Agenda

Topic one: Introduction Choice of Research Topic
Topic two: Research Question, Hypothesis
Topic three: Format of the thesis
Topic four: Language for Reporting Findings
Topic five: Hedging
Introduction: Choice of Research Topic

Brainstorming

❖ Major interests within discipline
❖ Personal experiences related to discipline that are meaningful
❖ Coursework that was interesting/exciting
❖ Theories and concepts that are most interesting about which you want to explore further
❖ Major issues/problems faced by industry today
❖ Interesting books/articles related to discipline
Next Step

Key Word Search

- Break down topic into main ideas
- Use these as key words and search using academic search engines
The Research Question

The question around which research is focused.

Characteristics of a good research question:

❖ clear
❖ concise
❖ focused
❖ complex
❖ arguable
Hypothesis

"a tentative explanation for an observation, phenomenon, or scientific problem that can be tested by further investigation.” Six types of hypothesis:

❖ Simple
❖ Complex
❖ Empirical
❖ Null / Alternative
❖ Logical
❖ Statistical
Format of thesis

- Abstract
- Introduction / Background / Methodology
- Literature Review
- Study / Experiment / Data
- Conclusion / Findings
- References
Reporting Findings: Clarifying who did what using verbs

How to differentiate between one’s own work and others’ work?

❖ Tenses
❖ Voice
❖ Paragraphing
Use of verb tenses

- Use of simple past ("was found") – researcher’s own work
- Use of present perfect ("It has been shown" – others’ work
- Use of present tense ("it is known") – common knowledge in the domain
Use of voice

- Passive voice – To describe what others have done/established knowledge in domain
- Active voice – To talk about one’s own work if permitted by journal/regulations
- Avoid use of someone, one, people
Use of paragraphing

- Others’ work in a one paragraph
- One’s own work in a fresh paragraph
Hedging

- Expressing uncertainty
- Avoiding sweeping generalisations
  1. Qualifying claims using words seem, tend, look like, appear to be, think, believe, doubt, be sure, indicate, suggest
Research writing is “to use language as efficiently as possible and to remember always that there is a reader out there.”

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Thank you

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