen. Instead, realise that the process to becoming an experienced researcher in a field takes practice.

At the PhD level, the topic must be novel, and the thesis must make an

original contribution to the field and at least parts of it must be publishable. The original contribution could be in terms of theory or methodology (e.g. how the data is collected or how it is analysed), but in all cases, the thesis must be one that plugs a gap in the research area, as it were. At the M.Phil. level, you must demonstrate both knowledge of existing research in an area of study you have identified and narrowed down, as well as an ability to formulate a research statement. Your ability to critically examine existing secondary sources is central to the writing of your M.Phil. dissertation, as at this level, you are not required to necessarily produce an original idea.

2.2 Work WITH your supervisor

Work out with your supervisor about how the two of you should proceed during the dissertation process, at the very beginning itself. Stick to that process. Any changes that you would like to make in this agreement must be mutually agreed on well beforehand. Do not disappear for months on end, and then appear with a draft of a dissertation that the supervisor is expected to read, comment upon, and approve in a few days.

Tell your supervisor what kind of feedback would be most helpful to you. Sometimes a supervisor can give unhelpful or discouraging feedback without realising it. Let him or her know very specifically what kinds of responses will be helpful to you at different stages of the writing process.

Keep your supervisor informed. Supervisors can be most helpful if they know what you are working on, what problems you are experiencing, and what progress you have made. A weekly, biweekly, or monthly meeting or progress report can prove helpful.

ASK YOUR SUPERVISOR

- How often should I be in contact with you about my progress?
- Do you prefer to see whole drafts of chapters, relatively polished drafts, or will you like to see smaller chunks of less-well-formed writing?
- If I give you a draft of a chapter on Monday, what do you think the turn-around time would be?
- Do you want to see the chapters in the order I write them, or in the sequence they will end up?

Understand that your supervisor has many other teaching and supervision responsibilities, as well as a personal life. Your missing deadlines and appointments may severely inconvenience her/him. If you think a dead-

line and/or appointment is too soon for you, discuss alternative dates with your supervisor well in time for a mutually convenient rescheduling. Moreover, when you do hand in written work to your supervisor, ensure that the work has been checked for grammar and spelling, proofread and copy-edited.

Remember that rights as a human being are not suspended in the supervisor/research scholar relationship. There is no place for either intimidation, abuse, sexual harassment, slander, or plagiarism in this professional relationship, and should any such situation arise, do not feel that you are required to submit to this conduct. You may take up any of the official avenues available for the redressal of such grievances. Remember also that the same rights accrue to your supervisor as well, so make sure that your conduct is such that it establishes a good professional relationship.

2.3 Plan your research

There is no one "right" research strategy, but some may work better than others for certain topics, and for others, a combination of methods may be best. ***Suppose for example, that you are studying verb agreement phenomena in Hindi***, and you are a monolingual speaker of French (who of course must have access to French-Hindi bilingual informants). Your research plan must therefore include an initial step of exploration of the literature to glean the reported patterns, to be followed by a crosschecking of these patterns with native speakers, and then a step of the elicitation of new data. A research plan that began with the elicitation of primary data would be wasteful in this context.

Brainstorming is often a successful way for you to get some of these ideas down on paper. Seeing one's ideas in writing is often an impetus for the writing process. Although brainstorming is particularly effective when a topic has been chosen, it can also benefit you to narrow a topic.

Even if you are a native speaker of Hindi embarking on the same research project, the above strategy is perhaps still an optimal one, not only because it avoids a duplication of effort, but also because it will simultaneously acquaint you with the range of analyses of the phenomenon. Although you may feel that is not necessary to crosscheck the published data with other native-speakers, taking this additional step is quite often the most prudent measure. Using yourself as your sole informant, particu-

larly where interpretive judgements are at stake, can lead to misleading conclusions – you may be inclined to "convince" yourself that your interpretations are the only permissible ones! Eliciting others' judgements cannot only remedy this possible bias, it can also reveal to you aspects of the problem that you simply had missed while consulting yourself.

Another example: ***suppose your research is a feminist interpretation of an autobiography written by a Dalit woman writer,*** whose work has not been studied before. Your research plan should therefore be one that has an initial step of exploring the literature for the ways in which Dalit/other oppressed communities writing in general, and autobiographies in particular, has been approached, as well as feminist approaches to the novel (and what makes them 'feminist'). Given that your research is interpretive in nature, the next logical step is for you to use this knowledge to build your own feminist interpretation of the text. This must involve moving beyond what has been said so far in the literature, so you will have to find a point of critique or departure from earlier approaches, and embark on a scholarship and reading that will enable you to move beyond existing theories. It is only then that you can begin your feminist interpretation of the actual text. (Note: remember to maintain a distance here between yourself and the writer—it is *you* who is being the feminist here, not necessarily the writer concerned, so do not transfer your feminism to her without serious introspection – she might be very patriarchal, in fact! As a consequence, the feminist reading you give of the text may well be very critical of her text.)

A final example: ***suppose that the object of your research is the translation of the dialect occurring in a particular Hindi novel into German.***[1] Your research plan must therefore include an initial step of exploration of the literature on the use of dialect in literature in general, followed by the use of dialect in novels in Hindi and the style of the concerned author in particular. You must then explore the literature on literary translation and literature on translating literary texts into European languages in general and into German in particular. Finally, you must consider the research and practical issues of translating Hindi literary texts into European languages in general and into German in particular, and of translating dialects in general and into German in particular.

[1] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

Another aspect of planning your research is to break up your research problem into autonomous sub-problems, and to work on them turn by turn. For example, our first example of the study of Hindi verb agreement – subject agreement in the non-perfective, agreement with direct objects in the perfective, and agreement with non-subjects when the subject is lexically marked non-nominative – will identify the following sub-problems:

- The licensing of subject-verb agreement – in which conditions does it take place?
- The role of perfective aspect in blocking subject-verb agreement – why does transitivity and aspect create the conditions for (a) to be blocked?
- The role of lexical case in blocking subject-verb agreement – when are subjects marked with a lexical Case? How does agreement with predicate nominals relate to (a) and (b)?

This systematic approach is sequential but cumulative – the results of each step must serve as the premise at the next.

This sequential approach can be applied also to our second example of a feminist interpretation of a Dalit woman writer's novel. There can be at least five sub-problems that may be postulated here:

- What are the distinguishing features of the autobiographical form?
- How have feminist interpretations treated other instances of such forms? Why do you find them preferable? What are their shortcomings and strengths?
- How has Dalit writing in general, and autobiography in particular, been viewed in the literature? What are their shortcomings and strengths?
- What needs to be added to or altered in feminist approaches to autobiography to make the approach that you will be ready to adhere to?
- How does your approach work when applied to the text you have chosen? In what ways does it work better (for you) than other interpretations?

This approach can be applied also to our third example of the translation into German of dialect in a Hindi novel. There can be at least six sub-

problems postulated here:[2]

- Use of dialect in literature in general, and in Hindi literature in particular – in what kind of literary texts is there an occurrence of dialect? What is the frequency of dialect use in the text? How lengthy is the passage in dialect? What is the manner of use of dialect – is it paraphrased within the text or explained in a footnote, foreword, or afterword, or is there no explanation of any kind? What is/are the purpose(s) of using dialect?
- Is the use of dialect common to the style of the concerned author? In what kind of writing does the author use dialect and why does s/he normally use it? Why has s/he used it in the particular novel under consideration?
- How is literary translation to be approached? What are the theories and strategies available to a literary translator? What are the consequences of the choice of a particular theory and strategy by the translator with regard to the reception of the translated work?
- Which translational strategy is the preferred strategy for translating literary texts from dominant languages into German and /or other dominant languages? Which is the preferred strategy for translating literary texts from so-called minor languages into dominant languages? Which is the preferred strategy for translating Hindi literary texts in particular into German? Is this the preferred strategy for translating Hindi literary texts into other European languages? Is this the preferred strategy for translating Hindi literary texts into Indian-English also? What conclusions can be drawn from your readings/analysis?
- How are dialects in literary texts normally transferred in translation? How are dialects in literary texts normally translated into German? Does this also hold good for the translation into German of dialect in Hindi literary texts also? What are the reasons for translating dialect in such a manner? Does the strategy being currently applied require alteration or modification?
- What is the strategy that has been applied in the Hindi novel under study? Is the strategy partially or wholly defensible? What kind of a strategy would you propose in general in dealing with the issue of

[2] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

translating dialect in literary texts? Is it possible to have a one-size-fit-all strategy or must flexibility be built into the proposal?

There can be many ways, however, of breaking down a problem – choose whichever suits you and your research question best. Mostly, the objective here is to use the plan to structure the research question and to make it more tractable. In a good thesis, the plan need not translate directly into chapterisation – you may choose to present your work by beginning with your own approach and engaging with other approaches in a dialectical way—but will still be detectable in the quality of your work.

2.4 Write a synopsis

Writing a thesis in a foreign language about a culture that is inaccessible to you on a daily basis also poses certain specific problems. Unlike the literatures in English, which thanks to the internationalization of the Anglo-American academic and cultural worlds, do not require an immediate and live contact, studying the literatures in other European languages, as well as Asian and African languages, will require you that you work hard and read widely for a full appreciation of their impact and relevance.[3] Critical editions are a particularly important resource in this regard. Furthermore, it is imperative that your contact with the literary text be in the language it was originally written. Therefore, a research topic that proposes a study of female protagonists in the works of, say, Leo Tolstoy, Premchand, and Theodor Fontane must not be attempted if you do not read all three languages. Translated texts always reflect a particular reading of the translator concerned.

Another area of concern is the access to archival material.[4] Think carefully before you choose a topic that will require you to spend a year or more at the archives of say an author, as this may not always be possible. Similar concerns inflect an area of research that would require you to do extensive fieldwork in a foreign culture, such as the study of an urban subculture in Japan. Instead, remember that you are in a unique position of fleshing out an area of study, which a native speaker of a foreign literature/culture may have little access to. For example, your transcultural positioning may provide insights and connections that would not necessa-

[3] Discussion by Madhu Sahni.

[4] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

rily be those of a contemporary Chinese scholar studying Chinese literature of the 1940s.

ASK YOURSELF

- What problems will I address?
- What questions will I answer?

A final issue regarding writing your synopsis, and later your thesis, is of academic writing style.[5] If your M.Phil./PhD is in Japanese or Arabic, you must take into account the academic writing styles and research culture that may be in variance with the dominant Anglo-American academic writing style. Reading only Anglo-American scholarly work whilst writing a thesis on Aime Cesaire would be rather limiting. Reading academic/scientific writing in the target language also helps build your vocabulary and style in that language.

JNU provides a format for PhD synopses, which may also be possibly used as a guideline for preparing M.Phil. research proposals. Some tips on the way that this format may be used:

Title: Take care to choose a title that is descriptive of your work, but at the same time not too specific, as you may find during the actual research that the title you began with is too narrow/wide. This is particularly true for PhD dissertations.

Scope and Objective: Always begin the synopsis with a clear statement of the objective of your proposed research. This is the "objective" part of the section title. The "scope" part of the section title is in service of the fact that research questions are generally of quite a broad nature, and an individual research thesis does not usually cover the entire spectrum of questions associated with a topic.

For example, a topic like verb agreement in Hindi can plausibly be approached from a phonological, morphological, syntactic, acquisitional, semantic, variationist, typological, areal, or sociolinguistic perspective. If you are going to adopt one, or a subset of these perspectives, you must delimit the area of your research at the very outset. A good research synopsis would then be one that first lists the full range of research questions that a particular topic relates to, and then demonstrates how the topic is delimited in the research at hand.

Similarly, a topic that deals with the interpretation of a text – be it poetic, fictional, philosophical, or dramaturgical – there are also a number of

[5] Discussion by Madhu Sahni.

perspectives from which you can approach it: e.g., a comparative perspective, a critical perspective from the standpoint of an individual or a constellation of literary theories, or a cultural\civilisational perspective. Here again, not only must you be explicit about which approach you will adopt, but also why you think that the approach is one that is applicable to, and suits, the text.

Topics related to translation can also be approached from various perspectives.[6] In the example of dialect, a comparative approach can also be adopted with regard to either different theories or different texts where there is a use of dialect. Alternatively, you may approach the subject from the perspective of the actual translation of such a text and its defence. Alternatively, you could employ the linguistic perspective, where the literary text only functions as a corpus for studying dialects and their potential translation.

Existing Research in the Area: In this section of the synopsis, show the relevance of your research to larger theoretical questions as well as other research on the topic. Take this opportunity to elaborate on the theoretical approach(es), and specific studies that form the context for your research.

ASK YOURSELF

- Who else has worked on this or similar problems?
- What were the conclusions of previous research?
- Why is this question important?

Keeping to the example of verb agreement in Hindi, let us take that you will adopt a generative approach. This section should then elaborate on the generative treatment of verb agreement, the techniques(s) by which it is effected, and the status of agreement in Universal Grammar (UG). This should be followed by a discussion of the existing work on Hindi verb agreement phenomenon in the generative tradition. Ensure that you give good reasons why the existing research on verb agreement in Hindi is insufficient. Finally, explore the kinds of questions that Hindi verb agreement raises for an understanding of UG principles.

Approach/Method/Technique: In this section, elaborate on how you will use your data to answer your research question(s), to make generalisa-

[6] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

tions, to defend assertions, to examine possible alternative outcomes to construct a plausible argument. Discuss here also, how you will collect the data, its nature (primary/secondary) and the steps involved in your analysis.

ASK YOURSELF

- What theoretical approach will I employ?
- What methods will I use to collect data?
- What technology or aids will use I to process the data?
- Will my research be divided into stages?

Keep in mind that different areas of study and research require a different kind of knowledge about methods and theories.[7] If, for example, you were researching the interface between multilinguality and language learning in a foreign language classroom for adults, the method would call for classroom-based action research, involving class observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Narrative data in this case is a perfectly legitimate object of study. If, on the other hand, you were examining nature and the literary imagination in the late twentieth century, you would need to ask yourself which theoretical model will help you understand and access this topic most productively. For example, the material in an ecocriticism reader would not offer an adequate theoretical model, because ecocriticism is, at best, an approach and not a theory. While there is no doubt that an ecocriticism offers a perspective on how we interact with literature and nature, environmental literary studies is an interdisciplinary area of study that requires a theoretical underpinning, be it Marxist literary criticism, post-structuralism or hermeneutics.

In what way is this research different? Here, demonstrate that your proposed research will be both novel and necessary, in terms of process as well as results. Taking the verb agreement example again, suppose now that you will investigate it by adding data from language impaired subjects, and that using those results, you will arrive at a generative analysis of the problem. This is a new approach given the existing work,

ASK YOURSELF

- How is my theoretical and/or methodological approach different?
- What new questions or connections am I adding to the research problem?

[7] Discussion by Madhu Sahni.

and easily demonstrated as necessary, given the widespread use of using language deficit as a means of investigating unimpaired competence. Compare this now with a proposal of investigating the same topic through Hindi remix music – while that is certainly novel, there is really no justification for the belief that this will enhance any understanding of the phenomenon!

Remaining with the example of translating dialect,[8] you could delve into the politics of translation and the prevalence of asymmetrical relationships between languages and cultures whilst engaging with this issue or approach the issue as one of 'untranslatability' and the devices/means available to the translator to compensate for this 'loss'.

Tentative Chapterisation: This is usually the most difficult section to conceptualise, as the dissertation has not been written yet! However, what is sought here is a conceptual skill rather than a truth claim, so use the section to summarise how you outline the problem being investigated. Remember, you must not have too many chapters as that just amounts to a listing rather than organisation – instead, try to develop the outline you make of your research topic (see Chapter 4) in terms of a set of research questions/issues each chapter will answer. Ensure that there is a progression towards the final argument of your thesis.

Bibliography\References: At the point of writing the synopsis, you are allowed to list all the books that you have read or plan to read. Make sure that you follow the style-sheet given in Chapter 6, and the examples in Appendix I.

Abstract: Although not required, you may also consider putting in an abstract – a paragraph summarising your topic of research, who or what will be the object of data collection, how the data will be collected, how it will be analyzed, and what results you expect.

2.5 Collect and organise the material\data

In areas such as linguistics and translation, the first decision you need to make is whether your work will draw from primary (data and other information collected by you) or secondary (published or other material) research sources. Largely, your research will determine this choice – for any study based in literature, secondary material must constitute the

[8] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

chief source, whereas for a task of description of synchronic linguistic knowledge or a study of dramatic or other performance, fieldwork that yields primary data is essential.

As far as translation studies is concerned, whilst secondary material is indeed important, in many cases it is equally important to generate data through interviews with/questionnaires sent to translators, publishers/editors and even authors, if living. Often cultural/historical or political aspects have to be additionally verified with experts in the field. An extreme position would be to spend some time in the field either to reconstruct the phenomena/events mentioned in the text or to seek to understand these in their lived reality.[9]

In other cases, such as a synchronic study of the correlation between bilingualism and gender, there may be a genuine option – you may choose to study this exclusively by either primary (through fieldwork) or secondary sources (published records). Note, however, that in linguistics research, a reliance on secondary sources alone is often fraught with difficulties, even as they facilitate large-scale studies and generalisations – secondary sources lack a consistency of perspective and biases. Inaccuracies in such sources cannot be verified/remedied by refinements of research instruments. As a further consequence, extreme caution must be used in mixing both primary and secondary research options for a study. Since it is virtually impossible to separate data from the methods it was originally collected by and the context it was collected in, the results of your own primary research may not speak to the same facts as that of a secondary source.

It is also important to recognise that primary research may suffer from many of the same limitations as secondary sources, as the instruments (questionnaires, interviews, judgements) employed may limit the data in the following ways:

- Closed questions may constrain the data (pre-empting a richer range of response);
- Respondents may interpret the questions differently. This makes comparison of the answers difficult. It is also impossible to check if people are responding honestly.
- Researchers can bias the data by concept definition and question

[9] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

framing.

An important lesson to be learned from these limitations of both primary and secondary data is that as a researcher, you must fully elaborate the steps in your investigative method.

In using data from secondary sources, elaborate on the reasons why you consider such data admissible and adequate for your purposes – i.e. why how the contextual and methodological differences from your study are either irrelevant or insignificant. In primary data elicitation, explain the rationale for all the instruments you have used, as well as for the revisions you have made to them in the research process. It is particularly important for you to discuss why certain instruments failed/were unsuccessful, as this discussion can serve as an important guide to the reader about the context and objectives of your research.

2.6 Interpret and analyse the material\data

To interpret and analyse your data, the first thing you need is a theory. As theory feeds not only into analysis, but also into the instruments you employ to collect data, it is necessary that you give as full a discussion possible of your theoretical assumptions and proposals. Linguistics research often involves a preliminary stage, for example, where you transcribe and/or organise your data into a form ready for analysis.

The analysis itself may involve various processes, depending on the kind of methodology and the nature of the data. Two common stages are the stages of a basic structural analysis—the first involves an identification of the basic licensing conditions of the phenomena studied, and the second, an integration of the results of a structural analysis in its theoretical and empirical neighbourhood.

2.7 Write up/present your findings

Your research is not just the results. It is the process as well, so make sure that this process is clearly presented in your report. Your methodology and writing-up is just as important as your findings.

Even a negative result is useful. Though it may be disappointing that you did not find what you originally expected, if you have carried out the research properly, the process will have been useful to you as a learning experience and may have led to useful discoveries about methodology or

other things.

Take ethics seriously. If there are ethical considerations that affect your work, you need to include a short discussion of these and mention any action you have taken, and make sure that you cite all sources in the prescribed format.

Take the time to present your work neatly and to proofread accurately. Common faults that detract from otherwise good dissertations are silly typos, misspelled names of authors, references that are not done according to the guidelines.

Chapter 3
Interpretation and Argumentation

At the most rudimentary level, an academic work is evaluated by one's peers for the novelty and creativity of interpretative skills demonstrated by its author, the rigour of its argumentation and the manner in which both skills are showcased. This chapter lists the strategies by which the skills of interpretation and argumentation may be enhanced.

3.1 Interpretation

Interpretation depends on a critical and questioning approach towards reading, identifying the inevitable biases and the possible weaknesses in a writer's argument. Interpretive skills require a familiarity with the theoretical perspectives and the ways in which they are argued.

ASK YOURSELF

- What is this writer trying to say?
- Does the writer have the facts right? Is s/he arguing from evidence or assumptions?
- Does the argument lack balance, combining bias with omission?
- Is it logically flawed in some way?

To develop these skills, it is first necessary to understand that all academic texts are opinionated accounts rather than factual explanations. Even textbooks represent an author's interpretation of theory or practice and the subjective selection of ideas and issues as a focus of exposition. This is also transparently true for works like research articles, papers, books, and monographs, all of which usually involve an author's attempts to either argue for an analysis from a particular theoretical perspective, and, in the process, to critique alternative accounts and/or competing theories relating to the problem at hand. You need to be able to look at arguments and to see whether the theories underpinning them are relevant to the problem, and whether these theories are ideologically biased to a particular set of values.

The more influential a theory is the more academics rely on it to continue to explore related problems, re-examine it, and determine whether it is

still valid. In each case, academics ask themselves how well a theory "accounts" for what it claims to cover. They will also explore the general strengths and weaknesses of the theory, and its applications to a specific context. As this usually involves reference to other postulations in the same general area, it is essential to be familiar with the dominant theoretical perspectives in your field.

ASK OF A WRITER'S CLAIMS

- What grounds does s/he have for this assertion?
- How does s/he know this?
- On what authority is this assertion made?

However, ascription to a theory does not mean that you must agree with every statement/ postulation just because it is written or spoken by a specialist or person in authority. Similarly, a critique is not invalidated because you find it unappealing. Both critique and ascription must be based on reason and logical argumentation.

3.2 Argumentation

In academic writing, an argument is usually the chief/main idea of a research work, often called a "claim" or "thesis statement", backed up with evidence that supports it. An ability to make some sort of claim and use evidence to support it is essential for research in any field.

Two broad styles characterise argumentation in academic texts – inductive vs. deductive reasoning (although academic essays and research reports are not exclusively inductive or deductive). The two approaches are united in requiring supporting evidence for claims, but differ in terms of how the manner of investigation is to be conceived. While deductive reasoning involves working from a principle or central position on an issue, and uses evidence to justify the stand taken at the beginning, inductive reasoning emphasises exploration and observation, and through the drawing of inferences from evidence, lays claim to their validity.

Claims can be simple – "Hindi has object-verb agreement in the perfective", or they may be complex – "Hindi object-verb agreement is not an instance of formal agreement in natural language." In the former case, the evidence must take the form of data from Hindi, but in the latter, this evidence must also be accompanied by elaboration of the criteria identifying formal agreement in natural language, and the evidence that object agreement in Hindi fails these criteria.

Another example: In a critical analysis of let's say a woman Dalit writer's short stories, a simple claim could be something like this – "This writer's Dalit identity is expressed through the main protagonists of her stories" – and a complex one could be – "This writer's identity as a 'woman', as a 'Dalit', and as a 'Dalit woman' is expressed through the main protagonists of her stories". Here too in the first case, your claim will hold water only if you can show that all the main protagonists have the properties you have defined to hold of a Dalit identity. In the more complex claim, you will have to define the properties you ascribe to the identities of 'woman', 'Dalit' and 'Dalit woman'.

With reference to the example of translating dialect,[10] a simple claim could be, "Dialects from distant cultures are untranslatable." – and a complex one could be – "The socio-cultural embeddedness of dialects from distant cultures makes them untranslatable." Here too, in the first case your claim would be validated only if you can show that dialects are translatable in case of a shared cultural heritage and that this is not possible in case translation is between distant cultures. In the more complex claim, you would have to define the socio-cultural features and contexts that make translation of dialects from distant cultures an impossibility.

Whether your claim is simple or complex, your research must detail reasons and facts that have led you to believe that your claim is correct. The strength of your evidence, and your use of it, can make or break your argument. Every field has slightly different requirements for acceptable evidence, so familiarise yourself with arguments from within your field, instead of just applying whatever evidence you like best.

3.2.1 Justifying your assertions

You need to show that you have a sense of the relationship between the strength of a claim (a position or assertion) and the support that you have for that claim. As part of the persuasive presentation of their arguments, hypotheses and findings, academic writers tend to make claims that are in proportion to evidence they present, and carry the kind of support expected (e.g. authoritative citations, documented examples, etc.).

Importantly, remember that evidence does not speak for itself. After you introduce evidence into your writing, you must say why and how this

[10] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

evidence supports your argument. In other words, you have to explain the significance of the evidence and its function in your paper. What turns a fact or piece of information into evidence is the connection it has with a larger claim or argument – evidence is always evidence for something, and you have to make that link clear. Do not assume that the reader already knows what you are talking about, or that the point is obvious. Although readers may be familiar with many of the ideas being discussed, they do not know what you are trying to do with those ideas. Try to spell out the connections that you were making in your mind when you chose your evidence, decided where to place it, and drew conclusions based on it. Remember, you can always cut prose from your work later if you find yourself stating the obvious.

ASK YOURSELF

- I have just stated this point, but why is it interesting? What does it imply?
- What are the consequences of thinking this way?
- I have just described a phenomenon, but why is it so?
- I have just said that something happens, but how does it come to be this way?
- How is this idea related to my dissertation? Does it support my thesis? How?

Note that it is not necessary that all the evidence you use will be novel or original to your research. Using the work of others to justify your claims is not only acceptable, but also required in academic texts, as it is this that integrates your work with the larger body of knowledge in your field. However, in every instance, using the work and ideas of others must be cited and attributed, the mechanics of which we discuss in Chapter 6.

3.2.2 Countering counterarguments

One way to strengthen your argument and show that you have a deep understanding of the issue you are discussing is to anticipate and address counterarguments or objections. By considering what someone who disagrees with your position might have to say about your argument, you show that you have thought things through, and thereby dispose of some of the reasons your readers might have for not accepting your argument.

You can generate counterarguments by asking yourself what someone who disagrees with you might say about each of the points you have made or about your position as a whole. Once you have thought up some counterarguments, consider how you will respond to them – will you

concede that your opponent has a point but explain why your audience should nonetheless accept your argument? Will you reject the counter-argument and explain why it is mistaken? Either way, you will want to leave your reader with a sense that your argument is stronger than opposing ones.

When you are summarising opposing arguments, be charitable. Present each argument fairly and objectively, rather than trying to make it look foolish. It is usually better to consider one or two serious counterarguments in some depth, rather than to give a long but superficial list of many different counterarguments and replies. Be sure that your reply is consistent with your original argument. If considering a counterargument changes your position, you will need to go back and revise your original argument accordingly.

3.2.3 Conceding and dismissing

Conceding a point to your opponent is not necessarily a sign of weakness. Very often, your own argument can only increase in status and persuasiveness if you fully acknowledge the quality of the opposing and alternative views that provide its context.

There are a few connectors which are actually termed 'concessive' because they are used to concede a point before the speaker goes on to relate an action or opinion which is in some ways 'contrary' or opposed to that point. This is easier to explain through example. The connectors in question are *although, though, while and whereas; also; in spite of, despite, nevertheless, however and but*. Most of the time, they will feature at the head of subordinate clauses, so that the main clause will feature the contrary point or view.

Concessive markers (*although, however*) are used to indicate the views that are being dismissed or rebutted because you disagree with them, as well as those that you endorse or defend. Using these markers to acknowledge alternative points of view shows awareness of, and respect for, the value or stance of those views – even if you disagree with them.

3.2.4 Avoiding weak argumentation

A critical reader will detect attempts to disguise weak content by the mere use of argumentative form; so avoid them in your own work, and use them as grounds for disputing the argument's of others'. Common instances of

weak argumentation are:

Straw Arguments: Like a straw, this argument is easy to demolish! Such arguments are usually the outcome of treating extreme, and/or implausible aspects of an argument/theory as if it were genuinely representative of the whole theory. Straw arguments can also result if you isolate part of an argument, and identify it as a separate argument or complete position. They can be avoided if you carefully question whether someone opposing a position/ argument/theory is presenting a fair and accurate account.

Circular arguments: A circular argument involves drawing a conclusion from a premise (baseline assumption) that is itself dependent on what is asserted in the conclusion. In other words, as the conclusion essentially appears at both the beginning and the end of the argument, it creates an endless circle, never accomplishing anything of substance. For example, take the statement, "women are more *docile* because women are *less aggressive*" or "dialects *cannot be translated* because they are *untranslatable*"-- here the circularity lies in the denotation of the italicised terms is identical.

False analogies: In a false analogy, there is only a superficial or chance similarity between the things that are compared; a small degree of similarity may be used to give the impression that the things are almost identical. For example, take the statement, "just as the female of every species is more docile, women are less aggressive". Here the false analogy assumes that the property of being female is sufficient to establish mutual comparability, ignoring the fact that many biological and social differences/contexts distinguish the two.

Another example: "the use of dialects is predominantly by speakers who are poorly educated or illiterate—therefore, all those speaking in dialect must necessarily be either less educated or illiterate". This is clearly a false analogy, because even highly educated politicians may deliberately lapse into dialect for creating empathy and identity with constituents, whose votes they are canvassing for. False analogies can be avoided if you ensure that the things compared indeed share all the characteristics that are relevant to the conclusion.

***Either-or arguments*:** This type of reasoning is also weak, based on the assumption that there is no middle ground between two extremes! The infamous statement *"Either you are with us, or against us"* is such an example. Further, an *either-or* statement, on an inclusive interpretation of the

connective, does not make an argument. For example, suppose we were to state "A Hindi verb agrees with either the subject or the direct object." Although this statement looks like a rule, it is not one at all – it does not predict what the agreement is when both subject and direct object are present! Weak *either-or* arguments can be avoided if you use such arguments with sufficient specification of context of occurrence.

In translation studies,[11] while critiquing and evaluating available and accessible translations, including sometimes multiple translations of the same original work, it is not sufficient to dismiss a translation as 'bad' or 'poor', or to laud it as 'good' or 'excellent', as such judgemental statements in themselves do not add to knowledge. Substantive value would only be added if instead you were to reflect on why a particular strategy had been chosen by a translator, and the likely consequences of this choice for the representation of a culture and the reception of the translated text. Finally, you should also point out why the choice of strategy is appropriate or inappropriate under the given circumstances.

Jumping to unjustified conclusions: This is a weak argument that derives from an over-generalisation. For example, if we conclude that since verbs in many languages carry tense inflections, inflectional tense is a definitional property of verbs in human language, we will not be able to consider action and activity predicates in Indian Sign Language (which lacks tense altogether) as verbs. You can avoid jumping to unjustified conclusions if you always ask if it (yours or someone else's) follows from the premises adopted, and whether such conclusions are necessarily true.

Again, in translation studies,[12] while reviewing or evaluating a translation, if you apply your criteria rather than those applied by the translator in determining the quality of translation, you would be jumping to unjustified conclusions. It behoves you as a scholar to first assess the translation within the terms of reference of the translator's chosen strategy and theory. As a next step, you can rationally analyze the choice of strategy and theory by the translator, if necessary.

***Misuse of Statistics*:** Statistics are often used as evidence to support a claim, but there is always a potential for misuse or abuse. Continuing with the example above, the statement that 99.9% verbs inflect for tense still

[11] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

[12] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan

does not entail that we can take inflectional tense to be a necessary condition for identification as a verb. You can avoid a misuse of statistics if you interpret statistics logically, and in the context of other information mentioned or that which is known to be true. Take care to explain why apparent counterexamples are not significant. With reference to Translation Studies, in case of empirical research from a text linguistics perspective, it is important to have a sufficiently large corpus of texts for the credibility of the results. A quantitatively inadequate corpus would result in the falsifying of results and therefore, a misuse of statistics.

3.2.5 Choosing the right expressions

A good writing style invokes in your readers a respect for the level of your intellectual development, and your socialisation into your academic or professional community. This, in turn, leads the reader to take a positive view of the power and persuasiveness of your argumentation.

> If you choose to use an acronym to refer to concepts or oft-cited sources, ensure that in the first use, you refer to the full form of the citation. Introduce the shortened form you will use in parentheses immediately after this. E.g. *Universal Grammar (UG).*

Two aspects of academic writing where the choice of expression is of utmost importance are in the writing of descriptions and definitions. A *description* usually has one, clear dominant impression, which guides the author's selection of detail. Some tips:

- Keep descriptions as objective as possible. Try giving all the details first; the dominant impression is built from these details.
- Initially, select details to support the dominant impression. If there are any complicating factors or exceptions, deal with them only after you have completed representing the dominant expression.

Remember that the purpose of a description is to involve the reader, so make sure that the specific and concrete details you give are consistent with the dominant impression.

A formal *definition* is based upon a concise, logical pattern that includes as much information as it can within a minimum amount of space. It consists of three parts: (a) the term (word or phrase) to be defined, (b) the class of object/concept to which the term belongs, and (c) the differentiating characteristics that distinguish it from all others of its class. Some tips:

- Avoid defining with "is when" and "is where". These adverb phrase

introducers do not work well when defining a word. A noun should be defined with a noun, a verb with a verb, an adjective with an adjective.

- Do not define a word/concept by mere repetition, but in simple and familiar terms.
- Keep your class small but adequate. It should be large enough to include all members of the term you define, but no larger.
- State the differentiating characteristics precisely.

Another aspect of appropriate expression in argumentation is the way that you state your conclusions and finding. In general, choose your expressions carefully:

Probability/Certainty*:** Do not express your views in an over-certain manner. For example, the statement, "verbs inflect for tense because temporal reference must be encoded in language", is overly certain, as an infinitival/non-finite inflection is also a type of tense inflection (albeit [– Tense]). In translation studies, while commenting on a translation, you cannot attribute motives to a translator with any degree of certainty, unless the translator him/herself has somewhere – in an interview, in an article, in the foreword/afterword/ translator's note to the translated text etc. - made such a claim. If a pattern can be established within one translated text, or within several by the same translator, or in the translations of several translators from the same region and period, you can only provide a probable reason for this in your analysis.[13] ASK YOURSELF: *Is that a fact? Am I certain of that?**

***Scope/Generalisation*:** Define the referents or population of your terms sufficiently narrowly and accurately, in relation to the claim you are making. For example, the statement, "in Western Hindi, transitive verbs, with the exception of conjunct verbs, may agree with objects in the perfective", is a claim too broad in scope, as verb agreement is with only direct objects. ASK YOURSELF: *Is what I am saying true for all instances?*

***Fact/Belief Status*:** Do not state a future action as a definite fact (*they will …*), and then use the simple present to imply certainty about a belief or attitude (*they think …*). Take the example "nurses will go on strike because they *think…*" – how do you know what they think or what they will do? ASK YOURSELF: *How do I know? Did I actually find this out?*

[13] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

***Condition/Circumstance*:** Carefully specify the conditions or circumstances in which a proposition holds true. As an example of the correct usage, consider the statement: "If a word inflects for gender, it is a noun, unless this inflection marks agreement with a noun phrase in the sentence." In Translation Studies, whilst dealing with functionalist theories and pragmatic texts, you would, for example, need to ask yourself, "Under what conditions is equivalence possible?"[14] ASK YOURSELF: *What are the conditions in which my claim is true?*

***Relativity*:** Often an absolute measure needs replacing by a relative comment. For example, in order to reflect your understanding that not all languages exhibit inflectional tense, you could amend a statement like "in *all* languages, verbs inflect for tense in order to encode temporal reference, or the lack thereof" to "in *many* languages, verbs inflect for tense ...." ASK YOURSELF: *Are there any exceptions? Is this always true?*

***Attribution*:** In academic communication, even our reconstructed formulation needs attributing to some source of information or opinion, e.g. "in many languages, tense is not marked by inflection – e.g., Meiteilon (Chelliah 1997), Kannada (Amritavalli 2005)." ASK YOURSELF: *What do I base this on? Where did I read that?*

***Concession*:** Use only those formulations in concessive clauses that you introduce (or subsequently) in the text. For example, the statement "in Western Hindi, transitive verbs, with the exception of conjunct verbs, may agree with direct objects in the perfective," can be used only if you have either already introduced what conjunct verbs are, or do so immediately after this sentence. ASK YOURSELF: *Is not the opposite true? What are the strengths of X's position?*

***Presupposition*:** This relates to the assumptions writers often make about the things they are writing about, what they are referring to. If you define all your premises clearly at the very outset, you will be minimising the presuppositional load for a reader. Although a repetition of premises or arguments you have made earlier is not necessary, but if you are going to use an argument/premise from quite early on, begin with a recapitulation of it. ASK YOURSELF: *What does (X) mean? Was this introduced earlier?*

3.3 Honesty

Plagiarism is an attempt to steal and use the ideas and writings of another as one's own. It is an extremely serious offence within the academic community. You plagiarise, whether you intend to or not, when you do not credit others' ideas within and at the end of your work.

The common academic integrity problems that students encounter are:

- Relying too heavily on others' information,
- Relying too heavily on others' words in a paraphrase or summary,
- Citing and documenting sources incorrectly,
- Relying too heavily on help from other sources.

In order to avoid charges of academic dishonesty, it is necessary to document all your sources, i.e. to show where you got information that is not your own. Given that research blends your ideas with ideas and information from other sources, documentation is necessary to reveal to the reader what ideas are yours and what you have taken from a source to support your point of view. By correctly documenting, you establish your credibility as a writer and researcher. You are letting your reader know that you have consulted experts whose ideas and information back up your own thoughts and ideas. Consequently, you make your viewpoint or argument more believable.

Chapter 4
Issues of Organisation

A well-written research dissertation does not simply put down interpretations, arguments, and analyses/results – it does all this in an organised fashion. Merely extrinsic organisational principles such as appropriate section breaks is not enough, your presentation must have a logical structure. In this chapter, we list some of the fundamental components that any dissertation must have.

4.1 Plan an Organised Text

4.1.1 Structure the text

An outline is a good way to begin planning your dissertation, as it helps you organise your ideas, and demonstrates the relationships among ideas you are considering. It is also extremely useful when you begin writing, as it presents an ordered overview of your writing. To get a preliminary outline:

- Jot down ideas or key words in a rough list. Give order to the list by arranging items into major and minor ideas.
- Drawing up a rough outline while you take notes helps you to locate important information and eliminate useless information. Drawing up a rough outline before you begin to write helps you organise your ideas, so that you may present your material in a logical form. The process of outlining reveals to you the relationships among ideas in your writing, and provides you with an ordered overview of your writing.

To develop an outline, list all the ideas that you want to include, and then group related ideas together. Then order these ideas by arranging the material in subsections (from general to specific or from abstract to concrete) You can then label these groupings in terms of main and sub headings, remembering that main headings should feature ideas or concepts that are of the same level of generality or importance. You do not have to stick to your draft outline; it can be helpful to let it develop as you pro-

gress. You can add new topics and discard others, rearrange the order, and subordinate minor elements.

Outlining strategies include outlines constructed by either *procedure* – where the focus is on the research procedures – or *content* – where the focus is on the subject itself. Structuring by function or procedure structures the report by the functional stages of the investigation, rather than by describing aspects of the topic itself. The most suitable format is:

- *Introduction*: introducing your study in the context of other work and why you did it
- *Methodology*: saying what you did in your study
- *Results*: saying what you found in your study
- *Discussion*: interpreting what your results might mean in the context of other work

Structuring by content or topic involves headings based on an aspect of the content. Topic outlines are reduced forms of full propositions – for example, the topic outline heading "Case-marking and Hindu-Urdu Agreement" is the shortened form of "The Role of Case-marking in Hindu-Urdu Verb Agreement". Another example: the topic outline heading “Alice in Wonderland and Pun Translation” is the shortened form of “Puns as a Problem of Translation: a Case Study of Lewis Carroll’s ‘Alice in Wonderland’.” The advantage of topic outlines is that they establish concisely the main areas of investigation by subject matter.

Both types of structuring strategies may also be combined, often with procedural headings providing a framework for a more detailed topic-based set of sub-headings. In all cases, however, ensure that there is a discernable logic to your sequence, even of sub-headings.

An effective outline maintains the following properties:

- *Parallelism*: Each heading and subheading should preserve parallel structure. If the first heading is a noun, the second heading should be a noun.
- *Coordination*: All the information contained in Heading 1 has the same significance as the information contained in Heading 2. The same goes for the subheadings (which should be less significant than the headings).
- *Subordination*: The information in the headings is more general, while the information in the subheadings is more specific.

- *Division*: Each heading is divided into two or more parts.

4.1.2 Make thesis statements

ASK YOURSELF

- What am I trying to explain?
- How can I categorise my explanations?
- In what order should I present them?

The thesis statement is that sentence or two in the text that contains the focus of your section or chapter and tells your reader what it is going to be about. It offers your readers a quick and easy to follow summary of what the section/chapter or dissertation will be discussing, and what you as a writer are setting out to tell them. Generally, a thesis statement appears at the end of the first paragraph of a dissertation or chapter, so that readers will have a clear idea of what to expect as they read.

A thesis statement generally consists of two parts: the topic, and then the analysis/explanation(s)/assertion(s) that you are making about it. In narrative or descriptions, a thesis statement is sometimes less important, but you may still want to provide some kind of statement in the first paragraph that helps to guide your reader through the section/chapter/dissertation. It is a very specific statement – it should cover only what you want to discuss, and should be supported with specific evidence.

Thesis statements can differ based on whether the section or chapter of the research work is an exposition, an analysis, or an argument. For example, suppose you simply want to describe a phenomenon. In this case, the thesis statement must tell your audience what you are going to explain to them, the categories you are using to organise your explanation, and the order in which you will be presenting your categories. For example, suppose that you are describing the phenomenon of verb agreement in Hindi, then an ***expository thesis statement*** like "Hindi verb agreement shows that verb agreement may be either with the subject, or the direct object, or in a default mode" is required. This will lead the reader to expect an exposition of these patterns (in this order) in the paragraphs/sections that follow.

Another example: In the case of puns, an expository thesis statement could read, "The pun, as a literary stylistic device, is a play on words for humorous or rhetorical effect." This will lead the reader to expect an

exposition in the paragraphs that follow on how the pun is a play on words, and how it is used humorously or rhetorically.[15]

ASK YOURSELF

- What is my claim or assertion?
- What are the reasons I have in support?
- In what order should I present them?

Elsewhere, you may feel the need to break down an issue or an idea into its component parts, in order to evaluate it. In order to present this breakdown and evaluation to your audience, an ***analytical thesis statement*** will be necessary, as that will explain what you are analysing, the parts of your analysis, and give the order in which you will be presenting your analysis.

For example: An analysis of fantasy writing as a sub-genre of juvenile literature reveals two styles of writing, one that uses the techniques of modernism and the other that uses the techniques of post-modernism. This would lead the reader to expect an explanation of the analysis of fantasy writing in juvenile literature and then an explanation of the modern and post-modern features constituting certain forms of fantasy writing and their significance in the writing of fantasy.[16]

Finally, in instances that you make a claim about a topic – an opinion, a proposal, an evaluation, a cause-and-effect statement, or an interpretation. Given that a claim is a statement that people could possibly disagree with, you have to convince your audience that your claim is true based on your presentation of your reasons and evidence, a***n argumentative thesis statement*** will be necessary. This will present your claim or assertion, the reasons/evidence that support this claim, and give the order in which you will be presenting your reasons and evidence.

For example, the thesis statement "we show that Hindi verb agreement does not involve argument raising or head movement, and that it is best analysed in terms of in situ Agree relations," would lead the reader to expect arguments supported by evidence for each of these three claims, presented in this order.

Another example:[17] Deletion or 'improvement' of sections of a literary

[15] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

[17] Discussion by Chitra Harshvardhan.

work in translation is more common for translations from minor languages into dominant languages reflecting asymmetrical relations of power in translation. The reader would expect to be provided substantial evidence of such deletion/'improvement' from translated works from minor languages into dominant languages, as also the reverse, i.e. a greater respect for the structure and content for literature translated from dominant languages into dominant languages before s/he can be convinced of the worth of your argument.

4.1.3 Direct the reader

Your structural and conceptual organisation must be made explicit to the reader via comments on the text in the text that signal to the reader about where the author is going, where (s)he has got to, and what (s)he has achieved so far. The author "intrudes" to direct the reader in some way. Reader directions function to preview what is to follow, or to review the discussion thus far, or to provide an overview of the discussion:

READER DIRECTIONS

- The whole thesis *(the focus of this thesis is…)*
- The current chapter *(this chapter will examine…)*
- Another chapter *(as described in Chapter 5)*
- Another section *(in section 1.1, it was argued)*
- The current example *(as example (1) shows)*

4.2 Write an Organised Text: Coherence

Your efforts to structure the research text must be supported by an intrinsic organisation of the text into paragraphs chained together by effective transitions. In this section, we provide some tips on how you may develop skills in these areas.

4.2.1 Paragraphs

Paragraphs are units of thought with one idea developed adequately. Length or appearance is NOT a factor in determining whether a section of text in a paper is a paragraph. Rather, a good paragraph should display (i) *unity*: the entire paragraph should have a single focus; (ii) *coherence*: explicit transitional devices link ideas and entities from different sentences are employed; (iii) *development*: every idea discussed is adequately explained and supported through evidence so as to shed light on the controlling idea of the section/chapter.

A 5-step process to paragraph development:

- *Formulate the controlling idea* by beginning with the expression of the main idea, topic, or focus of the paragraph in a sentence or a collection of sentences.
- *Explain the controlling idea* by following this with an explanation of how the reader should interpret the proposition in the controlling idea statement.
- *Support the controlling idea* by providing some type of support or evidence for the relationship of the idea and the explanation that came before it.
- *Explain the supporting ideas* by examining each piece of evidence and its relevance to the idea statement and its explanation.
- *Conclude* the paragraph in such a way that the last line of a paragraph functions as a transition or preparation for the paragraph that follows. The strategy of reminding the reader of the relevance of the information in this paragraph to the main or controlling idea of the paper is one that often leads to unnecessary repetitions.

START A NEW PARAGRAPH

- When you begin a new idea or point.
- To contrast information or ideas.
- When your readers need a pause — which they need if the paragraph becomes too long or the material is complex.
- When you are ending the introduction or starting the conclusion.

4.2.2 Transitions

The organisation of your written work includes two elements: (1) the order in which you have chosen to present the different parts of your discussion or argument, and (2) the relationships you construct between these parts. Transitions cannot substitute for good organisation, but they can make this organisation clearer and easier to follow.

Good transitions can connect paragraphs and turn disconnected writing into a unified whole. Instead of treating paragraphs as separate ideas, transitions can help readers understand how paragraphs work together, reference one another, and build to a larger point. The key to producing good transitions is highlighting connections between corresponding paragraphs. By referencing in one paragraph the relevant material from previous ones, writers can develop important points for their readers.

The following example should help to make these points clear. Basque has

been proposed to have verb agreement with indirect objects. Assume that you want to argue that Basque does not actually exhibit this property. One way to effectively organise your argument would be to present the conventional view and then to provide the reader with your critical response to this view. Then, in Paragraph A, you will want to enumerate all the reasons that someone might consider Basque to exhibit this phenomenon, while in Paragraph B you would want to refute these points. The transition that would establish the logical connection between these two key elements of your argument would indicate to the reader that the information in paragraph B contradicts the information in paragraph A:

- *Paragraph A*: Points in support of the view that Basque exhibits verb agreement with indirect objects.
- *Transition*: However, there are also many reasons that lead us to question whether this phenomenon is an instance of verb agreement at all.
- *Paragraph B*: Points that contradict the view that the phenomenon is an instance of verb agreement.

TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSIONS

- TO ADD: *again,* furthermore, next, moreover, in addition.
- TO COMPARE: whereas, on the other hand, however, meanwhile.
- TO PROVE: because, for, since, indeed, in fact.
- TO SHOW TIME: thereafter, then, later, previously, next,
- TO REPEAT: in brief, as I have said, as has been noted.
- TO EMPHASISE: obviously, in fact, indeed, in any case, always.
- TO SHOW SEQUENCE: first, second, third, next, then, subsequently, finally, simultaneously, thus, therefore, hence,
- TO GIVE AN EXAMPLE: for example, for instance, in this case, take the case of, to demonstrate, to illustrate.
- TO SUMMARISE OR CONCLUDE: in brief, on the whole, in conclusion, hence.

Another example, this time from criticism. Suppose that you wish to argue that a particular woman Dalit writer who has been argued to be feminist is not feminist at all. One way to make this argument is to begin by presenting all the arguments why she has been considered feminist. (If there are a large number of such approaches you could consider discussing them by type rather than individually.) The next (sequence of) paragraph(s) could then be devoted to enumerating why these arguments are based on an incorrect understanding what is to be a feminist. The transi-

tion here would then be as follows:

- *Paragraph(s) A*: The arguments for characterising the writer as a feminist.
- *Transition*: All these arguments, however, are misplaced, as they are based on the simple and incorrect view that just because the writer is a Dalit woman and chooses Dalit women as protagonists, she can be characterised as a feminist writer.
- *Paragraph B*: The properties that actually mark a writer as a feminist.

The types of transitions available to you are as diverse as the circumstances in which you need to use them. A transition can be a single word, a phrase, a sentence, or an entire paragraph. In each case, it functions the same way: first, the transition either directly summarises the content of a preceding sentence, paragraph, or section, or it implies that summary. Then it helps the reader anticipate or comprehend the new information that you wish to present. A word of caution: Avoid an over-use use of the transitional expression 'on the other hand', as it will leave the reader wondering as to how many hands you have!

***Transitions between sections*:** Particularly in longer works, it may be necessary to include transitional paragraphs that summarise for the reader the information just covered and specify the relevance of this information to the discussion in the following section.

***Transitions between Paragraphs*:** If you have done a good job of arranging paragraphs so that the content of one leads logically to the next, the transition will highlight a relationship that already exists by summarising the previous paragraph and suggesting something of the content of the paragraph that follows. A transition between paragraphs can be a word or two (however, for example, similarly), a phrase, or a sentence.

***Transitions within Paragraphs*:** As with transitions between sections and paragraphs, transitions within paragraphs act as cues by helping readers to anticipate what is coming before they read it. Within paragraphs, transitions tend to be single words or short phrases.

Chapter 5
Issues of Academic Writing Style

A writing style appropriate for a dissertation is a formal one, where you write to persuade an unknown audience. While you may use technical terms whose meaning is well known to others in your field with no definition, ensure that any terms without this general currency are adequately defined in the text. Equally important is to avoid using language that is stereotypical or biased in any way. Biased language frequently occurs with gender, but can also offend groups of people based on sexual orientation, ethnicity, interest, or race.

5.1 Write Grammatically and Coherently

The importance of grammaticality, conciseness, clarity, and coherence cannot be over-emphasised. You must understand that in order for your dissertation to be evaluated for the merits of your analysis and proposals, the language that carries your ideas must be able to bear their weight. A text with grammatical errors or poor organisation will be the first thing any reader notices.

5.1.1 Grammar

As the research that you are doing must be accessible to speakers of English outside the subcontinent, the English you employ will have to conform to international standards. Although many speakers of English in India have different rules governing the use of articles verb agreement in the spoken form of the language, the written form of English in India still uses the norms operating in British/American English. In Appendix II are enclosed some handouts on English grammar that will guide you to the appropriate usage.

5.1.2 Conciseness

The goal of concise writing is to use the most effective words. Concise writing does not always have the fewest words, but it always uses the strongest ones. See the handouts in Appendix III for strategies that you may employ.

5.1.3 Sentence Clarity

Contrary to many prescriptions, a good academic writing style is not always one that keeps sentences “short and simple”, but rather captures the writer’s mature evaluation of the propositions he/she is expressing. See the handouts in Appendix III for tips.

5.1.4 Coherence

Coherence in a text is first effected by the logical coherence of the ideas that are expressed by effective paragraphing and transitions; however, anaphoric uses of language play an equally pivotal role. Two strategies of achieving discourse cohesion are of immediate relevance to academic writing: (i) the correct use of pronouns, and (ii) consistency of verb tenses. Consult the handouts in Appendix III.

5.2 Write with sensitivity and humility

5.2.1 Use gender-sensitive language

Tackling gender sensitivity in your writing is no small task, especially since there is not yet (and there may never be) a set of concrete guidelines on which to base your decisions. Fortunately, there are a number of different strategies the gender-savvy writer can use to express gender relationships with precision.

Pronouns: Although most of us learned in elementary school that masculine pronouns (*he, his, him*) should be used as the "default" in situations where the referent (that is, the person or thing to which you are referring) could be either male or female, that usage is generally considered unacceptable now. So, what should you do when you are faced with one of those gender-neutral or gender-ambiguous situations? Use SHE OR HE, SHE/HE, or (S)HE as generic and indefinite pronouns when your observation holds without regard to sex.

Man and words ending in *-man* are the most commonly used gendered pronouns, so avoiding the confusion they bring can be as simple as watching out for these words and replacing them with words that convey your meaning more effectively. For example, do not say “all men are created equal; rephrase it to as "all people are created equal”.

Use the same rules to discuss women subjects as you use when you are writing about men. Refer to women subjects by only their last names –

just as you would do for men subjects. In circumstances where you are writing about several people who have the same last name, try using the full name of the person every time you refer to him/her. Also take care to refer to women subjects by their full titles – just as you would refer to male subjects.

USE THIS CHECKLIST

- Have you used "man", "men", or words containing one of them to refer to people who may be female?
- If you have mentioned someone's gender, was it necessary to do so? Unless gender and related matters are relevant to your point, leave them unmentioned.
- Have you used any occupational stereotypes?
- Have you used language that in any way shows a lack of respect for either sex?
- Have you used "he", "him", "his", or "himself" to refer to people who may be female?

5.2.2 'I': When to Use It

In many cases, using the first person pronoun can improve your writing, by offering the following benefits:

- *Assertiveness*: In some cases you might wish to emphasise agency (who is doing what), as for instance if you need to point out how valuable your particular project is to an academic discipline or to claim your unique perspective.
- *Clarity*: Because trying to avoid the first person can lead to awkward constructions and vagueness, using the first person can improve your writing style.
- *Positioning yourself in the essay*: In some projects, you need to explain how your ideas build on or depart from the work of others, in which case you will need to use the first person.

An instance in which using the first person would help avoid problems with clarity:

> In studying American popular culture of the 1980s, the question of to what degree materialism was a major characteristic of the cultural milieu was explored.
>
> BETTER: In my study of American popular culture of the 1980s, I explored the degree to which materialism characterised the cultural milieu.

The original sounds less emphatic and direct than the revised version; using "I" allows the writers to avoid the convoluted construction of the original and clarifies who did what.

The first person grounds the experience heavily in the writer's subjective, individual perspective, so if the writer's purpose is to describe a phenom-

enon that is in fact objective, or independent of that perspective, the first person should be avoided. This is shown in the example below, where avoiding the first person creates the desired impression of an observed phenomenon that could be reproduced, and creates a stronger, clearer statement.

> As I was reading this study of medieval village life, I noticed that social class was clearly defined.
> BETTER: This study of medieval village life reveals how clearly defined social class was.

The use of the first person also signifies a more casual writing style, deemed by many as inappropriate for a dissertation. In the example, below, there is no real need to announce that what follows is your thought; you can just go ahead, make the claim assertively, and let the fact that it is your paper clear up the issue. The revised version avoids that problem and renders the statement more assertive and direct.

> I think that Aristotle's ethical arguments are logical and applicable to contemporary cases, or at least it seems that way to me.
> BETTER: Aristotle's ethical arguments are logical and applicable to contemporary cases.

5.3 Use Correct Punctuation

When speaking, we can pause or change the tone of our voices to indicate emphasis. When writing, we use punctuation to indicate these places of emphases. In this section, we provide a brief overview of common punctuation conventions.

5.3.1 Comma

Use a comma to:

- Join two independent clauses (a clause that has a subject and a verb and can stand alone) by a comma and a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, for, nor, so*). Road construction can be inconvenient, but it is necessary.
- After an introductory phrase, prepositional phrase, transitional element, or dependent clause (a clause that has a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone). To get a good grade, you must complete all your assignments.
- To separate elements in a series. On her vacation, Lisa visited Greece, Spain, and Italy.

- To separate nonessential elements from a sentence. More specifically, when a sentence includes information that is not crucial to the message/intent of the sentence, enclose it in or separate it by commas. John's truck, a red Chevrolet, needs new tires.
- Between coordinate adjectives (adjectives that are equal and reversible). The irritable, fidgety crowd waited impatiently for the rally to begin.
- With quoted words. "Yes," she promised.
- In dates, in a personal title, and to separate a city name from the state. E.g., October 25, 2000; Pam Smith, MD; Mumbai, Maharashtra.

5.3.2 Semicolon

Use a semicolon to join:

- Two independent clauses, when the second clause restates the first or when the two clauses are of equal emphasis. Road construction in Dallas has hindered travel around town; streets are covered with bulldozers and cones.
- Two independent clauses, when the second clause begins with a conjunctive adverb or a transition. Terrorism in the United States has become a recent concern; in fact, the concern for America's safety has led to an awareness of global terrorism.
- Elements of a series, when individual items of the series already include commas. Recent sites of the Olympic games include Athens, Greece; Salt Lake City, Utah; Sydney, Australia.

5.3.3 Colon

Use a colon:

- To join two independent clauses to emphasise the second clause. Road construction in Dallas has hindered travel around town: parts of Main and West Street are closed.
- After an independent clause when it is followed by a list, a quotation, or appositive. Julie went to the store for some groceries: milk, bread, coffee, and cheese.
- To separate the hour and minute(s) in time notation. 12:00 p.m.
- To separate the year and page number in a citation. Chomsky (1995:22)

5.3.4 Parenthesis

Parentheses are used to emphasise content. They place more emphasis on the enclosed content than commas. Use parentheses to set off nonessential material, such as dates, clarifying information, or sources, from a sentence. Muhammad Ali, the greatest athlete of all time, claimed he would "float like a butterfly, sting like a bee."

5.3.5 Hyphens and Dashes

Use a hyphen:

- To join two or more words serving as a single adjective before a noun: a one-way street. However, when compound modifiers come after a noun, they are not hyphenated: The author was well known.
- With compound numbers: forty-six.
- To avoid confusion or an awkward combination of letters: *re-sign a petition* (vs. resign from a job), shell-like (but *childlike*), semi-independent (but semiconscious).
- With the prefixes *ex-* (meaning former), self-, all-; between a prefix and a capitalized word; and with figures or letters: ex-husband, self-assured.

Although hyphens can also be used as substitutes for the word “to” when discussing value ranges and scores in games, it is better to use the word in formal writing situations: The high temperature will be 87-89 degrees.

Dashes (—) can be used to indicate an interruption, particularly in transcribed speech: The chemistry student began to say, “An organic solvent will only work with—” when her cell phone rang. They can also be used as a substitute for “it is, “they are,” or similar expressions. In this way they function like colons, but are not used for lists of multiple items, and are used less frequently in formal writing situations: There was only one person suited to the job—Mr. Lee.

Dashes can also be used as substitutes for parentheses: Mr. Lee is suited to the job—he has more experience than everybody else in the department—but he has been having some difficulties at home recently, and would probably not be available.

Note that dashes are double the length of hyphens. When you type two hyphens together (--), most word processors automatically combine them into a single dash. When you use a dash, do not leave any space to the left and right of it.

5.3.6 Quotation Marks and Quotes

Do not use quotation marks in indirect or block quotations. Use quotation marks:

- To indicate the novel, ironic, or reserved use of a word. History is stained with blood spilled in the name of "justice".
- Around the titles of short poems, song titles, short stories, magazine or newspaper articles, essays, speeches, chapter titles, short films, and episodes of television or radio shows. "self-reliance," by Ralph Waldo Emerson
- to enclose direct quotes. Commas and periods are placed inside the closing quotation mark, and colons and semicolons are placed outside. The placement of question and exclamation marks depends on the situation. *He asked,* "When will you be arriving?" I answered, "Sometime after 6:30."

In quotations:

- Capitalise the first letter of a direct quote when the quoted material is a complete sentence. Mr. Johnson, who was working in his field that morning, said, "The alien spaceship appeared right before my own two eyes."
- Do not use a capital letter when the quoted material is a fragment or only a piece of the original material's complete sentence. Although Mr. Johnson has seen odd happenings before, he stated that the spaceship "certainly takes the cake" when it comes to unexplainable activity.
- If a direct quotation is interrupted mid-sentence, do not capitalise the second part of the quotation. "I didn't see an actual alien being," Mr. Johnson said, "but I sure wish I had".
- Use single quotation marks to enclose quotes within another quotation. The reporter told me, "When I interviewed the quarterback, he said they simply 'played a better game.'"
- Use a comma to introduce a quotation after a standard dialogue tag, a brief introductory phrase, or a dependant clause. The detective said, "I am sure who performed the murder."
- Put commas and periods within quotation marks, except when a parenthetical reference follows. He said, "I may forget your name, but I never forget a face".
- Place colons and semicolons outside closed quotation marks. Williams described the experiment as "a definitive step forward"; other scientists dis-

agreed.

- Place a question mark or exclamation point within closing quotation marks if the punctuation applies to the quotation itself. Place the punctuation outside the closing quotation marks if it applies to the whole sentence. Phillip asked, "Do you need this book?"

5.3.8 Italics

Underlining and Italics are often used interchangeably. Although the general trend has been moving toward italicising instead of underlining, you should remain consistent with your choice throughout your paper.

- Italicise the titles of magazines, books, newspapers, journals, films, television shows, long poems, plays of three or more acts, operas, musical albums, works of art, websites, and individual trains, planes, or ships. *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
- Italicise all words/morphemes from foreign (to English) sources. *Jaa-* "to go" is a light verb.
- Italicise a word or phrase to add emphasis. The truth is of utmost concern!

Chapter 6
The Dissertation

In this chapter, we examine four necessary components of dissertations/theses – the nature and role of introductions, conclusions, the literature review, and abstracts – and two properties they must have – academic integrity and honesty, and good design. The material in this chapter is based on the guidelines listed by The Writing Centre University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (henceforth, UNC), available online as handouts at http://writingcenter. unc.edu/resources/handouts-demos/ writing -the-paper/.

6.1 Introductions

Introductions to dissertations and/or chapters can be the most difficult parts to write, but they serve perhaps the most crucial purpose: they act as bridges that transport your readers from their own lives into the "place" of your analysis. By providing an introduction that helps your readers make a transition between their own world and the issues you will be writing about, you give your readers the tools they need to be engaged with your topic.

The *Introduction* is your first chance of making a good impression. The opening paragraph of your dissertation will provide your readers with their initial impressions of your argument, your writing style, and the overall quality of your work. A vague, disorganised, error-filled, off-the-wall, or boring introduction will probably create a negative impression. This section suggests some of the strategies you may employ for writing an effective introduction to your dissertation.

Your introduction must necessarily contain a thesis statement that will assert your main argument. However, that is not all an introduction should be – you may also use this space to locate your research topic within broader issues and questions, and/ or to provide information that constitutes the background of your study.

Try writing your introduction last. Writing the introduction first is not necessarily the most effective way to craft it. You may find that you do not

know what you are going to argue at the beginning of the writing process, and only through the experience of writing your dissertation do you discover your main argument. An introduction written at the beginning of that discovery process will not necessarily reflect what you wind up with at the end. You will most probably need to revise your dissertation to make sure that the introduction, all of the evidence, and the conclusion reflect the argument you intend.

Do not be afraid to write a tentative introduction first and then change it later. It is perfectly fine to start out thinking that you want to argue a particular point, but wind up arguing something slightly or even dramatically different by the time you have written most of the research work. Some people find that they need to write some kind of introduction in order to get the writing process started. That's fine, but if you are one of those people, be sure to return to your initial introduction later and rewrite if need be.

Open with an attention grabber. Sometimes opening with something catchy can help. Options could include: an intriguing example, a provocative quotation, a puzzling scenario, or a thought-provoking question. The UNC guidelines suggest that you try to avoid:

- *The Place Holder Introduction.* This is essentially a set of observations on the topic that are generally known and accepted to be true, and merely exists just to take up the "introduction space" in your dissertation. If you had something more effective to say, you would probably say it, but in the meantime, this paragraph is just a placeholder. WEAK EXAMPLE: Verb agreement is a property of most natural languages.
- *The Dictionary Introduction.* This introduction begins by giving the dictionary definition of one or more of the words in the topic. Giving a dictionary definition is useful only if you want to establish the important terms of the discussion, discuss the counter-examples to the definition, and/or develop your own definition of the term in the specific context of your research topic. WEAK EXAMPLE: The Glossary of Linguistic Terms defines agreement as “Agreement refers to a formal relationship between elements whereby a form of one word requires a corresponding form of another."

Pay special attention to your first sentence. If any sentence in your work is going to be completely free of errors and vagueness, it should be your first one. Start off on the right foot with your readers by making sure that

the first sentence actually says something useful and that it does so in an interesting and error-free way.

6.2 Abstracts

An abstract must be a fully self-contained, capsule description of the paper. It cannot assume (or attempt to provoke) the reader into flipping through looking for an explanation of what is meant by some vague statement. Despite the fact that an abstract is quite brief, it must do almost as much work as the multi-page paper or dissertation that follows it. Use the following as a checklist:

Motivation: Why do we care about the problem and the results? If the problem is not obviously "interesting" it might be better to put motivation first; but if your work is incremental progress on a problem that is widely recognised as important, then it is probably better to put the problem statement first to indicate which piece of the larger problem you are breaking off to work on. This section should include the importance of your work, the difficulty of the area, and the impact it might have if successful.

Problem statement: What problem are you trying to solve? What is the *scope* of your work (a generalised approach, or for a specific situation)? Be careful not to use too much jargon. In some cases, it is appropriate to put the problem statement before the motivation, but usually this only works if readers already understand why the problem is important.

Approach: How did you go about solving or making progress on the problem? What was the *extent* of your work? What important *variables* did you control, ignore, or measure?

Results: What's the answer? Avoid vague, hand waving results such as "very", "small", or "significant" and state, as simply as possible, the central results of your study.

Conclusions: What are the implications of your answer? Are your results *general*, or specific to a particular case? What generalisations can be made based on your results?

Another kind of abstract is the abstract of a research topic that academics write for selection to present your work in academic meetings like conferences, workshops, and seminars. Announcements of such academic meetings always provide you with information about the format and limita-

tions of page numbers, etc., as well as its theme.

- Abstracts for conferences, seminars, and workshops typically have a word count limitation. Be succinct; do not waste any words. You will need as many words as you are allowed.
- Keep the scope of the abstract modest. State a smaller problem and focus on your solution to that. Abstracts are often rejected because what the author claims (s)he will present in 15 or 25 minutes would take 2 hours to present adequately.
- Refer by citation to relevant previous work; this helps to put your work in context. Provide a one or two-line summary of other work only if your paper will be addressing specific issues in the work of others
- Keep your readers in mind. Even if a generalist cannot evaluate all the details of your argument, (s)he should appreciate some of your points and above all the tightness of your reasoning.
- Deadlines and other submission requirements are strictly enforced. Follow all specifications to the letter.

6.3 Review of the Literature

A literature review constitutes an essential part of a dissertation, and involves a survey of books, monographs, journal articles, computerised databases, conferences proceedings, dissertations and theses, empirical studies, government reports and reports from other bodies, historical records, and/or statistical handbooks. The purpose of a literature review is:

- To justify your choice of research question, theoretical or conceptual framework, and method, and to establish the importance of the topic.
- To provide background information needed for the study.
- To show readers you are familiar with significant and/or up-to-date research relevant to the topic.
- To establish your study as one link in a chain of research that is developing knowledge in your field.

A review of the field will enable you to carry on from where others have already reached, and avoid reinventing the wheel, as it were. It therefore provides the initial conditions for your original contribution, as it enables you to build on the platform of existing knowledge and ideas. By provid-

ing the intellectual context for your own work, it facilitates you to position your project relative to other work as well as enables you to access and identify opposing views to your claims, information, methods and ideas that may be relevant to your project. A good literature review must therefore place each work in the context of its contribution to the understanding of the subject under review, describe the relationship of each work to the others under consideration, and identify new ways to interpret, and shed light on, any gaps and contradictions in previous research.

Although it is usually assumed that the literature review must be an independent chapter in the dissertation and that the nature of the overview must be historical, neither of these assumptions is immutable. Actually, a mere chronological listing of all that you have read, bundled together without a unifying thematic, makes for poor reading. Moreover, a stand-alone chapter is not always the best strategy for all topics. A stand-alone literature review is not feasible if:

- The topic of your research is new or scantly studied,
- It involves unrelated sub-topics; as in, say, a grammatical description of a language; or
- The topic of your research has been examined from a variety of perspectives, all of which you will address in your analysis.

In all these cases, it makes more sense to have a distributed review that is embedded in the discussion of your description/analysis of the problem. You may then be better off having more than one chapter/section distributed across the dissertation/theses. You may also choose a mixture of the embedded/stand-alone/ distributed methodology of reviewing.

Whatever your choice of reviewing strategy, the following tips will be useful.

6.3.1 Find a focus

A literature review is usually organised around ideas, not the sources themselves (as an annotated bibliography would be organised). This means that you must not just simply list your sources and go into detail about each one of them one at a time. As you read widely but selectively in your topic area, consider instead what themes or issues connect your sources together. Do they present one or different solutions? Is there an aspect of the field that is missing? How well do they present the material

and do they portray it according to an appropriate theory? Do they reveal a trend in the field? A raging debate? Pick one of these themes to focus the organisation of your review.

6.3.2 Construct a working thesis statement

Use the focus you have found to construct a thesis statement, but here, your thesis statement will not necessarily argue for a position or an opinion; rather it will argue for a particular perspective on the material.

6.3.3 Be organised

Just like most academic papers, literature reviews also must contain at least three basic elements: an introduction or background information section; the body of the review containing the discussion of sources; and, finally, a conclusion and/or recommendations section to end the paper.

Develop an organisation for your review at both a global and local level by first choosing e the most effective way of presenting the information you gather, in terms of the most important topics, subtopics, etc. Next, decide the order in which they should be presented. The options are:

- *Chronological*: you can write about the materials according to when they were published, or by the trends they exemplify. Use this strategy only if chronology is actually important for the growth of the field. A good candidate for choosing this methodology is when your topic is itself historically grounded – e.g., *the growth of functional categories in UG.*
- *Thematic*: Thematic reviews of literature are organised around a topic or issue, rather than the progression of time. A review organised in this manner would shift between time periods within each section, according to the point made. A good candidate for choosing this methodology would be when your topic has many facets – e.g., *approaches to the study of gender and language.*
- *Methodological*: A methodological approach differs from the two above in that the focusing factor usually does not have to do with the content of the material. A good candidate for choosing this methodology would be when your topic has many facets – e.g., *methods of linguistic documentation.*

Once you have decided on the organisational method for the body of the review, the sections you need to include in the paper should be easy to

figure out. They should arise out of your organisational strategy. In other words, a chronological review would have subsections for each vital time period. A thematic review would have subtopics based upon factors that relate to the theme or issue.

Sometimes, though, you might need to add additional sections that are necessary for your study, but do not fit in the organisational strategy of the body. What other sections you include in the body is up to you. Here are a few other sections you might want to consider:

- *Current Situation*: Information necessary to understand the focus of the literature review.
- *History*: The chronological progression of the field, the literature, or an idea that is necessary to understand the literature review. Of course, this can be used only if the body of the literature review is not already a chronology.
- *Methods and/or Standards*: The criteria you used to select the sources in your literature review or the way in which you present your information. For instance, you might explain that your review includes only peer-reviewed articles and journals.
- *Questions for Further Research*: What questions about the field has the review sparked? How will you further your research as a result of the review?

6.3.4 Be selective

Resist the temptation to review everything you have read in the research period, and select only the most important points in each source to highlight in the review. The type of information you choose to mention should relate directly to the review's focus, whether it is thematic, methodological, or chronological.

6.3.5 Use tenses meaningfully

Use the present tense to indicate that a research outcome is a generally accepted finding. If the situation held only for a particular point in the past, use the past tense:

> According to Chomsky (1992, 1995, 2001, 2006), the EPP is responsible for the displacement property of human language. (GENERAL STATEMENT).
>
> According to Chomsky (1986), the displacement property of human language was derived from movement for Case as well as the EPP. (SPECIFIC

PAST FINDING). However, Chomsky (1992, 1995) eliminates Case as a trigger for displacement.

Use present tense if you want to indicate that the statement is an assumption drawn from research, based on specific research, which can be in the past:

Chomsky (1995, 2001) shows that Case is not a trigger for displacement. Although in Chomsky (1995), he argued that Case might be analysed as a free rider on EPP-checking, his (2001) argument was that Case-assignment must not involve any displacement.

Use of the present perfect implies that the research is salient, relevant to the current topic. The present perfect tense indicates that the event a in the past and continued until the present:

Chomsky (1995, 2001) has shown that Case is not a trigger for displacement. We will assume the essential correctness of his arguments in this research.

Use the simple past to describe background and ideas not immediately connected to your research.

The survey area for this thesis is Raipur (THE STUDENT'S RESEARCH IN PRESENT TIME). Raipur was recently named (THE LINKING OF PAST EVENTS WITH PRESENT TIME) the capital of Chattisgarh after a protracted agitation for Statehood that engulfed (BACKGROUND EVENT) much of the erstwhile South Bihar. The movement began (BACKGROUND EVENT) over two decades ago, and hundreds of activists were jailed (BACKGROUND EVENT) in the struggle.

6.3.6 Give examples

In general, the use of examples is a good strategy in any type of dissertation, as examples demonstrate your ability to generalize beyond the immediate context of your research area offers. However, using an example is a tricky business; as the success of an example lies in the chain of logical reasoning, you have used to process and\or construct it. Suppose you wish to show that a particular theoretical postulation you have made for a particular social fact covers other social facts as well, you must be sure that all the examples fully 'fit' your theory. For example, if you have arrived at the conclusion that "to be a Dalit woman writer is to be a proto-feminist', your examples must be ones that show this claim to be true across a spectrum of Dalit women writers.

In formal linguistics and applied linguistics research, examples are imperative. Note however, that there exist rigid conventions about how

examples must be presented and formatted. Consult your teachers about these conventions, and proceed accordingly.

In both cases, the most important point about using examples is that each example must be introduced and discussed. Typically, you should provide a few sentences about each example before you introduce it, discussing what the example illustrates. A fuller discussion about how the example feeds back to the theory, or how it carries your argument forward, can follow the example.

6.3.7 Footnotes

Academic conventions differ from subject area to subject area regarding the function and use of footnotes. While in both the social sciences and the humanities, footnotes are used as a device for citation, footnotes are used sparingly in linguistics writing. For the former two subject areas, a footnote is used to mark every reference to a published or unpublished source, and to point the reader to an entry in the bibliographic references section of the work. The objective of a citation footnote is to acknowledge the relevance of the works of others to the topic of discussion at the spot where the citation appears. Generally, the combination of the reference in the text body, the footnote, and the bibliographic entry constitutes what is commonly thought of as a citation (whereas bibliographic entries by themselves are not). In linguistics and the sciences, however, an in-body reference and inclusion in the bibliography is sufficient to mark citation.

Beyond this difference in academic conventions, footnotes are used for much of the same reason – for example, the mention of material or arguments that would otherwise interrupt the flow of the argument, or some extra clarification/ material for further thought that would be digressions if they were put in the main text. Furthermore, all direct quotations must be footnoted, as could be controversial facts or opinions must also be footnoted.

In a research paper, the first footnote is often an acknowledgement, and is often placed at the end of the title of the paper. In a dissertation however, you may have a separate page for acknowledgements; therefore, acknowledgements must not be footnoted in an M.Phil. /PhD dissertation. Similarly, while research papers require that the abbreviations used in the article be listed in a footnote to the first example of the text, a full page must be use d for abbreviations in dissertations.

6.4 Conclusions

Just as the *Introduction* acts as a bridge that transports your readers from their own lives into the "place" of your analysis, the Conclusion can provide a bridge to help your readers make the transition back to their daily lives. Such a conclusion will help them see why all your analysis and information should matter to them after they put the dissertation down.

Understand that the *Conclusion* allows you to have the final word on the issues you have raised in your dissertation, to summarise your thoughts, to demonstrate the importance of your ideas, and to propel your reader to a new view of the subject. You can use the space to go beyond the confines of the topic and allows you to consider broader issues, make new connections, and elaborate on the significance of your findings. Some strategies for writing *Conclusions* are given below.

Try to avoid clichéd conclusions. If you are stuck and feel like your conclusion isn't saying anything new or interesting, read the statements from your conclusion, and ask yourself, "So what?" or "Why should anybody care?" The UNC guide suggests that you try to avoid:

- *The "Sherlock Holmes" Conclusion*: This involves stating the thesis for the very first time in the conclusion. Do not keep the reader in the dark until the end and then "wow" her with the main idea, much like a Sherlock Holmes mystery.
- *Return to the theme or themes in the introduction.* This strategy brings the reader full circle. For example, if you begin by describing a scenario, you can end with the same scenario as proof that your essay is helpful in creating a new understanding. Try and avoid:
- *The "That's My Story and I'm Sticking to It" Conclusion,* as this conclusion just restates the thesis and is usually painfully short. It does not push the ideas forward.
- The *"America the Beautiful"/"I Am Woman"/"We Shall Overcome" Conclusion.* This kind of conclusion usually draws on emotion to make its appeal, but while this emotion and even sentimentality may be very heartfelt, it is usually out of character with the rest of an analytical dissertation. A more sophisticated commentary, rather than emotional praise, would be a more fitting tribute to the topic.

***Synthesise, do not summarise*:** Include a brief summary of the dissertation's main points, but do not simply repeat things that were in your

dissertation. Instead, show your reader how the points you made and the support and examples used fit together. Pull it all together for them. Try to avoid introducing a new idea\subtopic in your conclusion, and including evidence (quotations, facts, etc.), as that should be in the body of the dissertation.

Propose a course of action, a solution to an issue, or questions for further study. This can redirect your reader's thought process and help her to apply your ideas to her own academic endeavours or to see the broader implications.

6.5 Documentation of Sources

The basic rule for documentation is: Document any specific ideas, opinions, and facts that are not your own. The only thing you do not have to document is common knowledge.

There are two categories of common knowledge—information that is known to the public and information that is agreed upon by most people in a professional field. Yet, sometimes, common knowledge can be tricky to define. A good rule is if in doubt, document. However, if you find yourself needing to document almost every sentence, then it means you have not thought enough about your topic to develop your own ideas. A research work should not just be a collection of others' ideas and facts, and sources should only support or substantiate your ideas.

You must identify your sources in two places in your research paper: at the end in the form of a bibliography or reference list, and in your paper, as you use direct quotations or paraphrases and summaries of ideas and information from the sources you have researched. A bibliography is a list of sources (books, journals, websites, periodicals, etc.) one has used for researching a topic, and includes even that work which has not been actually cited in your thesis/dissertation. In research work other than dissertations/theses, a reference list (i.e. a list of the work actually cited in the text) and not bibliographies are employed. In linguistics, the style most commonly used is the American Psychological Association (APA) format, which is reproduced below.

6.5.1 Strategies for the Attribution of Sources

Three most commonly used strategies for representing the work of others are quotation, summary, and paraphrases. We discuss each in turn.

6.5.1.1 Quotation

Used ineffectively, quotations clutter your text and interrupt the flow of your argument. Use quotations at strategically selected moments, remembering that packing your paper with quotations will not necessarily strengthen your argument. Points in the text ideal for quotations are when you want to:

- Discuss specific arguments or ideas. In particular, when you wish to debate with clarity and specificity the ideas of others, you may want to quote those ideas word for word.
- Give added emphasis to a particularly authoritative source on your topic.
- Analyse how others use language.

Once you have carefully selected the quotations that you want, you must weave those quotations into your text. Follow these guidelines for "setting up" and "following up" quotations.

- Select quoted material judiciously
- Excerpt fragments – you should quote short fragments, rather than whole sentences.
- Use block quotations sparingly – only when you fear that omitting any words will destroy the integrity of the passage. If that passage exceeds four lines, set it off as a block.
- Provide a context for each quotation. Set the basic scene for when, possibly where, and under what circumstances the quotation was spoken or written.
- Attribute each quotation to its source. Even if you place an internal citation after a quotation, you must still attribute the quotation within the text. A good rule of thumb is this: Try reading your text aloud. Could your reader determine without looking at your paper where your quotations begin?
- Explain the significance of the quotation for the argument you are making
- Provide a citation for the quotation. All quotations require a formal citation.

6.5.1.2 Paraphrase

When the source of an idea is

A paraphrase is your own rendition of essential information and ideas expressed by someone else, presented in a new form. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source. Paraphrasing is one of the legitimate ways (when accompanied by accurate documentation) to borrow from a source, and is a more detailed restatement than a summary. It is a valuable skill because the mental process required for successful paraphrasing helps you to grasp the full meaning of the original. It also helps you control the temptation to quote too much.

Paraphrased material is usually shorter than the original passage, taking a somewhat broader segment of the source and condensing it slightly. To make an effective paraphrase:

- Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
- Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase on a note card.
- Jot down a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material. At the top of the note card, write a key word or phrase to indicate the subject of your paraphrase.
- Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
- Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.

Record the source (including the page) on your note card so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.

6.5.1.3 Summary

Summarising involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarised ideas to the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material.

- Read the entire text, noting the key points and main ideas.
- Summarise in your own words what the single main idea of the essay is.
- Paraphrase important supporting points that come up in the essay.
- Consider any words, phrases, or passages that you believe should be quoted directly.

Take care not to document paraphrases and summaries only at the end of

paragraphs, as this leaves your reader confused. Show where the source's information starts as well as ends. The easiest way to do this is to use a phrase such as "According to Dr. James Watts. . ." or "Carly Simon maintains that..."

6.5.2 Documentation in the Text

Today most research work put the basic source information inside parentheses right in the text of the paper. In the APA style, citations to sources are placed in the text of the paper in order to briefly identify sources for readers and enable them to locate the source of the cited information in the Reference List. These parenthetical (in text) references include the author's last name and the year of publication enclosed in parentheses. Citations are placed within sentences and paragraphs so that it is clear what information is being quoted or paraphrased and whose information is being cited.

Works by a single author: The last name of the author and the year of publication are inserted in the text at the appropriate point. In a recent study (Walker, 2000)... If the name of the author appears as part of the narrative, cite only the year of publication in parentheses. Walker (2000) compared reaction times.

Works by multiple authors: When a work has two authors, always cite both names every time the reference occurs in the text. In the narrative text, join the names with the word "and." as Nightlinger and Littlewoord (1993) demonstrated. In parenthetical material, join the names with an ampersand (&). as has been shown (Joreskog & Sorbom 1989)

When a work has three, four, or five authors, cite all authors the first time the reference occurs. Wasserstein, Zappulla, Rosen, Gerstman, and Rock (1994) found. In all subsequent citations per paragraph, include only the surname of the first author followed by "*et al.*", and the year of publication. Wasserstein et al. (1994)

Works by associations, corporations, government agencies, etc: The names of groups that serve as authors (corporate authors) are usually written out each time they appear in a text reference. (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH] 1999). When appropriate, the names of some corporate authors are spelled out in the first reference and abbreviated in all subsequent citations. The general rule for abbreviating in this manner is to supply enough information in the text citation for a reader to locate its

source in the Reference List without difficulty. (NIMH, 1999)

Works with no author: When a work has no author, use the first two or three words of the work's title (omitting any initial articles) as your text reference, capitalising each word. the book College Bound Seniors (1979). Place the title in quotation marks if it refers to an article or book chapter, or italicise it if it refers to a book, periodical, or report.

6.5.3 Documentation in the Reference List

Works cited in the text of a research work must appear in a Bibliography or Reference List. This list provides the information necessary to identify and retrieve each source.

- Entries should be arranged in alphabetical order by authors' last names. Sources without authors should be alphabetically by title within the same list.
- The first line of entries should be flush with the left margin, and all subsequent lines are indented to form a hanging indent.
- Capitalise only the first word of a title or subtitle, and any proper names part of a title.
- Use an ampersand (&) instead of "*and*" when listing multiple authors of a single work.
- Use the abbreviation p. or pp. to designate page numbers of articles from periodicals that do not use volume numbers, especially newspapers. These are also used to designate pages in encyclopaedia articles and chapters from edited books.

The American Psychological Association (APA) style guide for most common types of sources are given in Appendix I. For others, consult the APA website www.apastyle.org.

Chapter 7
Formatting and Proofreading Your Thesis

Your thesis must be written clearly and grammatically. Proofread it carefully before you submit it. Marks will be lost for careless presentation: format and presentation are important aspects of the task you have been set and it is expected that you will present your argument in a professional manner. You are making an original contribution to the discipline and you should think of your thesis as potentially a publishable piece of work.

Listed below are the most typical components of JNU dissertation, with the † marked ones being obligatory. Consult the Centre office at the time of submission for the procedures to be followed for the submission of your thesis.

- †Title page (in a prescribed format; available from your Centre)
- †Declaration (in a prescribed format; available from your Centre)
- †Certificate (in a prescribed format; available from your Centre)
- †Table of Contents
- †Abstract: (in a prescribed format; available from your Centre)
- †List of Abbreviations
- List of Tables
- List of Figures
- Acknowledgements
- Maps and Illustrations
- † Body of the thesis
- Appendices.
- † References.

7.1 Editing your draft

Writing is a process of discovering, and you do not always produce your best stuff when you first get started. Therefore, revision is a chance for you to look critically at what you have written to see if it is really worth saying, if it says what you wanted to say, and if a reader will understand

what you are saying.

Here are several steps that could be used when you begin to revise your first draft. However, do not try them all at one time. Instead, focus on a few main areas during each revision session.

Wait awhile after you have finished a draft before looking at it again. The Roman poet Horace thought one should wait nine years, but that's a bit much. A day – a few hours even – will work. When you do return to the draft, be honest with yourself and don't be lazy. Ask yourself what you really think about the dissertation. At this stage, you should be concerned with the large issues in the dissertation, not the commas.

***Check the focus of the dissertation*:** Is it appropriate to the assignment? Is the topic too big or too narrow? Do you stay on track through the entire dissertation?

***Think honestly about your thesis*:** Do you still agree with it? Should it be modified in light of something you discovered as you wrote the dissertation? Does it make a sophisticated, provocative point, or does it just say what anyone could say if given the same topic? Does your thesis generalise instead of taking a specific position? Should it be changed altogether? For more information, visit our handout on thesis statements.

***Think about your purpose in writing*:** Does your introduction state clearly what you intend to do? Will your aims be clear to your readers?

Examine the balance within your dissertation: Are some parts out of proportion with others? Do you spend too much time on one trivial point and neglect a more important point? Do you give lots of detail early on and then let your points get thinner by the end?

Check that you have kept your promises to your readers: Does your dissertation follow through with what the thesis promises? Do you support all the claims in your thesis? Is the tone and formality of language appropriate for your audience?

Check the organisation: Does your dissertation follow a pattern that makes sense? Do the transitions move your readers smoothly from one point to the next? Do the topic sentences of each paragraph appropriately introduce what that paragraph is about? Would your dissertation work better if you moved some things around?

Check your information: Are all your facts accurate? Are any of your statements misleading? Have you provided enough detail to satisfy read-

ers' curiosity? Have you cited all your information appropriately?

Check your conclusions: Does the last paragraph tie the dissertation together smoothly and end on a stimulating note, or does the dissertation just die a slow, or abrupt, death?

7.2 Proof-reading your draft

Producing a clean, error-free final draft isn't easy. Even the most carefully edited professional publications contain occasional typos. Most readers understand this and are not bothered by such infrequent problems. Yet, when errors occur often, they undermine the writer's authority and disrupt communication.

To proofread well, it helps to know the basics of grammar and mechanics, but equally important are good editing practices. You will need to be patient and attentive to detail. Use the suggestions below to improve your proofreading.

Know what you are looking for. What types of errors do you tend to make most often? Do you have problems with Subject/Verb Agreement or with Tense Shifts? Look for patterns in your errors and focus on eliminating the more serious and higher frequency errors first. Then check for less obvious problems.

Proofread printed copy. If you are writing at the computer, check your work quickly on the screen and run a spell-check. Then print out a draft to go over meticulously, looking for anything you may have missed.

Proofread actively. Go through your draft carefully, pencil in hand. Actually, touch each word with your pencil. Look especially at word endings. Have you dropped any *-s* or *-ed* endings? Do subjects and verbs agree? Does each pronoun have a clear antecedent?

If possible, proofread with a partner. Read your draft slowly aloud while your partner, pencil in hand, reads another copy of the draft. Have your partner stop you whenever there might be a problem. Discuss each questionable punctuation mark or word choice.

All this may seem tedious at first, but it pays big dividends. A clean, well-proof-read final draft makes a good impression. It shows that you care about your writing, and when readers sense your care, they will care, too.

7.3 Formatting

See Appendix IV for instruction on formatting theses-length documents in MS Word.

Margins

Your dissertation must be printed (double-sided) on A-4 paper. Leave a 1-inch margin on the top, bottom, and right-hand sides, and a 1.5-inch margin on the left.

Fonts and Paragraph Spacing

Use a font size of 12 in Times New Roman, Palatino or Palatino Linotype, or Georgia (do NOT use fonts that occupy space larger than these) as well as any IPA\foreign language fonts of your choice. Use 1.5-paragraph spacing. New paragraphs begin at two keystrokes of the ENTER key.

Numbering

Chapters must be numbered in Arabic numerals, and should begin on a new page. First-level section headings must be in bold and numbered in Arabic numerals.

Prefix the chapter number (as in this document) to section headings. Sub-headings must be in bold italics, and numbered in Arabic numerals. Prefix the chapter and section number (as in this document) to sub-headings. Try to avoid sub-sub headings, but if you do need them, present them in (not bold) italics.

Examples must be numbered chapter-wise. Footnotes (do not use end-notes) should be numbered chapter-wise, and be in a 10-point size of the font used for the main body of the text.

All prefatory pages, including table of contents; list of charts, graphs, illustrations and the like; acknowledgments; dedication; and preface are to be numbered with lower-case Roman numerals, beginning with *i a*nd numbered consecutively. They must be cantered at the bottom of the page, beginning with “i”, no closer than one half inch from the bottom edge of the page.

All other pages, including the main body of the dissertation (which contains the introduction, chapters, graphs, photos, figures, and tables) bibliography, and appendices should be numbered with Arabic numerals, starting with 1. They must be distinct from the text and no closer than

one half inch from the top edge of the paper and one inch from the right edge of the paper. The bibliography and appendices should be numbered consecutively with the main body of the dissertation.

Appendices

Appendix I
APA-Style Referencing

Start your reference list on a new page with the word References or Bibliography centred at the top of the page. APA style has hanging indents, which means that for each reference you indent all lines ½ inch, other than the first line. Type all your references first, and then format. Use (n.d.) if the date is not known. When there is no author for a web page, the title moves to the first position of the reference entry. In the reference list use the following styles:

Book with a single author

Marsden, J. (2007). *While I live*. New York: Scholastic Press

Books with more than one author

Holmberg, D., Orbuch, T., & Veroff, J. (2004). Thrice told tales: Married couples tell their stories. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum

Ebook

Sewell, A. (2005). *Black Beauty: the autobiography of a horse*. Retrieved from http://destiny.sd61.bc.ca/cataloging/servlet/presenttitledetaiform. do ?siteTypID=2&siteID=&includeLibrary=true.

Edited books

Langwith, J. (ed.) (2007). *Stem Cells*. Farmington, MI: Greenhaven Press.

Langwith, J. and Marshall M. (eds.) (2007). *Stem Cell Biology*. Farmington, MI: Greenhaven Press.

Article in a book

Begley, S. (2007). Embryonic stem cell research may one day cure Alzheimer's disease. In J. Langwith (Ed.), *Stem cells* (pp. 54-57). Farmington, MI: Greenhaven Press.

Article in a reference book (e.g. encyclopedia, dictionary etc)

Bercuson, D. J. (2005). Canada. In *World Book Encyclopedia* (Vol. 3, pp. 98-127). Chicago: World Book.

Magazine article

Chamberlin, J., Novotney, A., Packard, E., & Price, M. (2008, May). Enhancing worker well-being: Occupational health psychologists share their research on work, stress, and health. *Monitor on Psychology*, 39(5), 26-29.

Online magazine article

Clay, R. (2008, June). Sciences vs. Ideology: Psychologists fight back about the misuse of research. *Monitor on Psychology*, 39(6). Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/monitor/

Online newspaper article

Cleverley, B. (2011, March 4). Victoria set to go ahead with bridge without rail. *Times Colonist*. Retrieved from http://www.timescolonist.com

Journal Article with DOI from online database

Wozniak, M. A., Shipley, S. J., Dobson, C. B., Parker, S. P., Scott, F. T., Leedham-Green, M., & Itzhaki, R. F. (2007). Does apolipoprotein E determine outcome of infection by varicella

zoster virus and by Epstein Barr virus? *European Journal of Human Genetics*, 15(6), 672-678. doi:10.1038/sj.ejhg.5201812

Journal article from online database – no DOI

Epidemiological summary of pandemic influenza A (H1N1) 2009 virus – Ontario, Canada, June 2009. (2009). *Weekly Epidemiological Record*, 84(47), 485-491. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.

Webpage within a website, no author

Gadhafi vows retaliation against no-fly zone: Report. (2011, March 8). *CBC*. Retrieved from http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/ 2011 /03/09 /libya-gadhafi-030911.html

Webpage within a website, author given

Payton, L. Speaker rules against government, Oda. (2011, March 8). *CBC*. Retrieved from http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/ 2011/03/ 09/pol-speaker-rulings.html

THE BASIC ORDER OF AN *APA* ENTRY:

- Author, A. (year). Site or Chapter Title. *Title* or *homepage title*. Place: Company.
- Author, A. (year). Title of article, *Title of periodical*, xx, pp-pp.
- Author, A. (year). *Title of work*. Retrieved from http:// www.xxxx
- Author, A. (year). *Title of book.* Location: Publisher.

Appendix II

Some Common Grammatical Mistakes in English and How to fix them

Using Articles

What is an article? Basically, an article is an adjective. Like adjectives, articles modify nouns. English has two articles: *the* and *a/an*. *The* is used to refer to specific or particular nouns; *a/an* is used to modify non-specific or non-particular nouns. We call *the* the definite article and a/an the indefinite article. For example, if I say, "Let's read the book," I mean a specific book. If I say, "Let's read a book," I mean any book rather than a specific book.

Here is another way to explain it: *The* is used to refer to a specific or particular member of a group. For example, "I just saw the most popular movie of the year." There are many movies, but only one particular movie is the most popular. Therefore, we use *the*.

A/an is used to refer to a non-specific or non-particular member of the group. For example, "I would like to go see a movie." Here, we're not talking about a specific movie. We're talking about any movie. There are many movies, and I want to see any movie. I don't have a specific one in mind.

Indefinite Articles: a and an

A and *an* signal that the noun modified is indefinite, referring to any member of a group. For example:

> "My daughter really wants a dog for Christmas." *This refers to any dog. We don't know which dog because we haven't found the dog yet.*
>
> "Somebody call a policeman!" *This refers to any policeman. We don't need a specific policeman; we need any policeman who is available.*

"When I was at the zoo, I saw an elephant!" *Here, we're talking about a single, non-specific thing, in this case an elephant. There are probably several elephants at the zoo, but there's only one we're talking about here.*

Remember, using *a* or *an* depends on the sound that begins the next word. So...

- *A + singular noun beginning with a consonant*: a boy; a car; a bike; a zoo; a dog
- *An + singular noun beginning with a vowel*: an elephant; an egg; an apple; an idiot; an orphan
- *A + singular noun beginning with a consonant*: a user (sounds like 'yoo-zer,' i.e. begins with a consonant 'y' sound, so 'a' is used);a university; a unicycle
- *An + nouns starting with silent* "h": an hour
- *A + nouns starting with a pronounced "h":* a horse. In some cases where "h" is pronounced, such as "historical," you can use an. However, *a* is more commonly used and preferred. A historical event is worth recording.

Another case where this rule applies is when acronyms start with consonant letters but have vowel sounds:

An MSDS (material safety data sheet) was used to record the data.

An SPCC plan (Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures plan) will help us prepare for the worst.

If the noun is modified by an adjective, the choice between *a* and *an* depends on the initial sound of the adjective that immediately follows the article:

a broken egg

an unusual problem

a European country (sounds like 'yer-o-pi-an,' i.e. begins with consonant 'y' sound)

Remember, too, that in English, the indefinite articles are used to indicate membership in a group:

I am a teacher. (*I am a member of a large group known as teachers.)*

Brian is an Irishman. *(Brian is a member of the people*

known as Irish.)

Seiko is a practicing Buddhist. *(Seiko is a member of the group of people known as Buddhists.)*

Definite Article: The

The definite article is used before singular and plural nouns when the noun is specific or particular. *The* signals that the noun is definite, that it refers to a particular member of a group. For example:

"The dog that bit me ran away." *Here, we're talking about a specific dog, the dog that bit me.*

"I was happy to see the policeman who saved my cat!" *Here, we're talking about a particular policeman. Even if we don't know the policeman's name, it's still a particular policeman because it is the one who saved the cat.*

"I saw the elephant at the zoo." *Here, we're talking about a specific noun. Probably there is only one elephant at the zoo.*

Count and Noncount Nouns

The can be used with noncount nouns, or the article can be omitted entirely.

"I love to sail over the water" (*some specific body of water*) or "I love to sail over water" (*any water*).

"He spilled the milk all over the floor" (*some specific milk, perhaps the milk you bought earlier that day*) or "He spilled milk all over the floor" (any milk).

"A/an" can be used only with count nouns. Most of the time, you can't say, "She wants a water," unless you're implying, say, a bottle of water.

I need a bottle of water.

I need a new glass of milk.

Geographical use of *the*

There are some specific rules for using *the* with geographical nouns.Do not use *the* before:

- Names of most countries/territories: Italy, Mexico, Bolivia; however, the Netherlands, the Dominican

Republic, the Philippines, the United States
- Names of cities, towns, or states: Seoul, Manitoba, Miami
- Names of streets: Washington Blvd., Main St.
- Names of lakes and bays: Lake Titicaca, Lake Erie except with a group of lakes like the Great Lakes
- Names of mountains: Mount Everest, Mount Fuji except with ranges of mountains like the Andes or the Rockies or unusual names like the Matterhorn
- Names of continents (Asia, Europe)
- Names of islands (Easter Island, Maui, Key West) except with island chains like the Aleutians, the Hebrides, or the Canary Islands

Do use *the* before:
- Names of rivers, oceans and seas: the Nile, the Pacific
- Points on the globe: the Equator, the North Pole
- Geographical areas: the Middle East, the West
- Deserts, forests, gulfs, and peninsulas: the Sahara, the Persian Gulf, the Black Forest, the Iberian Peninsula

Omission of Articles

Some common types of nouns that don't take an article are:
- Names of languages and nationalities: Chinese, English, Spanish, Russian (unless you are referring to the population of the nation: "The Spanish are known for their warm hospitality.")
- Names of sports: volleyball, hockey, baseball
- Names of academic subjects: mathematics, biology, history, computer science

Adjectives with Countable and Uncountable Nouns

The Basic Rules: Adjectives

A countable noun is one that can be expressed in plural form, usually with an "s." For example, "cat–cats," "season–seasons," "student–students." An uncountable noun is one that usually cannot be expressed in a plural form. For example, "milk," "water," "air," "money," "food."

Usually, you cannot say, "He had many moneys." Most of the time, this doesn't matter with adjectives. For example, you can say, "The cat was gray" or "The air was gray." However, the difference between a countable and uncountable noun does matter with certain adjectives, such as the following:

- some/any
- much/many
- little/few
- a lot of/lots of
- a little bit of
- plenty of
- enough
- no

Both *some* and *any* can modify countable and uncountable nouns.

There is some water on the floor.
There are some Mexicans here.
Do you have any food?
Do you have any apples?

Much modifies only uncountable nouns.

They have so much money in the bank.
The horse drinks so much water.

Many modifies only countable nouns.

Many Americans travel to Europe.
I collected many sources for my paper.

Little modifies only uncountable nouns.

He had little food in the house.
When I was in college, there was little money to spare.
Few modifies only countable nouns.
There are a few doctors in town.
He had few reasons for his opinion.

A lot of and *lots of* are informal substitutes for *much* and *many*. They are used with uncountable nouns when they mean *much* and with countable nouns when they mean *many*.

They have lots of (much) money in the bank.
A lot of (many) Americans travel to Europe.
We got lots of (many) mosquitoes last summer.
We got lots of (much) rain last summer.

A little bit of is informal and must precede an uncountable noun.

There is a little bit of pepper in the soup.
There is a little bit of snow on the ground.

Plenty of modifies both countable and uncountable nouns.

They have plenty of money in the bank.
There are plenty of millionaires in Switzerland.

Enough modifies both countable and uncountable nouns.

There is enough money to buy a car.
I have enough books to read.

No modifies both countable and uncountable nouns.

There is no time to finish now.
There are no squirrels in the park.

Making Subjects and Verbs Agree

When the subject of a sentence is composed of two or more nouns or pronouns connected by and, use a plural verb.

She and her friends are at the fair.

When two or more singular nouns or pronouns are connected by *or* or *nor*, use a singular verb.

The book or the pen is in the drawer.

When a compound subject contains both a singular and a

plural noun or pronoun joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb should agree with the part of the subject that is nearer the verb.

The boy or his friends run every day.

His friends or the boy runs every day.

Doesn't is a contraction of does not and should be used only with a singular subject. *Don't* is a contraction of do not and should be used only with a plural subject. The exception to this rule appears in the case of the first person and second person pronouns I and you. With these pronouns, the contraction *don't* should be used.

He doesn't like it.

They don't like it.

Do not be misled by a phrase that comes between the subject and the verb. The verb agrees with the subject, not with a noun or pronoun in the phrase.

One of the boxes is open

The people who listen to that music are few.

The team captain, as well as his players, is anxious.

The book, including all the chapters in the first section, is boring.

The woman with all the dogs walks down my street.

The words *each, each one, either, neither, everyone, everybody, anybody, anyone, nobody, somebody, someone,* and *no one* are singular and require a singular verb.

Each of these hot dogs is juicy.

Everybody knows Mr. Jones.

Either is correct.

Nouns such as civics, mathematics, dollars, measles, *and* news *require singular verbs. Not*e: the word *dollars* is a special case. When talking about an amount of money, it requires a singular verb, but when referring to the dollars themselves, a plural verb is required.

The news is on at six.

Five dollars is a lot of money.

Dollars are often used instead of roubles in Russia.

Nouns such as *scissors, tweezers, trousers,* and *shears* require plural verbs. (There are two parts to these things.)

These scissors are dull.
Those trousers are made of wool.

In sentences beginning with *there is* or *there are,* the real subject follows the verb. Since *there* is not the subject, the verb agrees with what follows.

There are many questions.
There is a question.

Collective nouns are words that imply more than one person but that are considered singular and take a singular verb, such as *group, team, committee, class,* and *family*.

The team runs during practice.
The committee decides how to proceed.
The family has a long history.
My family has never been able to agree.

In some cases in American English, a sentence may call for the use of a plural verb when using a collective noun. This sentence is referring to the individual efforts of each crew member.

The crew are preparing to dock the ship.

Expressions such as *with, together with, including, accompanied by, in addition to*, or *as well* do not change the number of the subject. If the subject is singular, the verb is too.

The President, accompanied by his wife, is travelling to India.
All of the books, including yours, are in that box.

Appendix III

Issues of Academic Style

Conciseness

The goal of concise writing is to use the most effective words. Concise writing does not always have the fewest words, but it always uses the strongest ones. Writers often fill sentences with weak or unnecessary words that can be deleted or replaced. Words and phrases should be deliberately chosen for the work they are doing. Like bad employees, words that don't accomplish enough should be fired. When only the most effective words remain, writing will be far more concise and readable. This resource contains general conciseness tips followed by very specific strategies for pruning sentences.

Replace several vague words with more powerful, specific words.

Often, writers use several small and ambiguous words to express a concept, wasting energy expressing ideas better relayed through fewer specific words. As a general rule, more specific words lead to more concise writing. Because of the variety of nouns, verbs, and adjectives, most things have a closely corresponding description. Brainstorming or searching a thesaurus can lead to the word best suited for a specific instance. Notice that the examples below actually convey more as they drop in word count.

> *Wordy*: The politician talked about several of the merits of after-school programs in his speech (14 words)
> *Concise*: The politician touted after-school programs in his speech. (8 words)

> *Wordy*: Suzie believed but could not confirm that Billy had feelings of affection for her. (14 words)

Concise: Suzie assumed that Billy adored her. (6 words)

Wordy: Our website has made available many of the things you can use for making a decision on the best dentist. (20 words)
Concise: Our website presents criteriafor determining the best dentist. (9 words)

Wordy: Working as a pupil under someone who develops photos was an experience that really helped me learn a lot. (20 words)
Concise: Working as a photo technician's apprentice was an educational experience. (10 words)

Interrogate every word in a sentence

Check every word to make sure that it is providing something important and unique to a sentence. If words are dead weight, they can be deleted or replaced. Other sections in this handout cover this concept more specifically, but there are some general examples below containing sentences with words that could be cut.

Wordy: The teacher demonstrated some of the various ways and methods for cutting words from my essay that I had written for class. (22 words)
Concise: The teacher demonstrated methods for cutting words from my essay. (10 words)

Wordy: Eric Clapton and Steve Winwood formed a new band of musicians together in 1969, giving it the ironic name of Blind Faith because early speculation that was spreading everywhere about the band suggested that the new musical group would be good enough to rival the earlier bands that both men had been in, Cream and Traffic, which people had really liked and had been very popular. (66 words)
Concise: Eric Clapton and Steve Winwood formed a new band in 1969, ironically naming it Blind Faith because speculation suggested that the group would rival the musicians' previous popular bands, Cream and Traffic. (32 words)

Combine Sentences.

Some information does not require a full sentence, and can easily be inserted into another sentence without losing any of its value. To get more strategies for sentence combining, see the handout on Sentence Variety.

> *Wordy:* Ludwig's castles are an astounding marriage of beauty and madness. By his death, he had commissioned three castles. (18 words)
> *Concise:* Ludwig's three castles are an astounding marriage of beauty and madness. (11 words)

> *Wordy:* The supposed crash of a UFO in Roswell, New Mexico aroused interest in extraterrestrial life. This crash is rumoured to have occurred in 1947. (24 words)
> *Concise:* The supposed 1947 crash of a UFO in Roswell, New Mexico aroused interest in extraterrestrial life. (16 words)

Eliminating Words

Eliminate words that explain the obvious or provide excessive detail. Always consider readers while drafting and revising writing. If passages explain or describe details that would already be obvious to readers, delete or reword them. Readers are also very adept at filling in the non-essential aspects of a narrative, as in the fourth example.

> *Wordy:* I received your inquiry that you wrote about tennis rackets yesterday, and read it thoroughly. Yes, we do have... (19 words)

> *Concise:* I received your inquiry about tennis rackets yesterday. Yes, we do have...(12 words)

> *Wordy:* It goes without saying that we are acquainted with your policy on filing tax returns, and we have every intention of complying with the regulations that you have mentioned. (29 words)
> *Concise:* We intend to comply with the tax-return regulations that you have mentioned. (12 words)

> *Wordy:* Imagine a mental picture of someone engaged in the intellectual activity of trying to learn what the rules

are for how to play the game of chess. (27 words)
Concise: Imagine someone trying to learn the rules of chess. (9 words)

Eliminate unnecessary determiners and modifiers

Writers sometimes clog up their prose with one or more extra words or phrases that seem to determine narrowly or to modify the meaning of a noun but don't actually add to the meaning of the sentence. Although such words and phrases can be meaningful in the appropriate context, they are often used as "filler" and can easily be eliminated.

Wordy: Any particular type of dessert is fine with me. (9 words)
Concise: Any dessert is fine with me. (6 words)

Wordy: Balancing the budget by Friday is an impossibility without some kind of extra help. (14 words)
Concise: Balancing the budget by Friday is impossible without extra help. (10 words)

Wordy: For all intents and purposes, American industrial productivity generally depends on certain factors that are really more psychological in kind than of any given technological aspect. (26 words)
Concise: American industrial productivity depends more on psychological than on technological factors. (11 words)

Omit repetitive wording

Watch for phrases or longer passages which repeat words with similar meanings. Words that don't build on the content of sentences or paragraphs are rarely necessary.

Wordy: I would appreciate it if you would bring to the attention of your drafting officers the administrator's dislike of long sentences and paragraphs in messages to the field and in other items drafted for her signature or approval, as well as in all correspondence, reports, and studies. Please encourage your section to keep their sentences short. (56 words)
Concise: Please encourage your drafting officers to keep sentences and paragraphs in letters, reports, and

studies short. Dr. Lomas, the administrator, has mentioned that reports and memos drafted for her approval recently have been wordy and thus time-consuming. (37 words)

Wordy: Our branch office currently employs five tellers. These tellers do an excellent job Monday through Thursday but cannot keep up with the rush on Friday and Saturday. (27 words)
Concise: Our branch office currently employs five tellers, who do an excellent job Monday through Thursday but cannot keep up with Friday and Saturday rush periods. (25 words)

Omit Redundant Pairs

Many pairs of words imply each other. Finish implies complete, so the phrase completely finish is redundant in most cases. A related expression that's not redundant as much as it is illogical is "very unique." Since unique means "one of a kind," adding modifiers of degree such as "very," "so," "especially," "somewhat," "extremely," and so on is illogical. One-of-a-kind-ness has no gradations; something is either unique or it is not.

Wordy: Before the travel agent was completely able to finish explaining the various differences among all of the many very unique vacation packages his travel agency was offering, the customer changed her future plans. (33 words)
Concise: Before the travel agent finished explaining the differences among the unique vacation packages his travel agency was offering, the customer changed her plans. (23 words)

Omit Redundant Categories

Specific words imply their general categories, so we usually don't have to state both. We know that a period is a segment of time, that pink is a colour, that shiny is an appearance.

Wordy: During that time period, many car buyers preferred cars that were pink in colour and shiny in

appearance. (18 words)
Concise: During that period, many car buyers preferred pink, shiny cars. (10 words)

Wordy: The microscope revealed a group of organisms that were round in shape and peculiar in nature. (16 words)
Concise: The microscope revealed a group of peculiar, round organisms. (9 words)

Changing Phrases

Using phrases to convey meaning that could be presented in a single word contributes to wordiness. Convert phrases into single words when possible.

Wordy: The employee with ambition... (4 words)
Concise: The ambitious employee... (3 words)

Wordy: The department showing the best performance... (6 words)
Concise: The best-performing department... (4 words)

Wordy: We read the letter we received yesterday and reviewed it thoroughly.
Concise: We thoroughly read the letter we received yesterday.

Wordy: As you carefully read what you have written to improve your wording and catch small errors of spelling, punctuation, and so on, the thing to do before you do anything else is to try to see where a series of words expressing action could replace the ideas found in nouns rather than verbs. (53 words)
Concise: As you edit, first find nominalizations that you can replace with verb phrases. (13 words)

Change unnecessary *that*, *who*, *which* clauses into phrases

Using a clause to convey meaning that could be presented in a phrase or even a word contributes to wordiness. Convert modifying clauses into phrases or single words when possible.

Wordy: The report, which was released recently... (6

words)
Concise: The recently released report... (4 words)

Wordy: All applicants who are interested in the job must... (9 words)
Concise: All job applicants must... (4 words)

Wordy: The system that is most efficient and accurate... (8 words)
Concise: The most efficient and accurate system... (6 words)'

Change Passive Verbs into Active Verbs

See our document on active and passive voice for a more thorough explanation of this topic.

Wordy: An account was opened by Mrs. Simms. (7 words)
Concise: Mrs. Simms opened an account. (5 words)

Wordy: Your figures were checked by the research department. (8 words)
Concise: The research department checked your figures. (6 words)

Avoid Common Pitfalls

Avoid overusing expletives at the beginning of sentences/ Expletives are phrases of the form it + be-verb or there + be-verb. Such expressions can be rhetorically effective for emphasis in some situations, but overuse or unnecessary use of expletive constructions creates wordy prose. Take the following example: "It is imperative that we find a solution." The same meaning could be expressed with this more succinct wording: "We must find a solution." But using the expletive construction allows the writer to emphasize the urgency of the situation by placing the word imperative near the beginning of the sentence, so the version with the expletive may be preferable.

Still, you should generally avoid excessive or unnecessary use of expletives. The most common kind of unnecessary expletive construction involves an expletive followed by a noun and a relative clause beginning with that, which, or

who. In most cases, concise sentences can be created by eliminating the expletive opening, making the noun the subject of the sentence, and eliminating the relative pronoun.

Wordy: It is the governor who signs or vetoes bills. (9 words)
Concise: The governor signs or vetoes bills. (6 words)

Wordy: There are four rules that should be observed: ... (8 words)
Concise: Four rules should be observed:... (5 words)

Wordy: There was a big explosion, which shook the windows, and people ran into the street. (15 words)
Concise: A big explosion shook the windows, and people ran into the street. (12 words)

Avoid overusing noun forms of verbs

Use verbs when possible rather than noun forms known as nominalizations. Sentences with many nominalizations usually have forms of be as the main verbs. Using the action verbs disguised in nominalizations as the main verbs–instead of forms of be–can help to create engaging rather than dull prose.

Wordy: The function of this department is the collection of accounts. (10 words)
Concise: This department collects accounts. (4 words)

Wordy: The current focus of the medical profession is disease prevention. (10 words)
Concise: The medical profession currently focuses on disease prevention. (8 words)

Avoid unnecessary infinitive phrases

Some infinitive phrases can be converted into finite verbs or brief noun phrases. Making such changes also often results in the replacement of a be-verb with an action verb.

Wordy: The duty of a clerk is to check all incoming mail and to record it. (15 words)
Concise: A clerk checks and records all incoming mail. (8 words)

Wordy: A shortage of tellers at our branch office on Friday and Saturday during rush hours has caused customers to become dissatisfied with service. (23 words)
Concise: A teller shortage at our branch office on Friday and Saturday during rush hours has caused customer dissatisfaction. (18 words)

Avoid circumlocutions in favour of direct expressions

Circumlocutions are commonly used roundabout expressions that take several words to say what could be said more succinctly. We often overlook them because many such expressions are habitual figures of speech. In writing, though, they should be avoided since they add extra words without extra meaning. Of course, occasionally you may for rhetorical effect decide to use, say, an expletive construction instead of a more succinct expression. These guidelines should be taken as general recommendations, not absolute rules.

Wordy: At this/that point in time... (2/4 words)
Concise: Now/then... (1 word)

Wordy: In accordance with your request... (5 words)
Concise: As you requested... (3 words)

Wordy: It is possible that nothing will come of these preparations. (10 words)
Concise: Nothing may come of these preparations. (6 words)

Wordy: She has the ability to influence the outcome. (8 words)
Concise: She can influence the outcome. (5 words)

Wordy: It is necessary that we take a stand on this pressing issue. (12 words)
Concise: We must take a stand on this pressing issue. (9 words)

Improving Sentence Clarity

There are many strategies for improving the clarity of your sentences and your papers.

Go from old to new information

Introduce your readers to the "big picture" first by giving them information they already know. Then they can link what's familiar to the new information you give them. As that new information becomes familiar, it too becomes old information that can link to newer information. The following example sentence is clear and understandable because it uses old information to lead to new information:

> Every semester after final exams are over, I'm faced with the problem of what to do with books of lecture notes (new information). They (old) might be useful some day, but they just keep piling up on my bookcase (new). Someday, it (old) will collapse under the weight of information I might never need.

Here is a sentence that is not as clear. It moves from new information to old information:

> Lately, most movies I've seen have been merely second-rate entertainment, but occasionally there are some with worthwhile themes. The rapid disappearance of the Indian culture (new) is the topic of a recent movie (old) I saw.

Did you find the second sentence hard to read or understand? If so, it could be because the old information comes late in the sentence after the new information. A clearer version that moves from old information to new information might look like this:

> Lately, most movies I've seen have been merely second-rate entertainment, but occasionally there are some with worthwhile themes. One recent movie (old) I saw was about the rapid disappearance of the Indian culture. (new)

Transitional words

There are many words in English that cue our readers to

relationships between sentences, joining sentences together..

> I like autumn, and yet autumn is a sad time of the year, too. The leaves turn bright shades of red and the weather is mild, but I can't help thinking ahead to the winter and the ice storms that will surely blow through here. In addition, that will be the season of chapped faces, too many layers of clothes to put on, and days when I'll have to shovel heaps of snow from my car's windshield.

Be careful about placement of subordinate clauses

Avoid interrupting the main clause with a subordinate clause if the interruption will cause confusion:

> *Clear* (subordinate clause at the end): Industrial spying is increasing rapidly because of the growing use of computers to store and process corporate information.
> *Clear* (subordinate clause at the beginning): Because of the growing use of computers to store and process corporate information, industrial spying is increasing rapidly.
> *Not as clear* (subordinate clause embedded in the middle): Industrial spying, because of the growing use of computers to store and process corporate information, is increasing rapidly.

Use active voice

Sentences in active voice are usually easier to understand than those in passive voice because active-voice constructions indicate clearly the performer of the action expressed in the verb. Changing from passive voice to active often results in a more concise sentence. So, use active voice unless you have good reason to use the passive. For example, the passive is useful when you don't want to call attention to the doer; when the doer is obvious, unimportant, or unknown; or when passive voice is the conventional style among your readers.

> *Clear* (active): The committee decided to postpone the vote.
> *Not as clear* (passive): A decision was reached to

postpone the vote.

Use parallel constructions

When you have a series of words, phrases, or clauses, put them in parallel form (similar grammatical construction) so that the reader can identify the linking relationship more easily and clearly.

> *Clear* (parallel): In Florida, where the threat of hurricanes is an annual event, we learned that it is important (1) to become aware of the warning signs, (2) to know what precautions to take, and (3) to decide when to seek shelter.
> *Not as clear* (not parallel): In Florida, where the threat of hurricanes is an annual event, we learned that it is important (1) to become aware of the warning signs. (2) There are precautions to take, and (3) deciding when to take shelter is important.

In the second sentence, notice how the string of "things to be aware of in Florida" does not create a parallel structure. Also, notice how much more difficult it is for a reader to follow the meaning of the second sentence compared to the first one.

Avoid noun strings

Try not to string nouns together one after the other because a series of nouns is difficult to understand. One way to revise a string of nouns is to change one noun to a verb.

> *Unclear* (string of nouns): This report explains our investment growth stimulation projects.
> *clearer*: This report explains our projects to stimulate growth in investments.

Avoid overusing noun forms of verbs

Use verbs when possible rather than noun forms known as "nominalizations."

> *Unclear* (use of nominalization): The implementation of the plan was successful.
> *Clearer*: The plan was implemented successfully.

Avoid multiple negatives

Use affirmative forms rather than several negatives because multiple negatives are difficult to understand.

> *Unclear* (multiple negatives, passive): Less attention is paid to commercials that lack human-interest stories than to other kinds of commercials.
>
> *Clearer*: People pay more attention to commercials with human interest stories than to other kinds of commercials.

Choose action verbs over forms of *be*

When possible, avoid using forms of *be* as the main verbs in your sentences and clauses. This problem tends to accompany nominalization (see above). Instead of using a *be* verb, focus on the actions you wish to express, and choose the appropriate verbs. In the following example, two ideas are expressed: 1) that there is a difference between television and newspaper news reporting, and 2) the nature of that difference. The revised version expresses these two main ideas in the two main verbs.

> *Unclear* (overuse of be verbs): One difference between television news reporting and the coverage provided by newspapers is the time factor between the actual happening of an event and the time it takes to be reported. The problem is that instantaneous coverage is physically impossible for newspapers.
>
> *Clearer*: Television news reporting differs from that of newspapers in that television, unlike newspapers, can provide instantaneous coverage of events as they happen.

Avoid unclear pronoun references

Be sure that the pronouns you use refer clearly to a noun in the current or previous sentence. If the pronoun refers to a noun that has been implied but not stated, you can clarify the reference by explicitly using that noun. *This, that, these, those, he, she, it, they,* and *we* are useful pronouns for referring back to something previously mentioned. Be sure, however, that what you are referring to is clear.

> *Unclear* (unclear pronoun reference): With the spread of

globalized capitalism, American universities increasingly follow a corporate fiscal model, tightening budgets and hiring temporary contract employees as teachers. This has prompted faculty and adjunct instructors at many schools to join unions as a way of protecting job security and benefits.
Clearer: With the spread of globalized capitalism, American universities increasingly follow a corporate fiscal model, tightening budgets and hiring temporary contract employees as teachers. This trend has prompted faculty and adjunct instructors at many schools to join unions as a way of protecting job security and benefits.

Unclear (unclear pronoun reference): Larissa worked in a national forest last summer, which may be her career choice.
Clearer: Larissa worked in a national forest last summer; forest management may be her career choice.

Sentence Fragments

Fragments are incomplete sentences. Usually, fragments are pieces of sentences that have become disconnected from the main clause. One of the easiest ways to correct them is to remove the period between the fragment and the main clause. Other kinds of punctuation may be needed for the newly combined sentence.

Fragment: Purdue offers many majors in engineering. Such as electrical, chemical, and industrial engineering.
Possible Revision: Purdue offers many majors in engineering, such as electrical, chemical, and industrial engineering.

Fragment: Coach Dietz exemplified this behaviour by walking off the field in the middle of a game. Leaving her team at a time when we needed her.
Possible Revision: Coach Dietz exemplified this behaviour by walking off the field in the middle of a game, leaving

her team at a time when we needed her.

Fragment: I need to find a new roommate. Because the one I have now isn't working out too well.
Possible Revision: I need to find a new roommate because the one I have now isn't working out too well.

Fragment: The current city policy on housing is incomplete as it stands. Which is why we believe the proposed amendments should be passed.
Possible Revision: Because the current city policy on housing is incomplete as it stands, we believe the proposed amendments should be passed.

You may have noticed that newspaper and magazine journalists often use a dependent clause as a separate sentence when it follows clearly from the preceding main clause, as in the last example above. This is a conventional journalistic practice, often used for emphasis. For academic writing and other more formal writing situations, however, you should avoid such journalistic fragment sentences.

Some fragments are not clearly pieces of sentences that have been left unattached to the main clause; they are written as main clauses but lack a subject or main verb.

No main verb

Fragment: A story with deep thoughts and emotions.
Possible Revisions:
Direct object: She told a story with deep thoughts and emotions.
Appositive: Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," a story with deep thoughts and emotions, has impressed critics for decades.

Fragment: Toys of all kinds thrown everywhere.
Possible Revisions:
Complete verb: Toys of all kinds were thrown everywhere.
Direct object: They found toys of all kinds thrown everywhere.

Fragment: A record of accomplishment beginning when you were first hired.
Possible Revisions:
Direct object: I've noticed a record of accomplishment

beginning when you were first hired
Main verb: A record of accomplishment began when you were first hired.

No Subject

Fragment: With the ultimate effect of all advertising is to sell the product.
Possible Revisions:
Remove preposition: The ultimate effect of all advertising is to sell the product.

Fragment: By paying too much attention to polls can make a political leader unwilling to propose innovative policies.
Possible Revisions:
Remove preposition: Paying too much attention to polls can make a political leader unwilling to propose innovative policies.

Fragment: For doing freelance work for a competitor got Phil fired.
Possible Revisions:
Remove preposition: Doing freelance work for a competitor got Phil fired.
Rearrange: Phil got fired for doing freelance work for a competitor.

These last three examples of fragments with no subjects are also known as mixed constructions, that is, sentences constructed out of mixed parts. They start one way (often with a long prepositional phrase) but end with a regular predicate. Usually the object of the preposition (often a gerund, as in the last two examples) is intended as the subject of the sentence, so removing the preposition at the beginning is usually the easiest way to edit such errors.

Identifying Independent and Dependent Clauses

When you want to use commas and semicolons in

sentences and when you are concerned about whether a sentence is or is not a fragment, a good way to start is to be able to recognize dependent and independent clauses. The definitions offered here will help you with this.

An independent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought. An independent clause is a sentence.

Jim studied in the Sweet Shop for his chemistry quiz.

A dependent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought. A dependent clause cannot be a sentence. Often a dependent clause is marked by a dependent marker word.

When Jim studied in the Sweet Shop for his chemistry quiz . . . (What happened when he studied? The thought is incomplete.)

A dependent marker word is a word added to the beginning of an independent clause that makes it into a dependent clause.

When Jim studied in the Sweet Shop for his chemistry quiz, it was very noisy.

Some common dependent markers are: after, although, as, as if, because, before, even if, even though, if, in order to, since, though, unless, until, whatever, when, whenever, whether, and while.

Some Common Errors to Avoid

Comma Splices

A comma splice is the use of a comma between two independent clauses. You can usually fix the error by changing the comma to a period and therefore making the two clauses into two separate sentences, by changing the comma to a semicolon, or by making one clause dependent by inserting a dependent marker word in front of it.

Incorrect: I like this class, it is very interesting.
Correct: I like this class. It is very interesting.
(or) I like this class; it is very interesting.
(or) I like this class, and it is very interesting.
(or) I like this class because it is very interesting.
(or) Because it is very interesting, I like this class.

Fused Sentences

Fused sentences happen when there are two independent clauses not separated by any form of punctuation. This error is also known as a run-on sentence. The error can sometimes be corrected by adding a period, semicolon, or colon to separate the two sentences.

> *Incorrect*: My professor is intelligent I've learned a lot from her.
> *Correct*: My professor is intelligent. I've learned a lot from her.
> (or) My professor is intelligent; I've learned a lot from her.
> (or) My professor is intelligent, and I've learned a lot from her.
> (or) My professor is intelligent; moreover, I've learned a lot from her.

Sentence Fragments

Sentence fragments happen by treating a dependent clause or other incomplete thought as a complete sentence. You can usually fix this error by combining it with another sentence to make a complete thought or by removing the dependent marker.

> *Incorrect*: Because I forgot the exam was today.
> *Correct*: Because I forgot the exam was today, I didn't study.
> (or) I forgot the exam was today.

Dangling Modifiers and How to Correct Them

A dangling modifier is a word or phrase that modifies a word not clearly stated in the sentence. A modifier describes, clarifies, or gives more detail about a concept.

> Having finished the assignment, Jill turned on the TV.

"Having finished" states an action but does not name the doer of that action. In English sentences, the doer must be

the subject of the main clause that follows. In this sentence, it is Jill. She seems logically to be the one doing the action ("having finished"), and this sentence therefore does not have a dangling modifier.

The following sentence has an incorrect usage:

> Having finished the assignment, the TV was turned on.

"Having finished" is a participle expressing action, but the doer is not the TV set (the subject of the main clause): TV sets don't finish assignments. Since the doer of the action expressed in the participle has not been clearly stated, the participial phrase is said to be a dangling modifier.

Strategies for revising dangling modifiers:

Name the appropriate or logical doer of the action as the subject of the main clause:

> Having arrived late for practice, a written excuse was needed.

Who arrived late? This sentence says that the written excuse arrived late. To revise, decide who actually arrived late. The possible revision might look like this:

> Having arrived late for practice, the team captain needed a written excuse.

The main clause now names the person (the captain) who did the action in the modifying phrase (arrived late).

Change the phrase that dangles into a complete introductory clause by naming the doer of the action in that clause:

> Without knowing his name, it was difficult to introduce him.

Who didn't know his name? This sentence says that "it" didn't know his name. To revise, decide who was trying to introduce him. The revision might look something like this:

> Because Maria did not know his name, it was difficult to introduce him.

The phrase is now a complete introductory clause; it does not modify any other part of the sentence, so is not considered "dangling."

Combine the phrase and main clause into one:

To improve his results, the experiment was done again.

Who wanted to improve results? This sentence says that the experiment was trying to improve its own results. To revise, combine the phrase and the main clause into one sentence. The revision might look something like this:

He improved his results by doing the experiment again.

More examples of dangling modifiers and their revisions:

Incorrect: After reading the original study, the article remains unconvincing.
Revised: After reading the original study, I find the article unconvincing.

Incorrect: Relieved of your responsibilities at your job, your home should be a place to relax.
Revised: Relieved of your responsibilities at your job, you should be able to relax at home.

Incorrect: The experiment was a failure, not having studied the lab manual carefully.
Revised: They failed the experiment, not having studied the lab manual carefully.

Parallel Structure

Parallel structure means using the same pattern of words to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance. This can happen at the word, phrase, or clause level. The usual way to join parallel structures is with the use of coordinating conjunctions such as "and" or "or."

Words and Phrases

With the -ing form (gerund) of words:

Parallel: Mary likes hiking, swimming, and bicycling.

With infinitive phrases:

Parallel: Mary likes to hike, to swim, and to ride a bicycle.
OR
Mary likes to hike, swim, and ride a bicycle.

(Note: You can use "to" before all the verbs in a sentence or only before the first one.)

Do not mix forms.

Not Parallel: Mary likes hiking, swimming, and to ride a bicycle.
Parallel: Mary likes hiking, swimming, and riding a bicycle.
Not Parallel: The production manager was asked to write his report quickly, accurately, and in a detailed manner.
Parallel: The production manager was asked to write his report quickly, accurately, and thoroughly.

Not Parallel: The teacher said that he was a poor student because he waited until the last minute to study for the exam, completed his lab problems in a careless manner, and his motivation was low.
Parallel: The teacher said that he was a poor student because he waited until the last minute to study for the exam, completed his lab problems in a careless manner, and lacked motivation.

Clauses

A parallel structure that begins with clauses must keep on with clauses. Changing to another pattern or changing the voice of the verb (from active to passive or vice versa) will break the parallelism.

Not Parallel: The coach told the players that they should get a lot of sleep, that they should not eat too much, and to do some warm-up exercises before the game.
Parallel: The coach told the players that they should get a lot of sleep, that they should not eat too much, and that they should do some warm-up exercises before the game.

— or —
Parallel: The coach told the players that they should get a lot of sleep, not eat too much, and do some warm-up exercises before the game.

Not Parallel: The salesman expected that he would present his product at the meeting, that there would be time for him to show his slide presentation, and that questions would be asked by prospective buyers. (passive)

Parallel: The salesman expected that he would present his product at the meeting, that there would be time for him to show his slide presentation, and that prospective buyers would ask him questions.

Lists after a Colon

Be sure to keep all the elements in a list in the same form.

Not Parallel: The dictionary can be used for these purposes: to find word meanings, pronunciations, correct spellings, and looking up irregular verbs.

Parallel: The dictionary can be used for these purposes: to find word meanings, pronunciations, correct spellings, and irregular verbs.

Proofreading Strategies to Try

Skim your paper, pausing at the words "and" and "or." Check on each side of these words to see whether the items joined are parallel. If not, make them parallel.

If you have several items in a list, put them in a column to see if they are parallel. Listen to the sound of the items in a list or the items being compared. Do you hear the same kinds of sounds? For example, is there a series of "-ing" words beginning each item? Or do your hear a rhythm being repeated? If something is breaking that rhythm or repetition of sound, check to see if it needs to be made parallel.

Appendix IV

How to format your thesis in Microsoft Word

The purpose of this document is to give you some pointers on how to use Microsoft Word for your thesis.

A. Create an automatic backup file of your thesis.

1. Click on the Office button.
2. Select Word Options and then Advanced
3. Scroll down to the Save section and check Always Create Backup Copy

B. Autorecovery Files.

Word automatically creates autorecovery files but it is necessary to change where they are saved.

4. Click on the Office button and select Word Options
5. Select Save
6. Next to AutoRecover file location click on Browse. The default file is saved under your profile, but once you log out you will lose the autorecover file. It is better to save it to another drive such as your H: drive.

C. Turn off the automatic bullets, numbering, etc.

7. Do the steps in A.1 and A.2
8. Select Proofing and click on AutoCorrect Options
9. Under the Autoformat tab and remove the check boxes under Apply for Built-in Headings styles, Automatic bulleted lists, List styles, and other paragraph styles.
10. Under Autoformat As You Type tab, remove the check mark under Apply as you type for: Automatic bulleted list, Border lines, Built-in Heading Styles, Automatic numbered lists, Tables. Also remove the

check boxes for Format beginning of list item like the one before it and Define styles based on your formatting.

D. Spelling

11. Click on the Office button and select Word Options
12. Select Proofing
    - *Deselect Ignore words in UPPERCASE*
    - *Deselect Ignore words with numbers*
    - *Deselect Ignore Internet and file addresses*

E. Grammar

13. Click on the Office button and select Word Options
14. Select Proofing
    - *Select Mark grammar errors as you type*
    - *Select Check grammar with spelling*
    - *Select Writing Style: Grammar & Style*
15. There are also three Settings that must be set to Require to check for correct formatting:
    - *Comma required before last list item*
    - *Punctuation required with quotes*
    - *Spaces required between sentences: one space.*

F. Modifying a Style

Word comes with many styles that have already been created and formatted. To properly format your thesis, it is necessary to format some of the styles that already exist or to create new ones.

16. Make sure the Home tab is selected and the styles section is displayed.
17. Click in the lower right hand corner to see the style list.
18. You will see the following screen with a list of styles that already exist. Click on the drop down arrow and click Modify. After selecting Modify, you will see a screen that describes the style, such as the name, style that it is based on, and the style that follows it

once you hit the enter key. You will also see a preview of the style and a description of the existing formatting of the style.

19. Click on Format to modify the style.

G. Creating a New Style

You will also be able to create a new style by clicking on the following button: You will be prompted for a name for the style. You are able to base it on any style that is already created. Click on format to format the style however you wish.

A word of caution: be careful about selecting automatically update. Any changes that you make in the text to the style at any time will automatically be made to that style throughout your thesis. This is dangerous because you might not want to change the style everywhere but only in one place. I would recommend not selecting it.

H. Creating Section Breaks for Page Numbering

20. The thesis will have to be in one file when converted to PDF format for printing. It is necessary to have section breaks between the cover page and all the other personal information and then the body of the thesis. The page numbering is different for these sections:
    - *There is no page number on the cover page.*
    - *The page numbers for other information is in Roman numerals and the body of the thesis is in Arabic numerals.*
    - *The first section break needs to occur after the cover page and the second section break after the Acknowledgements, or if you do not want Acknowledgements, it is after the last page before the body of the thesis begins.*
    - *Keep in mind that all text begins on an odd numbered page*
21. Go to the Page Layout tab and select Break
22. Under Section Break Types select Next Page for the

first section break and Continuous for the second section break.

I. Inserting Page Numbers

23. To insert the page numbers in any section you must be in the correct section. You will need to add the section information at the bottom of the screen. It is no longer the default.
24. Right click on the page number at the bottom of the screen.You will see the following screen. Select Section to turn it on as well as page number to see how many pages there are. It will appear at the bottom of the screen.
25. Go to the Insert menu, and click on Page Numbers. The position will be Bottom of page. Select Plain Number 2.
26. To format the numbers correctly, you will need to select Insert, then Page Number then Format Page Numbers.
27. Next to Number Format, Click on the down arrow to select the type of number. Under Page numbering, Select Start At and type in the following:
    - *For Arabic numerals: type in 1*
    - *For Roman numerals: type in i*

J. Footnotes

Many times, there are problems inserting footnotes and then getting the entire footnote to show on the same page..

28. Go to References and select Insert Footnote. Click in the lower right hand corner to see the footnote formatting list.
29. Make sure Continuous is selected under Format, Numbering. This way you will be able to insert a footnote at a later time and it will renumber all the following footnotes. Number format is 1, 2, 3, etc. Make sure Start at is 1.

K. Getting the Entire Footnote on One Page

30. A combination of settings will fix this problem. Set

the Line Spacing of the Footnote Text Style to Exactly

31. Click in the lower right hand corner to see the styles list. In the Styles list, select Footnote Text and then Modify
32. In the Modify Style dialog box, click on Format and then click on Paragraph.
33. In the Line Spacing list, click Exactly In the At box, type a point size slightly larger than the font size of the footnote text, then click OK. For example, if the font size of the footnote text is 10 points, set the line space to exactly 10.5 points. If you set the line spacing to a size smaller than the point size of the type, the top or bottom of the text may not be visible.

L. Importing Figures/Tables/Images

There are many ways to import figures, table, images, etc. Some take up a lot of space on your hard disk, can be megabytes in size and will slow down your thesis, if not crash your computer. Once your computer can no longer load the objects, they will disappear and a small square box will appear in place of the object. This is especially true of Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint slides. The following way is the most expedient and takes up the least amount of room.

34. Copy the material
35. In Word, go to Home, Paste Special. Select from the following formats listed below (each picture/object is different and might look different depending on how it is imported. It is best to try all three to see which one has the best resolution):
    - *Picture (Windows Metafile)*
    - *Picture (Enhanced Metafile)*
    - *Picture (PNG)*
36. You will see a description for each selection when you click on a selection. Once you have imported the material, follow the instructions in 23 below.
37. One of the problems with Word is that the figures/tables/images that are imported are, as a default, set to float over text which means that the

picture will NOT be locked into place once imported. Any text that is added will cause the figures/tables/images to be moved and float over the text, to show up on the next page or to disappear partly if not completely. Here is how to fix this problem and anchor them into place:

- *Insert the picture or object into the thesis document*
- *Select the picture or object by left clicking on it once*
- *Right click and select Text Wrapping and then In Line With Text*

38. It is also possible to resize the picture to make it fit on a page. Follow the same procedures are above, but select the size tab and change the scale height percentage of the picture accordingly.

M. Automatic Numbering of Figure and Table Captions and Updating them

39. To set up the automatic numbering of figure and/or table captions do the following:
    - *Click the home tab, and then click in the lower right hand corner to see Styles list.*
    - *Select Figure Caption or Table Caption from the list of Styles*
    - *Click the Modify button.*
    - *In the Modify Style window click on the Format button and select Numbering.*
    - *In the Numbering window, if a style with Figure or Table caption is not defined, select Define New Number Format. The style will then be created. If it is already there, click on the style, either Figure or Table and select Define New Number Format.*
    - *Look at the Number Format box, and type 'Figure' or 'Table' before the number and a '_'after the number. The _ signifies a space. Click OK.*
    - *In the Modify Style window, check the box for Automatically Update. Click OK.*

40. To automatically update the cross references to the figure and table captions, do the following:
    - *Go to References, Cross Reference*

- *Under Reference Type: Select Numbered Item*
- *Under Insert Reference to: Select Paragraph Number*
- *Select the figure or table to cross-reference and click on Insert.*
- *To update all cross references if you decide to add a figure or table later, select the entire document, right-click, and then click Update Field.*

N. Automatically create a Table of Contents

41. In your document, click within the first major heading that you want to appear in the Table of Contents. Apply the Heading 1 style to that paragraph. In the same way, apply the Heading 2 style to sub-headings, Heading 3 style to sub-sub-headings etc. If you don't like the way the heading styles look (eg, you want a different font or font size or colour), don't format the text directly. Instead, modify the heading styles.
42. Choose References > Table of Contents. There are two built-in 'automatic' tables of contents: Automatic Table 1 and Automatic Table 2. If you click the thumbnail for either of these, your table of contents will be inserted into a content control, and Word will add a heading.
43. At the bottom of the menu, you can choose Insert table of contents. To modify the Table of Contents itself, you need to display the Table of Contents dialog.
44. To display the dialog for an existing table of contents in Word 2007 and Word 2010: click within the ToC and then click References > Table of Contents > Insert Table of Contents. By default, Word shows three levels in your Table of Contents. That is, it puts the text from Heading 1, Heading 2 and Heading 3 in the Table of Contents. If you want to show more or fewer or different levels, in the Table of Contents dialog, change the number in the Show levels box. If you need to use other styles, you can put them in

your Table of Contents. In the Table of Contents dialog, click Options, and allocate your style(s) to the appropriate level(s).

45. Tables of Contents don't update automatically when you add a new heading to your document. This is because a ToC is a field. To update a Table of Contents, put your cursor in the Table of Contents and press F9 to update it. When you update your Table of Contents, always choose to update the Entire Table.

O. Formatting your Bibliography

46. To obtain the hanging indent required for the Bibliography. First, type in your citations without worrying about indents. Then, highlight what you want indented.

47. Select Format and then Paragraph. In the dialog box, go to the selection box marked "Special" underneath the label "Indentation" and click on the arrow. Choose "hanging" as your option, and click OK

48. To sort your list alphabetically, select the entire bibliography text. On the Home tab, in the Paragraph group, click Sort.

49. In the Sort Text dialog box, under Sort by, click Paragraphs and Text, and then click Ascending.

A Final Checklist

Use this checklist when you submit any written work to your supervisor and for copy-editing and proofing your dissertation

- ☐ Have you run two sentences together incorrectly without a period, conjunction, or semicolon separating them?
- ☐ Have you ended every sentence with a period, question mark, or exclamation point?
- ☐ Are your thoughts within sentences broken up correctly by commas for easier understanding?
- ☐ Have you broken up series with commas?
- ☐ Have you used a period after abbreviations?
- ☐ If you are in doubt about the proper punctuation of a sentence, have you asked or looked at our handouts on punctuation at
- ☐ Did you remember to place exact quotes within quotation marks?
- ☐ Did you place all periods and commas inside the quotation marks while placing semicolons and colons outside them?
- ☐ Have you used them correctly to indicate possession? If you are unsure, check a grammar book.
- ☐ Have you capitalised names of persons, cities, countries, streets, and titles?
- ☐ Have you capitalised a quotation according to

the original and according to the needs of your sentence?

- ☐ If you are unsure of the spelling of a certain word, look it up.
- ☐ Be especially careful of the words listed as spelling nightmares: "ei" and "ie" words, words which add "-ing" and "ed," and words with one or more sets of double letters.
- ☐ Check each sentence to make sure it has a subject, a verb, and a complete thought.
- ☐ Check every subject and verb to make sure that if you have used a singular subject, you have also used a singular verb. Similarly, a plural subject needs a plural verb.
- ☐ Have you varied the length of sentences in each paragraph? If your sentences are too long, break them into shorter units, but remember that very short sentences tend to produce a jerky style of writing.
- ☐ Does each sentence follow clearly and logically from the one before it? Have you used some type of transitional device between each sentence?
- ☐ Have you incorrectly jumped about in different tenses?
- ☐ Have you used the correct form of the verb to express the tense you want?
- ☐ Does each paragraph have a topic sentence that states the main idea?
- ☐ Are transitions used between sentences and paragraphs?

- ☐ Is there a concluding sentence for each paragraph?
- ☐ Have you used examples and vivid specific details to describe your topic?
- ☐ Have you used explanatory sentences to give your opinion or judgment on the topic?
- ☐ Have you included sentences that pertain only to that idea?
- ☐ Have you left out any words?