2. Review Writing

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Bibliography Manager

- You found a good paper. Record citation!
- Don’t type it, use a tool.
- Export to \texttt{BIBTEX} format.
Organize ideas, structure narrative
Key Questions

• What is the hypothesis/problem/question?

• Why is it interesting?

• What answers are provided by current literature? How did they do it? Implications?

• Which particular studies are particularly interesting and why?

• What is unsatisfactory about current literature? What remains unanswered?
Distill the answers into your synthesis

In other words:

What is your point?
More Questions

Coherent synthesis of past and present research in the domain of study

- What are the main perspectives on this topic in previous research?
- What have been the main research questions?
- What are the main conclusions on previous research in this area?
- Where are the gaps in literature?
- Where is existing knowledge “thin”?
- Which existing work could be extended?

Who are these “others”?

- Do parallel literatures exist for this topic?
- In which subject areas has the topic been studied?

What are the key concepts in this area?

- How is this topic approached by others?

Which aspects of this work are of most relevance to my study?

- Which sub-themes?
- Which writers?

What are the key areas of debate in this area?

Hazel Hall, http://www.dcs.napier.ac.uk/MSc-dissertation/materials/lit_rev.ppt
Typical structures

- Chronological
- Conceptual (e.g. pro/contra)
- Experimental/Methodological
- Centered on Implications

But: remember your point!

Ridley, “The Literature Review”, 2008
Write first draft
Know your reader

• What can the reader be assumed to know?
  • Read the journal editorial policy
  • Read similar articles published there
  • Err on side of caution, but avoid condescending or educational tone

• For this course, assume that your reader is a student of the CCBI Master’s programme.
  • But keep a formal tone
The Title

- Signals the field and scope
- Includes your main point
- Arouses interest of the readers
The Abstract

- Introduces field in 1-2 sentence(s)
- Motivates your review
- Announces important points  
  (reformulates subheadings and main point)
- Includes relevant keywords (for indexing)
The Introduction

• Set the context from general to specific
  • Show that the research area is important/interesting/relevant.

• Establish a niche
  • Show need for your work (the review)

• Occupy the niche
  • Announce your main point
  • Indicate structure of article

The Main Body

• Use subheadings for each section
  • One sentence summary/conclusion
  • Helps non-linear reading

• If appropriate, use a figures and/or tables
  • Review figs are often schema/cartoons
  • Use caption to make them self-descriptive
The Conclusion

• Specific ➔ general
  • Mini summary
  • Broader implications, future directions
Drafting: outline

Introduction

Identity of research:

This report will discuss using solid particles as the heat transfer medium in a solar central receiver. Requirements for such a heat transfer medium include:

1. Heat transfer medium must withstand temperatures up to 800°C.
2. Convective losses from medium must not be too high (define “too high”).
3. What else?

Reasons that research is important:

1. Diversifies solar energy applications by obtaining higher temperatures than those obtainable from current designs.
2. Allows for high-temperature experiments and modeling.

Background material (heat transfer media):

Drafting (con’t)

- Keep in mind that every claim needs to be backed by some evidence (in reviews, typically a reference)
  - Either report the findings only
  - or paraphrase their approach and findings
  - or use quotations (do not distort context)
- Best way to start writing is to start writing
Beware of Plagiarism!

- If you include exact wording, use quotation marks and reference
- If you paraphrase, use a reference only

(Full text linked from course homepage)
Kantone starten Technologie-Offensive gegen Plagiate

Der Plagiatsvorwurf an Gutenberg bringt Schweizer Bildungsinstitutionen zum Handeln: Zehn Kantone ergreifen konkrete Massnahmen gegen Schummelschüler – mit Hilfe von modernster Technik. Mehr...
Plagiarism case professor hanged himself

MATTHEW COOPER TUESDAY 13 NOVEMBER 1990

Latest in News:

Up to 25 killed in Damascus blast, says Syria.

David Cameron targets patient care improvement.

Rebekah Brooks' former PA arrested by phone hack police.

From Afghanistan to the ambulance: the warzone drug that will save hundreds of lives.

Independent Appeal: Working with terminally ill children is Lucy's dream job – but it takes its toll.

A DEPRESSED university professor hanged himself in front of his girlfriend after being sacked for plagiarising a student's work, an inquest heard yesterday. Birmingham Crown Court heard Ian Connell "walked into" a makeshift noose at his home after telling his partner: "I've got something to show you."

He died almost immediately.

The academic felt he had been "left high and dry" after losing his position at Wolverhampton University, his long-term partner said.

Suzanne Ord (Connell's partner) told how Dr Connell, 49, hanged himself with a cotton cord found in his wine cellar.
Edit and revise
Improve Flow

- Start each paragraph with a topic sentence
  It signals paragraph content to the reader

- Improve cohesion
  Connect sentences through conjunctions, parallel structures, repeated keywords, pronouns, “old-new” pattern, etc.

- Remove unneeded/redundant words
Final checks

• Spelling: use automated spell-checker (e.g. ispell) and proofread your text carefully.

• Verify one more time
  • that references are accurate and complete
  • that each claim backed by citation
  • that your narrative is coherent
  • that the article meets editorial policy (in particular length requirements)

• Ask a colleague for feedback on draft (thank for his/her help in Acknowledgement section)
Resources

Joseph M Williams, “Style”, 1990
Diana Ridley, “The Literature Review”, 2008
Rowena Murray “Writing for Academic Journals”, 2004