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Writing Workshop 1

Audience, Style & Purpose

Teacher: Laura Humphries

What is good academic writing?

What is "good" Academic Writing?

1. **Objectivity**
2. **Complexity:** lexically and grammatically more complex
3. **Formality**
4. **Precision with facts & figures**
5. **Explicitness:** signposting / linking ideas
6. **Accuracy**: narrow specific terminology
7. **Hedging:** cautious language indicating a degree of certainty
8. **Responsibility:** support claims with evidence, use sources, critically assess sources

(Gillet, 2015)

Structuring the introduction

The Toulmin-Zappen model (Problem-solution pattern)

Arguably, the most important pattern of organization in academic writing.

This model and its variants are commonly found in:

- argumentative and evaluative critical thinking
- Bachelor, Master's and Doctoral thesis introductions and abstracts
- research articles
- research reports and proposals

The Problem-Solution Pattern

Four rhetorical moves

1. **Situation**

   What is relevant or important about the topic?

2. **Problem**

   What is wrong with the current situation?
   What is needed or lacking?

3. **Solution**

   What is the solution?

4. **Evaluation**

   Is this a good solution?

   If not, repeat move 3 & 4.

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Creating a Research Space (Swales 1990)

Move 1: Establishing a Territory

Move 2: Establishing a Niche

Move 3: Occupying the Niche

*See 'Cars' model in handouts

Formality – Verbs

Anglo-Saxon verbs

- Be
- Do
- Get
- Give
- Be going to
- Happen
- Have
- Have to
- Mean
- Put
- Use

Latinate verbs

- Be situated, be listed, serve as
- Perform, implement, execute
- Become, acquire, procure
- Provide, supply, contribute
- Will
- Occur
- Possess, include, contain
- Should, must
- Denote, indicate
- Place, attach, insert
- Employ, utilize, apply, exploit

(McAnsh & Pennington, 2005)

Formality – Nouns

Informal

- a thing

- know-how

- trouble

- an idea

- the meaning (of)

Formal

- a device, object, instrument

- expertise

- difficulty, challenge

- a concept, plan, notion

- the purpose, aim, objective, target

(McAnsh & Pennington, 2005)

Formality – Adjectives

Informal

- good

- bad

- small, tiny

- big

- different

Formal

- suitable, effective, beneficial

- poor, ineffective, unsuitable

- minute, insignificant

- major, high, large, great

- various, a variety of, separate

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(McAnsh & Pennington, 2005)

Thesaurus

design 🔊 ⭐ see definition of **design** [f Like] [g +1] (Aa) show [all ▼]

| *noun* **sketch, draft** | *noun* **artful conception** | *noun* **intention** | *verb* **plan, outline** | *verb* **create, conceive** |

Relevance ⬤ A-Z   Complexity ⬤ ——— +   Length ⬤ ——— +

Synonyms for design   ☐ Common   ☐ Informal   ‖‖ ≡

noun **sketch, draft**

architecture	layout	scheme	delineation	outline
arrangement	map	study	depiction	paste-up
composition	method	blueprint	diagram	perspective
construction	model	chart	doodle	tracery
drawing	pattern	comp	dummy	tracing
form	picture	conception	formation	treatment
idea	plan	constitution	makeup	

Visual Thesaurus

Academic Phrasebank
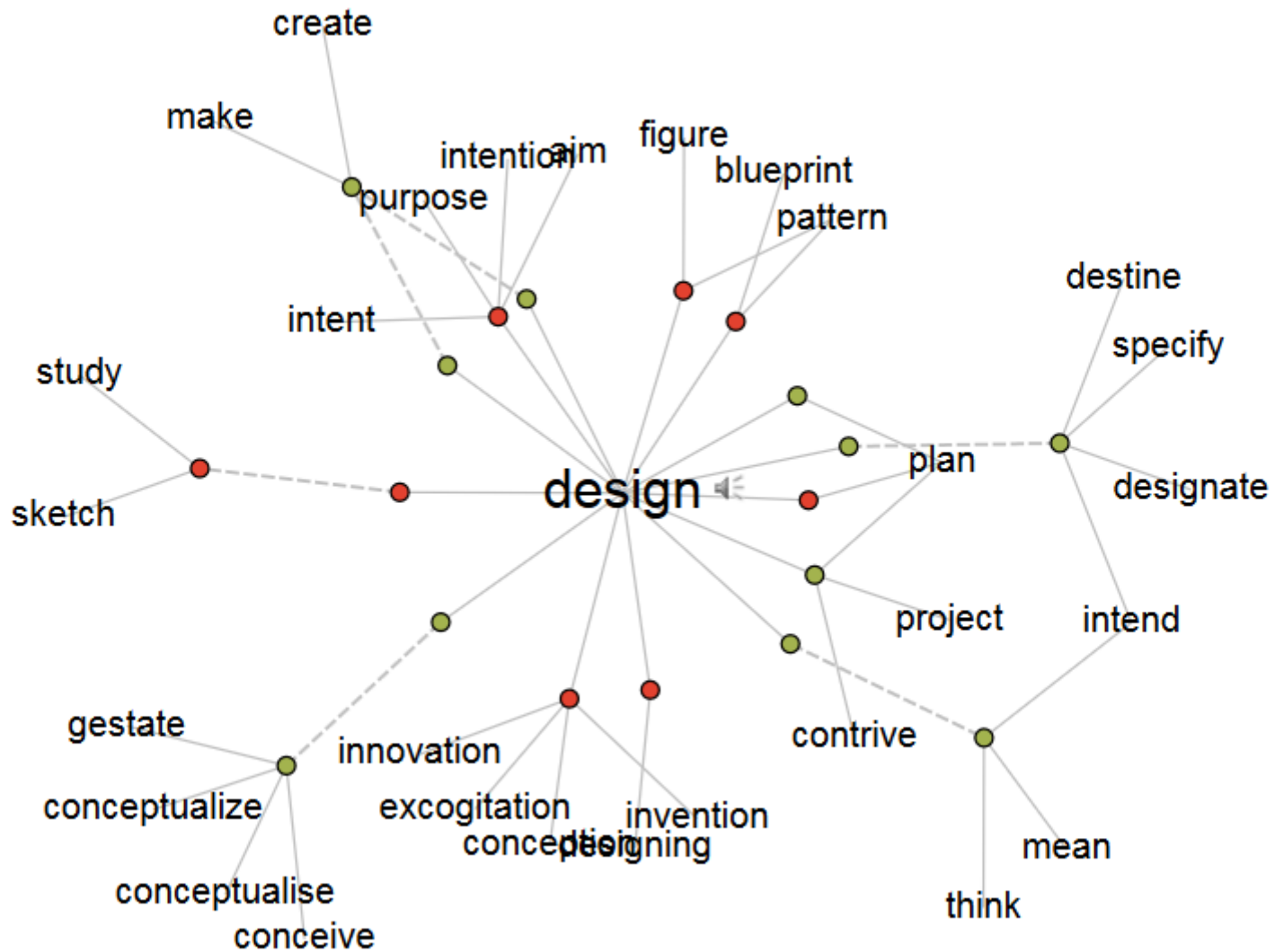
| **Introducing Work** | **Referring to Sources** | **Describing Methods** | **Reporting Results** | **Discussing Findings** |

HOME »

Compare and Contrast

By understanding similarities and differences between two things, we can incre
understanding and learn more about both. This usually involves a process of a
we compare the specific parts as well as the whole. Comparison may also be a
of evaluation. For example, by comparing specific aspects of A and B, we can
more useful or valuable. Many paragraphs whose function is to compare or co
with an introductory sentence expressed in general terms.

Introductory Sentences: Differences

X is different from Y in a number of respects.
X differs from Y in a number of important ways.
There are a number of important differences between X and Y.
Women and men differ not only in physical attributes but also in the way in which

Smith (2003)	found observed	distinct significant notable considerable major only slight	differences between X

Hedging

1. Level of certainty

2. Likelihood

3. Distance

4. Softening generalizations

(Swales and Feak, 2012)

Level of Certainty

Small groups

Arrange from most to least certain

Establish

Contend

Refute

Suggest

Imply

Prove

Level of Certainty

Toikka et al. (2002)

(Lappalainen, 2016)

MOST

Prove
Validate
Confirm
Corroborate
Affirm
Refute
Attest
Establish
Demonstrate
Show
Indicate
Claim
Contend
Argue
Concede
Admit
Suggest
Propose
Imply
Hint

LEAST

Likelihood – Modal verbs

Word-of-mouth advertising **influences** a consumer's incentive to purchase a product.

can influence

could influence

may influence

might influence

(Swales and Feak, 2012)

Likelihood – Phrases

Stronger

It is clear that…

It is rather clear that…

It is very probable/highly likely that…   word-of-mouth advertising influences a consumer's incentive to purchase a product.

It is probable/likely that…

It is possible that…

It is unlikely that…

Weaker

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(Swales and Feak, 2012)

Distance

Based on the limited data available…

According to the preliminary study…

Based on previous surveys…

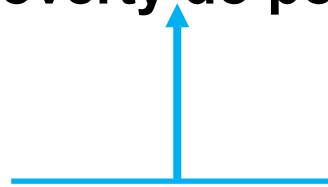According to some earlier studies…

In the view of many scholars…

the African continent has considerable potential for developing solar energy for domestic needs and for export.

(Swales and Feak, 2012)

Softening generalizations

Children living in poverty do poorly in school. (Strong)

(Swales and Feak, 2012)

Softening generalizations

Children living in poverty do poorly in school. **(Strong)**

appear to

tend to   **(Softening verbs)**

seem to

(Swales and Feak, 2012)

Softening generalizations

Children living in poverty do poorly in school. **(Strong)**

Many

A majority of

Some

In most parts of the world,

(Limit the subject)

(Swales and Feak, 2012)

Active versus Passive Voice

Active – **Subject performs the action of the verb**

They designed this product to improve efficiency.

Passive – **Subject receives the action of the verb**

The product was designed (by them) to improve efficiency.

Which should you use? Why?

Avoid personal pronouns

I propose a new solution for recycling plastic…

Use the inanimate agent

This thesis proposes a new solution for recycling plastic…

This thesis analyzes…

This paper argues…

This report discovered…

This article researched…

Verb tense – Present simple

The data **suggests**…

There **is** evidence that…

Uses:

To introduce your work

To make general statements, conclusions, or interpretations about research

To introduce evidence or support

Verb tense – Past Simple

Swales (2002) **found**…

A paired samples t-test **was run**…

Uses:

To introduce others' research work

To describe methods and data in your work

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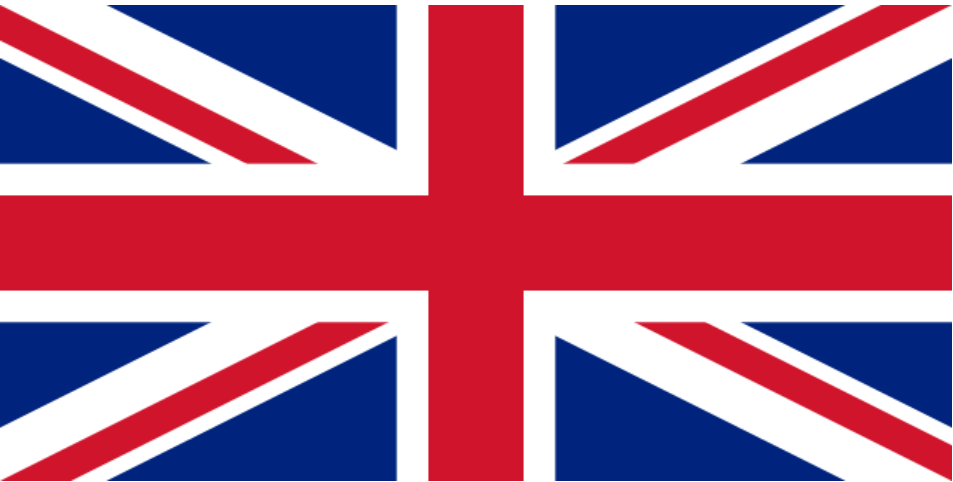**Language Centre**

Verb tense – Present Perfect

Some studies **have shown**…

Researchers **have discovered**...

Uses:

To connect the past (previous research) with the present (your research).

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Which dialect to use?

Common Dialectal Differences

British English	**American English**
Programme	Program
Autumn	Fall
16.00	4:00 PM
Honour	Honor
Metre	Meter
Recognise	Recognize
Analyse	Analyze
Analogue	Analog
Cancelled	Canceled

Common Dialectal Differences

British English

However I would suggest…

Based on the current evidence further research would be…

Dr Smith

Yours sincerely

American English

However, I would suggest…

Based on the current evidence, further research would be…

Dr. Smith

Sincerely yours,

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