The Global View on (Thesis) Writing: from planning to final editing

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1. Explanations of "global" editing
1.1 "Big view" (=bird’s eye=top-down=holistic=global)
macro- → meso- → micro-level
chapter/section → paragraph → sentence
writing as process:
planning – writing/drafting – editing
"Don’t hand in your first draft!"
time 20% 50% 30%
writing as result (e.g. BA/MA thesis of 40+/60+ pages):
introduction – main body – conclusion
length 20% 60% 20%

2. Key concepts
2.1 Discourses in science communication

discourse community approach (Hyland 2006, 2012; Schmied 2011) =
a writer/speaker appeals to shared knowledge to create a community of discourse incl. linguistic clues: of course, as we know from ...

2.2 Academic research cycle

2.3 The Genre Approach

Figure 1: The Academic Research Cycle

Introduction  Concepts  Editing  Info Management  Thesis Paradigms  Conclusion  2/33

Introduction  Concepts  Editing  Info Management  Thesis Paradigms  Conclusion  4/33

Introduction  Concepts  Editing  Info Management  Thesis Paradigms  Conclusion  5/33

Introduction  Concepts  Editing  Info Management  Thesis Paradigms  Conclusion  6/33
2.3 Prototype approach to genres in academic writing

![Genres diagram](image)

Schmied 2015: 11

2.4 (Academic) metadiscourse, metalanguage

- Wikipedia comments on academic writing conventions
- Wikipedia comments on content (scope)
- this is not a suitable explanation for Ac. Writing

3. A global view on editing (meso-level) from a general perspective

- all good simple examples
- not a theoretical concept for Ac. Writing

3.1 An effective title

- provides an indication of the context in which the text should be understood
- orients the reader towards the topic of the text
- strikes a balance between brevity and clarity
- is readily understandable
- does not pre-empt your conclusion (HM 2017: 51)
- makes (further) reading attractive and useful

Examples:
- Working with Media Texts: Deconstructing and Constructing Crises in Europe.
- Complexity and Coherence in English Student Writing, especially in Hypertext Learning Systems.
- Where the grass is greener? Colour terms in East African English.
- Corpus-based contrastive lexicology: the case of English with and its German translation equivalents.
3.2 An introductory paragraph

• provides a context for the argument that is to follow
• expresses your perspective on the issue you will be dealing with
• explicitly or implicitly makes clear which aspects of the issue will not be treated
• has forward dynamics, presenting a coherent development of the topic sentence and involving the reader in your argument

3.3 Intro: opening sentence (H/M 2017: 54, 3,4,1,2)

• does not depend on the preceding title for its understanding
• is a fresh start after the title
• is fairly uncontroversial
• is not linked directly to the time of writing

examples:
For centuries increasing meat consumption has been an indicator of increasing prosperity... But today the new trend towards vegan ...

3.4 Climax intro: thesis statement

• expresses the central concern of the text
• is recognisable by its paragraph final positioning, without any cumbersome sign-posting
• is rather neutral or suggestive of the line to be followed [??S]
• is formulated in such a way as to end the paragraph in a strong, self-confident way (HM 2017: 59)

examples: good or bad?
The thesis to be examined in the following paragraphs is whether grandparents should once again be given a place in the family home. Any decision to place restrictions on what is broadcast should follow on a careful consideration of the pros and cons of television censorship.

4. A global view on information management

4.1 Structure and linking of paragraphs (meso-level)

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4.2 Information ordering, management in paragraphs
4.3 Theme and focus in sentences and paragraphs

In Functional linguistics (from Prague School to Halliday), theme (=topic, background, presupposition) and focus (=rheme, new, comment) have been used to describe the argumentation, information management. The theme may depend on the previous focus of the previous theme.

4.4 Grammaticalised focusing constructions in English (micro-)

(22/03/18)

On-line exc. HM 2017

4.5 Cohesive devices (linking, connectors, etc. e.g. clause adverbials,)

coherence = extralinguistic factors contributing to the creation of texture (=implicit)
cohesion = linguistic means which create texture (=explicit)

1 It is unfortunately not the case that knowledge of the mechanical 002SAX
2 unfortunately, an instantaneous comparison was not possible 002SAX
3 Unfortunately, exact information on gas usage is unavailable 002SAX
4 Unfortunately, one has no prior way of predicting 002SAX
5 Unfortunately, neither easily works. 002SAX
6 Unfortunately, there are yet no reliable calculations that 002SAX
7 Unfortunately, our experience is confined to an equilibrium ... 004AX
8 Unfortunately, the energy resolution of a neutrino telescope is ... 001AX
9 unfortunately, is unfeasible 001AX
10 Unfortunately, lack of information about the collective ... 002AX
11 Unfortunately, the complexity of each subprocess also grows ... 002AX
12 Unfortunately, these theorems tell us practically nothing about ... 002AX
13 Unfortunately, there are very few analytic results available 004AX
14 Unfortunately, all recent experiments are, in principle. 004AX
15 Unfortunately, all existing recent experiments are 004AX
16 Unfortunately, those prior-art solutions require daunting experiments 004AX
17 Unfortunately, the NQI is incomputable since the constituent 004AX
18 Unfortunately, in many places such information is getting harder ... 005AX
19 it's a good protective barrier," says Hiddeboer, "unfortunately." 006AX
20 Unfortunately, because of the rarity of plant data from this ... 010AX

4.6 Reference (micro-): esp. pronouns

On-line exc. HM 2017
5. Focus on thesis paradigm (macro-level)

5.1 IMAC global paradigm spreading from natural sciences into humanities

Organisation can be viewed on several levels using different theoretical approaches:

- Global vs. local planners: a fixed structure like IMAC provides a general “skeleton” for global planning, which is said to characterize good writers

- Moves + steps in sections (Swales’ model)
  - E.g. CARS (= Creating A Research Space) to identify a gap to fill
  - Topical structure analysis: discourse deixis through personal pronoun references
    - (In the paragraph, the 1st focus is the topic that is referred to by personal pronoun in all following clauses until a new focus topic starts a new paragraph)

- Theme – Rheme (functional sentence perspective)

5.2 Examples of theses paradigms

**ToC of a BA thesis with IMRAD structure**

**Contents**

1. Introduction ........................................... 1
   1.1 Historical Background .......................... 2
   1.2 Types of Migration ............................. 3
   1.3 Case Study ................................. 4

2. Methodology .......................................... 5
   2.1 Literature Review ............................ 6
   2.2 Data Collection .............................. 7
   2.3 Data Analysis ............................... 8

3. Results ................................................ 9
   3.1 Findings ..................................... 10
   3.2 Discussion ................................. 11

4. Conclusion .......................................... 12

**ToC a BA thesis with a non-IMRAD structure**

Metalanguage terms / expected general academic phrases:

- 2. Theoretical background
  - 2.1. Definition, key concept
  - 2.2. Types

- 2.3. Theories
- 3. Case study

"Historical perspective" is always an option in humanities and social sciences

Should subheadings be more explicit? Like

4.1. Polish Migration to the UK before the accession of Poland to the EU in 2004, etc.

Should general phrases be supplemented by project-specific one? Like

2.3.2. Lee's Migration Theory: Push and Pull Factors

**ToC a linguistic BA term paper with INRAD structure**

1. Introduction ........................................... 1
   2. Visual Word Recognition ....................... 2
     2.1. Lateralisation and Visual Perception .... 2
     2.2. The Mental Lexicon ........................ 3
   2.3. Models of Visual Word Recognition ....... 3

3. Methodology .......................................... 4

4. Results ................................................. 5
   4.1. Results of Male Participants .............. 6
   4.2. Results of Female Participants .......... 7

5. Discussion of Results ............................. 8

6. Limitations ............................................ 9

7. Conclusion .......................................... 10

8. References .......................................... 11
ToCof a literature BA term paper with non-IMRAD structure

5. Conclusion

5.1 Writing, esp. editing is a craft (can be learnt by practice) that determines the success of academic careers from global to local, on macro-, meso-, micro-level

5.2 Neglected planning: psychological "writing block"—make a global plan based on best practice model details on local level: the right word, idiomaticity (esp. prepositions), grammar (esp. articles), punctuation (e.g.:)

5.3 Use electronic resources as aids: spell-, style, grammar checker

5.4 Find good models in your area to copy + practice makes perfect

References


