



Guide to Writing your Bachelor Thesis in English

Please refer to “Hinweise zum Verfassen einer schriftlichen Arbeit. Vollständig überarbeitete Fassung Juni 2012” (Seyfried, Weinberger) for general guidelines regarding seminar papers and bachelor theses.

This document only provides subject-specific information which is primarily geared towards helping you with English terminology and wording.

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1. Example of Title Page



THE PRIVATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION OF THE DIOCESE OF LINZ

BACHELOR THESIS
submitted as part requirement for the degree of
Bachelor of Education for New Secondary Schools

Pronunciation in the EFL Classroom:
An Analysis of Potential Problems and Suggestions for Solutions.

presented by

Mr. Benjamin Example

Tutors

Oswald Example, MA, Human Sciences
Henrietta Example, PhD, English

Matriculation number
XXX

Number of words
XXX

Linz, 24th December 2014

2. Structure of the Thesis

Abstract (heading for both the English and German versions!):

- short summary of the thesis
- main concern/ interest
- research question(s)
- hypotheses
- purpose/ aim/ main goal
- research method
- results
- conclusions
- pedagogical relevance

Preface

- guiding cognitive interest
- main purpose and goal of the thesis
- personal information
- acknowledgments

Introduction

- introduction to the topic
- relevance/ topicality of the research question
- research question: note that all parts of the thesis should actually focus on your research question(s) and serve the purpose of answering it/them
- main purpose and goals
- overview of the thesis (short summary of the chapters)

1. Literature Review

- definition of all relevant terms (cf. title, research question(s))
- theoretical framework
- different approaches to the issue
- comprehensive overview of the theory
- relevance to and comment on personal experience(s)
- reference to empirical research on the topic
- hypotheses: should be logically deduced from the theory; summarize findings and suggest new aspect(s) requiring further research/consideration
- alternative to hypotheses: specific research questions (qualitative research)

2. Method of Data Collection and Analysis

Note: the bullet points outlined below regard your thesis and are not meant to talk about research methods in general!!!

- sample/ participants in the study: detailed data (e.g. gender, number); don't give names; justification of the choice of subjects
- detailed description of the research procedure: How are the hypotheses being tested/ the research questions explored?; description of research paradigm (qualitative, quantitative, action research); independent variable (e.g. teaching method), dependent variable (what is being measured, e.g. motivation); time schedule of intervention(s) and surveys; justification of choice of method
- description of method of collecting data and instruments used (e.g. questionnaire): reference to theory if approached deductively; description, operationalization (how

can the constructs be measured), - e.g. how have the items in a questionnaire been developed?

- evaluation method: e.g. qualitative content analysis (show scheme of categories); statistical evaluation method
- realisation (describe in detail to ensure objectivity)
- results: (reliability, descriptive findings, evidence to test hypotheses)
- interpretation of the results

3. Results and Discussion

- central part: evaluation of the data
- short introduction (What was the main goal? Research question, method(s))
- the most important results and answers to the main research question
- comment on results with reference to the literature used in the theoretical part
- generalizations (and justification)
- self-criticism (suggestions of what could be improved)
- practical/ pedagogical implications (limits of the practical application, problems, risks, preconditions)
- (theoretical implications (new hypotheses))
- (suggestions for future research)

Conclusion

short (1-3 pages)

(German version: © Dr. Alfred Weinberger, Institut für Forschung und Entwicklung)

3. Guide to Good Writing

1. Employ tentative rather than assertive language.
 - use *possibly* and *probably* in front of verbs and noun phrases; e.g. 'This is possibly caused by...' or 'This is probably the most important factor.'
 - use the modal verbs *may* and *might*; e.g. 'This *may* be the most important factor.'
 - use *appears to* and *seems to*; e.g. 'This *appears to* be the most important factor.'
 - avoid *always* and *every*, and replace them with *often* and *many/much*
2. Use formal vocabulary, e.g. *discuss* rather than *talk about*. One way to do this is by replacing phrasal verbs with more formal ones.
3. Use '*It*' as a subject; e.g. '*It* is very difficult to...'
4. Avoid discourse '*this*':

The author explains the past tense in detail. *This (kind of) explanation* helps the students.

5. Use '*One*' as a subject; e.g. '*One* may ask whether...' ('*One*' is a formal version of '*You*' [plural] in general)
6. Use the passive voice; e.g. 'Many things *can be done* in order to...'
7. Use of personal pronouns:
 - Choose the simplest gender-aware option:
If *students* want to be sure, ~~he/she~~ *they* should ask the teacher to check ~~his/her~~ *their* homework daily.
8. Avoid short, disconnected sentences.
9. Avoid the use of rhetorical questions such as *Did you know that spoken and written language are very different?*.
10. Avoid the use of contractions such as *won't*, *didn't*, *we'll*.

11. To the extent possible, use parallel structures:
~~I will look at effectiveness, clarity, and how teachers and students benefit from these books.~~
I will look at effectiveness, clarity, and *teacher-students benefits* from these books.

12. When using an acronym for the first time, give the full name first with the acronym in parentheses; thereafter it is all right to use the acronym alone.
Teachers wanting training in *English as a Second Language (ESL)* can do a master's degree.

13. Use correct punctuation and capitalization.
Please refer to the notes from your writing classes.

4. References and Quotations

The following passage is taken from Bailey, S. (2006) *Academic Writing - A Handbook for International Students*. London: Routledge. 99-102. Retrieved from https://www1.doshisha.ac.jp/~ji-ii/Bailey.Academic_Writing.pdf (21.3.2014). The pdf-document can be downloaded for free.

4.1. Avoiding plagiarism:

A reference is an acknowledgement that you are making use of another writer's idea or data in your writing:

As Donner (1997) pointed out, low inflation does not always lead to low interest rates.

There are three main reasons for giving references:

- a) To avoid the charge of plagiarism, do not use another person's ideas or research without acknowledgement.
- b) The reference can give more authority to your writing as it shows you are familiar with other research on the topic.
- c) The reader can find the original source by using the reference section, which will list the full publishing details of Donner's book:

Donner, F. (1997). *Macroeconomics*. Borchester: Borchester University Press.

4.2. Verbs of reference

Referring verbs use both the present and the past tenses. It is probably best to use the present tense for recent sources or when you feel that the idea or data is still valid:

Rathbone (1997) demonstrates the limitations of video-conferencing.

The past tense suggests that the source is older and the ideas perhaps out of date:

Steinbeck (1965) explored a link between cancer and diet.

There are three main systems of reference in use in academic writing:

- a) The system illustrated above (the Harvard) is the most common. Note the following:

Hunter (1989) states....

(date of publication in brackets when referring verb is used)

Women pose less security risks (Burke and Pollock, 1993)

(authors and date in brackets after summary)

Note that with quotations page numbers should also be given after the date. Details of the organisation of the reference section are given below.

- b) Numbers in brackets are inserted in the text for each source, and at the end of the chapter or article the references are listed in number order:

A survey of Fortune 500 companies found that over 70% have problems recruiting skilled staff (1). Some analysts argue that this could be as high as 90% (2).

1. Cuervo D. 1990, 'Whither Recruitment?' *HR Journal* **13**, pp. 23-39.
2. Segall, N. 1996, *Cross-cultural studies*, Harper & Row, New York pp. 173-4.

c) A third system uses footnotes:

More than 80% of families own or are buying their own homes.²

In this system the references are listed at the bottom of the page:

²*Economist*, 13 January 1996, pp. 27-8.

NB A full reference section is required at the end of the article or book.

4.3. Note-making

- a) When reading and note-making, keep a careful record of the details of your sources.
- b) Follow one of the methods below to give the reference:

1. Summary of the writer's ideas:

Orwell (1940) pointed out that although Charles Dickens described eating large meals in many of his books, he never wrote about farming. He explains this contradiction in terms of Dickens' upbringing in London, remote from the countryside.

2. Quotation of a writer's words:

Orwell clearly highlighted this inconsistency in Dickens: 'It is not merely a coincidence that Dickens never writes about agriculture and writes endlessly about food. He was a Cockney, and London is the centre of the earth in rather the same sense that the belly is the centre of the body.' (Orwell, 1940: pp. 53-4)

3. Mixture of summary and quotation:

As Orwell (1940) noted, Dickens frequently described food but was uninterested in food production. He considered that this was because of the writer's background: 'he was Cockney, and London is the centre of the earth.' (pp. 53-4)

4.4. Additional Reading

Oshima, A., Hogue, A. (2006). *Writing Academic English*. Fourth Edition. Pearson Longman.

Scarry, S. & Scarry, J. (1999). *The Writer's Workplace with Readings*, Third Edition. Harcourt Brace College Publishers. 71-99; 161-177.

5. Bibliography/ References – The Harvard Style

The object of your writing is for you to say something for yourself using the ideas of the subject, for you to present ideas you have learned in your own way. The emphasis should be on working with other people's ideas, rather than reproducing their words. The ideas and people that you refer to need to be made explicit by a system of referencing. This consists of a list of materials that you have used at the end of the piece of writing and references to this list at various points throughout the essay. The purpose of this is to supply the information needed to allow a user to find a source.

Therefore, at the end of your assignment you need a list of the materials you have used - a bibliography or a reference list.

There are many ways of writing a list of references. The most common system is called the Harvard system. There is no definitive version of the Harvard system and most universities have their own. But the one used here - the American Psychological Association style - is well known and often used (American Psychological Association, 1983, 1994, 1999, 2001, 2010).

5.1. Example

References

- Abercrombie, D. (1968). Paralanguage. *British Journal of Disorders of Communication*, 3, 55-59.
- Barr, P., Clegg, J. & Wallace, C. (1981). *Advanced reading skills*. London: Longman.
- Chomsky, N. (1973). Linguistic theory. In J. W. Oller & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *Focus on the learner* (pp. 29-35). Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.
- Fromkin, V. & Rodman, R. (1983). *An introduction to language*. London: Holt-Saunders.
- Guiora, A. Z., Paluszny, M., Beit-Hallahmi, B., Catford, J. C., Cooley, R. E. & Dull, C. Y. (1975). Language and person: Studies in language behaviour. *Language Learning*, 25, 43-61.
- GVU's 8th WWW user survey. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/usersurveys/survey1997-10/> (18.3.2014)
- Kinsella, V. (Ed.). (1978). *Language teaching and linguistics: Surveys*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lipinsky, E. & Bender, R. (1980). Critical voices on the economy. *Survey*, 25, 38-42.
- Oller, J. W. & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (1973). *Focus on the learner*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.
- Longman dictionary of contemporary English*. (1978). London: Longman.
- Smith, F. (1978). *Reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stern, H. H. & Weinrib, A. (1978). Foreign languages for younger children: Trends and assessment. In V. Kinsella (Ed.), *Language teaching and linguistics: Surveys* (pp. 152-172). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

NOTES

- ✓ Use heading: **References**
- ✓ Page numbers should be included for all articles in journals and in collections.
- ✓ Use *italics* (or underlining in handwriting) for titles of books, periodicals, newspapers etc.
- ✓ Use alphabetical order.
- ✓ Alphabetise works with no author by the first significant word in the title.

- ✓ All co-authors should be listed.
- ✓ Indent second etc. lines
- ✓ Use (n.d.) if no date is given.
- ✓ If the author of a document is not given, begin the reference with the title of the document.

5.2. Books

a. One author:

Smith, F. (1978). *Reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

b. Two authors:

Fromkin, V. & Rodman, R. (1983). *An introduction to language*. London: Holt-Saunders.

c. More than two authors:

Barr, P., Clegg, J. & Wallace, C. (1981). *Advanced reading skills*. London: Longman.

d. Edited collections:

Kinsella, V. (Ed.). (1978). *Language teaching and linguistics: Surveys*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oller, J. W. & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (1973). *Focus on the learner*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.

e. Book, corporate author:

British Council Teaching Information Centre. (1978). *Pre-sessional courses for overseas students*. London: British Council.

f. Book, no author, or editor:

Longman dictionary of contemporary English. (1978). London: Longman.

The Times atlas of the world (5th ed.). (1975). New York: New York Times.

g. Book, third edition:

Fromkin, V. & Rodman, R. (1983). *An introduction to language* (3rd ed.). London: Holt-Saunders.

h. Book, revised edition:

Cohen, J. (1977). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioural sciences* (rev. ed.). New York: Plenum Press.

i. Non-English book:

Piaget, J. & Inhelder, B. (1951). *La genèse de l'idée de hasard chez l'enfant* [The origin of the idea of danger in the child]. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

j. English translation of a book:

Luria, A. R. (1969). *The mind of a mnemonist* (L. Solotaroff, Trans.). New York: Avon Books. (Original work published 1965)

k. Books or articles, two or more by the same author in the same year:

Lyons, J. (1981a). *Language and linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lyons, J. (1981b). *Language, meaning and context*. London: Fontana.

5.3. Periodical articles

a. One author:

Abercrombie, D. (1968). Paralinguage. *British Journal of Disorders of Communication*, 3, 55-59.

b. Two authors:

Lipinsky, E. & Bender, R. (1980). Critical voices on the economy. *Survey*, 25, 38-42.

c. More than two authors:

Guiora, A. Z., Paluszny, M., Beit-Hallahmi, B., Catford, J. C., Cooley, R. E. & Dull, C. Y. (1975). Language and person: Studies in language behaviour. *Language Learning*, 25, 43-61.

d. Review of a book:

Carmody, T. P. (1982). A new look at medicine from a social perspective [Review of the book *Social contexts of health, illness and patient care*]. *Contemporary Psychology*, 27, 208-209.

e. Review of a book, no title:

Maley, A. (1994). [Review of the book *Critical language awareness*]. *Applied Linguistics*, 15, 348-350.

f. Magazine article:

Gardner, H. (1981, December). Do babies sing a universal song? *Psychology Today*, 70-76.

g. Newspaper article:

James, R. (1991, December 15). Obesity affects economic social status. *The Guardian*, p. 18.

h. Newspaper/Magazine article, no author:

Acid attack 'scarred girl for life'. (1986, October 21). *The Guardian*, p. 4.

(In the essay use a short form of the title for citation: ("Acid Attack." 1986))

i. Newspaper article, letter to the editor:

Hain, P. (1986, October 21). The police protection that women want [Letter to the editor]. *The Guardian*, p. 4.

j. Journal article, in press:

Johns, A. M. (in press) Written argumentation for real audiences. *TESOL Quarterly*.

5.4. Selections from edited collections

a. One author:

Chomsky, N. (1973). Linguistic theory. In J. W. Oller & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *Focus on the learner* (pp. 29-35). Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.

b. Two authors:

Stern, H. H. & Weinrib, A. (1978). Foreign languages for younger children: Trends and assessment. In V. Kinsella (Ed.), *Language teaching and linguistics: Surveys* (pp. 152-172). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

5.5. CD ROMs etc

a. Newspaper or magazine on CD-ROM:

Gardner, H. (1981, December). Do babies sing a universal song? *Psychology Today* [CD-ROM], pp. 70-76.

b. Abstract on CD-ROM:

Meyer, A. S. & Bock, K. (1992). The tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon: Blocking or partial activation? [CD-ROM]. *Memory Cognition*, 20, 715-726. Abstract from: SilverPlatter File: PsycLIT Item: 80-16351

c. Article from CD-ROM Encyclopedia:

Crime. (1996). In *Microsoft Encarta 1996 Encyclopedia* [CD-ROM]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.

d. Dictionary on CD-ROM:

Oxford English dictionary computer file: On compact disc (2nd ed.) [CD-ROM]. (1992). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

5.6. Documents obtained from the Internet

All references begin with the same information that would be provided for a printed source (or as much of that information as possible). The WWW information is then placed at the end of the reference in the same way as publishing information is given for books. It is important to give the date of retrieval if the document on the Web may change in content, move, or be removed from a site altogether.

The object of this is the same as all referencing - to supply the information needed to allow a user to find a source. If you do not know the author or the date and it does not have a clear title, think carefully before using it.

a. An article:

Jacobson, J. W., Mulick, J. A. Schwartz, A. A. (1995). A history of facilitated communication: Science, pseudoscience, and antisience: Science working group on facilitated communication. *American Psychologist*, 50, 750-765. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/journals/jacobson.html> (18.3.2014).

b. A newspaper article:

Sleek, S. (1996, January). Psychologists build a culture of peace. *The New York Times*, pp. 1, 33 Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com> (18.3.2014).

c. WWW Document:

Li, X. & Crane, N. (1996, May 20). *Bibliographic formats for citing electronic information*. Retrieved from <http://www.uvm.edu/~xli/reference/estyles.html> (18.3.2014).

d. WWW Document - corporate author:

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). (1995, May 15). *About the World Wide Web*. Retrieved from <http://www.w3.org/hypertext/WWW/> (18.3.2014).

e. WWW Document - corporate author:

American Psychological Association (1996). *How to cite information from the world wide web*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html> (18.3.2014).

f. WWW Document - no author:

A field guide to sources on, about and on the Internet: Citation formats. (1995, Dec 18). Retrieved from <http://www.cc.emory.edu/WHSCS/citation.formats.html> (18.3.2014).

g. WWW Document - no author, no date:

WWW user survey. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.wast.ac.uk/usersurveys/survey2000-10/> (18.3.2014).

h. An abstract:

Rosenthal, R. (1995). State of New Jersey v. Margaret Kelly Michaels: An overview [Abstract]. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 1, 247–271. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/journals/ab1.html> (18.3.2014).

i. Entry in online reference work, no author, editor or date:

heuristic (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary* (11th ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/heuristic> (18.3.2014).

5.7. Others

a. Government report:

National Institute of Mental Health. (1982). *Television and behaviour: Ten years of scientific progress and implications for the eighties* (DHHS Publication No. ADM82-1195). Washington DC: US Government Printing Office.

b. Publication with no date given:

Malachi, Z. (Ed.). (n.d.) *Proceedings of the International Conference on Literary and Linguistic Copmputing*. Tel Aviv: Faculty of Humanities, Tel Aviv University.

c. Unpublished dissertation or thesis:

Devins, G. M. (1981). *Helplessness, depression, and mood in end-stage renal disease*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, McGill University, Montreal.

d. Unpublished conference paper:

Howarth, P. (1995, March). *Phraseological standards in EAP*. Paper presented at the meeting of the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes, Nottingham.

e. Film or videotape:

Maas, J. B. (Producer), and Gluck, D. H. (Director). (1979). *Deeper into hypnosis* [Film]. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Source: Gillett, Andy. *Using English for Academic Purposes - UEFAP*.
<http://www.uefap.com/writing/writfram.html> (accessed 20.11.2009)