

Guidelines and Style Sheet for Writing Research Papers

Seminar für Anglistik und Amerikanistik

(Stand: Wintersemester 2009/10)

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Part I: Formatting

1. Term Papers: Page Design

- **Layout:** DIN A4, print on one side of the paper only, right margin: 3 cm, left margin: 4cm, top and bottom margins: 2,5 cm
- **Text:** use Times New Roman font, type size 12pt; 1,5 line spacing; hyphenless justification, mark each paragraph by indentation of the first line (one tab stop)
- **Quotations:** Short quotations (up to three lines) are incorporated into the main text “between double quotes” (double quotes within the quotations become single ‘inverted commas’). Longer quotations are set off in one block, without quotation marks, left indent by 1,25 cm, single-spaced, type size 11pt, blank line before and after.
- **Footnotes:** same font type; 10pt, single spacing, hyphenless justification, no indentions, end each footnote with a full stop
- **Bibliography:** use Times New Roman font, type size 12pt; single spacing; hanging indent by 1,25 cm
- **Headings:** use same font and same font size, no colours, Arabic numbers only
- **Pagination:** same font; same font size; starts with the title page but is not made visible as a page number until the first page of the text
- **Do not use a folder or other wrapping materials.** Hand in your paper on time, **stapled** together in the top left hand corner and **hole-punched**.

2. Term Papers: Structure

Cover Page

(university), (institute, department), (summer or winter semester, year), (course module, course type, course title), (type of paper: term paper/ portfolio/ Ausarbeitung etc.), (expected number of credit points), (name of teacher), (date of handing in), (title and subtitle of term paper), (your name), (matriculation number), (address, telephone number, e-mail), (subjects: majors and minors), (course of study, e.g. M.Ed.Gym), (semester)

Table of Contents

Always give page numbers; make sure page numbers are in one vertical line, right-aligned; capitalize titles and subtitles (exception: function words); do not give chapter numbers for bibliography, appendix etc.; make sure your table of contents shows the exact same headlines as your paper

Introduction, Main Part, Conclusion

Bibliography (and Appendices)

Same font, same font size; same margins; left aligned, single space; alphabetical order by the surname of the (first) author; each entry with hanging indent by 1,25 cm.

Statement on Plagiarism

Please copy and paste the following text, add date and signature, and include on a separate sheet at the end of your paper:

Hier mit erkläre ich, dass ich die Arbeit selbständig verfasst bzw. gestaltet und keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel benutzt und die allgemeinen Prinzipien wissenschaftlicher Arbeit und Veröffentlichungen, wie sie in den Leitlinien guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg festgelegt sind, befolgt habe. (vgl. §11. Abs.16 der Prüfungsordnung für den Zwei-Fächer-Bachelor, Allg. Teil, Fassung von 2008)

Part II: Quotations, References, Bibliography

1. Didactics and Linguistics

1.1. Quotations

Do not change wording or spelling of the quotation. Indicate already existing mistakes using the term sic! in squared brackets [sic!]. Mark [additions] and [...] ellipses in squared brackets.

Indicate the source of your quotation with the author's surname followed by the year of publication and the page number after a colon, all in one bracket: (Chomsky 1981: 245). If you are not quoting an author but refer to a particular statement, suggestion, proposal or result, indicate this work by the author's last name and the year of publication: (Haegeman 1994).

If you refer to more than one work by the same author, identify by year of publication and separate these works with commas and list them chronologically: (Guasti 2000, 2002). If there are two or more publications by the same author in the same year, use a,b... to identify: (Hamann 1996a, 1996b, 1996c). When quoting publications authored or edited by more than two people, just list the name of the first author/ editor and abbreviate the others with "et al." (e.g. Blum-Kulka et al. 1989 instead of Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper 1989).

If you make a statement or suggestion that is similar to one given by one of your sources, indicate this with the abbreviation "cf." which means "confer": (cf. Rizzi 1990).

1.2. Footnotes

Footnotes are for content only. Use footnotes if you would like to add something to the content of your paper that you think is best put into footnotes. Do not put bibliographic information or references into footnotes. In footnotes, use the same conventions for quotations and references as in the body.

1.3. Object Language

In Linguistics, you use language to write about language. That means, you have to mark the language that you write about: the object language. Use italics to indicate object language: "In English, *the* is the definite article" or "The English regular plural is marked by the morpheme *-s*".

Number your language examples and separate them from the text by a blank line, indented by one tab stop. In an example, the object language is not in italics. Use the number to refer to your examples. If you include tables or figures, use a separate numbering. Refer to your examples by (1), (2), etc. and to your tables and figures by (table 1), (figure 1).

There are certain symbols that you have to use in your examples:

- An asterisk (*) marks ungrammatical sentences.
- One or two quotation marks (?) (??) marks odd sentences, i.e., sentences that are neither grammatical nor ungrammatical but rather unclear.
- A hash (#) marks sentences or utterances that are semantically or pragmatically infelicitous.

Child Language: When giving examples from corpora of child language (for instance from the CHILDES database), indicate the name of the child and the age at which the utterance was recorded (Years Semi-Colon Months) (Name x;xx). If you use corpora from the CHILDES database, there are guidelines how to refer to each corpus. You can find them on the CHILDES website.

See an example paragraph: <http://www.staff.uni-oldenburg.de/michael.treichler/download/Linguisticsexampleparagraph.pdf>

1.4. Bibliography

Monographs

Last Name, Comma, First Name, Year of Publication in Brackets, Title in italics, Full Stop,
Place of Publication: Publisher, Full Stop

Guasti, Maria Teresa (2002), *Language Acquisition: The Growth of Grammar*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

O'Grady, William (2005), *How Children Learn Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Articles in Collections

Last Name, Comma, First Name, Year of Publication in Brackets, Title in inverted commas, in:, Last Name of Editor, Comma, First Name, optional First Name(s) and Last Name(s) of Co-Editors, ed./eds. in Brackets, Title of Collection, Comma, Place of Publication: Publisher, Pages, Full Stop

Guasti, Maria Teresa (2000), "An Excursion into Interrogatives in Early English and Italian" in: Friedemann, Marc Ariel and Luigi Rizzi (eds.), *The Acquisition of Syntax*, Harlow: Longman, 105-128.

Articles in Periodicals

Last Name, Comma, First Name, Year of Publication in Brackets, Title in inverted commas, Periodical in Italics, Number of Issue for Periodicals, Comma, Pages, Full Stop

- Crain, Stephen and Paul Pietroski (2001), "Nature, Nurture and Universal Grammar", *Linguistics and Philosophy* 24, 139-186.
- Newport, Elissa L. (1990), "Maturational Constraints on Language Learning", *Cognitive Science* 14, 11-28.

Online documents

- Blake, Robert (2000), "Computer Mediated Communication: A Window on L2 Spanish Interlanguage", *Language Learning & Technology* 4, 120-136. Retrieved January 27, 2001, from <http://llt.msu.edu/vol4num1/blake>.

2. Literary and Cultural Studies

2.1 Author-Date System or Notes-Bibliography System?

The author-date system outlined in the previous section is perfectly acceptable also in academic work produced for literary and cultural studies. It has the advantage of being very economical. There is an alternative tradition, however, which many scholars prefer to use, and which is particularly useful, if you are also working with anonymous or undated sources or materials from archives. In this alternative system, all references are placed in the footnotes and the source is quoted in full when it is first mentioned (later references are by author and / or short title).

The following section presents the main points of the notes-bibliography system. (For further details cf. "Appendix A: Endnotes and Footnotes" and "Appendix B: Author-Date System" in: Joseph Gibaldi. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1998. 289-305, 305-307.

Both styles of citing are acceptable in literary and cultural studies. Make your choice, but stick to it. A mixture of citation styles is not acceptable.

2.2. Quotations

Do not change wording or spelling of the quotation. Emphasize already existing mistakes using the term sic! in squared brackets [sic!]. Mark [additions] and [...] ellipses in squared brackets.

Distinguish between primary and secondary literature. Use a full bibliographic entry at the first mentioning of the primary literature (in the accompanying footnote); document the rest of the quotations from this particular source within your text in brackets following the quotation. Your secondary literature is to be documented in footnotes. Give the full bibliographic reference at the first occurrence of the work quoted. For subsequent references, use the author's last name (if known) and a short title.

2.3. Footnotes

Footnotes are used for providing source documentation and additions to argumentation. Insert footnote numbers without leaving a space after the punctuation mark. Always end a footnote with a period. The first note referring to a source includes the publication information found

in a bibliographic entry – the author's name, the title, and the publication facts – as well as the page reference identifying the portion of the source you refer to at that point in the text. (Subsequent references to a work require less information – author, short title, page number – and may be included in the text or given as footnote (cf. MLA Style Manual, Appendix A1, p.290). Do not use endnotes.

General rule: author's first name, followed the author's last name, title, place and year of publication (in brackets), and then the page number you are referring to.

Examples:

- Hayden White, "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality," *Critical Inquiry* 7.1 (Autumn 1980): 5-27, here p. 8. (this is an article in a scholarly journal, and you are quoting from a specific page in this article) [subsequent reference: White, "Value of Narrativity", 8.]
- Hal Foster, ed., *Vision and Visuality* (New York: The New P, 1988). (here you are referring to a study edited by Hal Foster without giving further page references; this is meant as a general reference) [subsequent reference: Foster, *Vision*.]
- On these matters see also Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," *Vision and Visuality*, ed. Hal Foster (New York: The New P, 1988) 3-23. (here you are referring to an article/book section within the study by Hal Foster) [subsequent reference: Jay, "Scopic Regimes".]
- Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966; Chicago: U of Chicago P; London: Routledge, 1974) 32f. (here you are referring to specific pages in this book so that the reader may take a look into the argument formulated on these pages) [subsequent reference: Yates, *Art of Memory*, 32f.]
- For a discussion of the gaze in psychoanalysis see Jacques Lacan's *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan*, Book XI, "The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis," trans. Alan Sheridan, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (1981; New York: Norton, 1998) esp. pp. 67-119. (here you are referring to a particular section in a translated study) [subsequent reference: Lacan, "Four Fundamental Concepts".]

2.4. Italics

Italics are used

- for the titles of books, journals and newspapers (i.e. for independent publications);
- for letters, words and phrases, which serve as linguistic documents (e.g.: Shaw spelled *Shakespeare* without the final *e*),
- for foreign words and phrases (*laissez-faire*),
- for emphasis.
- If you wish to emphasise a particular word or phrase in a quotation, you may put this word or phrase in italics; indicate this in the accompanying footnote by stating: [emphasis added], or [emphasis mine]. If the text you are quoting a text already contains italics, make sure to quote from the original text as it appears and add: [emphasis in the original].

Remember: Put titles of periodical articles, book chapters, short stories, poems in "double quotes", definitions and translations in 'inverted commas'. Example: Petrarca uses the term *favola* meaning 'tattle'.

2.5. Bibliography

Primary Literature

Mason, Bobbie Ann. *In Country*. New York: Perennial Library, 1985.
Sterne, Lawrence. *Tristram Shandy*. 1759-67. Ed. Howard Andersen. New York: Norton, 1980.
Wilde, Oscar. *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*. New York: Harper Collins, 1989.

Secondary Literature

Single Author

Caruth, Cathy. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1996.
Foster, Hal. *Vision and Visuality*. New York: The New P, 1988.
Yates, Frances. *The Art of Memory*. 1966. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1974.

Several Authors

Karlin, Wayne, Minh Khuê Lê, and Vu Truong. *The Other Side of Heaven: Postwar Fiction by Vietnamese and American Writers*. Willimantic, CT: Curbstone P, 1995.

Anonymous Author

If the name of the author is known but omitted from the title page, use square brackets and question mark to indicate uncertainty:

[Ebenezer Cook?]. *Sotweed Redivivus, or The Planter's Looking-Glass*. Annapolis, MD: William Parks, 1730.

If the name of the author is unknown, alphabetize by title, ignoring any initial articles:

A True Sincere Declaration of the Purpose and Ends of the Plantation Begun in Virginia, of the Degrees Which It Hath Received, and Means by Which It Hath Been Advanced. London: Stepneth, 1610.

Edited Book

Belau, Linda M., and Petar Ramadanovic, eds. *Topologies of Trauma: Essays on the Limit of Knowledge and Memory*. New York: Other P, 2002.
Engler, Bernd and Kurt Müller, eds. *Historiographic Metafiction in Modern American and Canadian Literature*. Paderborn et al.: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1994.

Book in a Series

Twelbeck, Kirsten. *No Korean is Whole – Wherever He or She May Be: Erfindungen von Korean America seit 1965*. Angelsächsische Sprache und Literatur 393. Frankfurt/M. et al.: Lang, 2002.

Book Sections (Essays/Chapters)

Jay, Martin. "Scopic Regimes of Modernity." *Vision and Visuality*. Ed. Hal Foster. New York: The New P, 1988. 3-23.
Pease, Donald E. "New Perspectives on U.S. Culture and Imperialism." *Cultures of United States Imperialism*. Eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1993. 22-39.

Re-Editions (indicate the date of orig. publication)

Aaron, Daniel. *The Unwritten War: American Writers and the Civil War*. 1973. Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2003.

Wellek, René and Austin Warren. *Theory of Literature*. 1959. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.

Poems and Short Stories in Anthologies

Pukui, Mary Kawena. "The Marchers of the Night." *A Hawaii Anthology*. Ed. Joseph Stanton. Honolulu: State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, 1997. 82-84.

Eliot, T. S. "Journey of the Magi." *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Ed. M. H. Abrams, et. al. Vol. 2. New York: Norton, 2000. 2386-2387.

Books with more than one volume

Bercovitch, Sacvan, gen. ed. *Prose Writing 1940—1990*. Cambridge, UK, et al.: Cambridge UP, 1999. Vol. 7 of *The Cambridge History of American Literature*. 8 vols. to date. 1994- .

Lucas, Robert E., Jr. and Thomas J. Sargent, eds. *Rational Expectations and Econometric Practice*. 2 vols. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1981. [both volumes used]

Lucas, Robert E., Jr. and Thomas J. Sargent, eds. *Rational Expectations and Econometric Practice*. Vol. 1. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1981. [only one volume used]

Translations

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Trans. Sheila Faria Glaser. 1994; Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2006.

Zola, Emile. *The Ladies' Delight* [*Au Bonheur des Dames*, 1883]. Trans. Robin Buss. London: Penguin, 2001.

Articles in Periodicals

If all issues in a volume are paginated consecutively:

Wimsatt, W. K. and Monroe C. Beardsley. "The Concept of Meter: An Exercise in Abstraction." *PMLA* 74 (1959): 585-598.

If each issue in a volume is paginated separately:

White, Hayden. "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality." *Critical Inquiry* 7.1 (Autumn 1980): 5-27.

Newspaper Articles

Jones, Mick. "My Life with the Stones." *Time* 14 Nov. 1989: 1-20.

Risen, James, Judy L. Thomas. "Pro-life Turns Deadly." *Newsweek* 26 Jan. 1998: 68-69.

Films and videos

Bram Stoker's Dracula. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola. With Gary Oldman, Sir Anthony Hopkins and Winona Ryder. Columbia Tristar Home Video, DVD, 1992.

Online Speech

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. "President Honors America's Veterans." Speech by the President at the Veterans Day at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, 11 November 2003
<<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031111-8.html>>.

Online Article (from a Newspaper)

Riding, Alan. "A Discourse Shaped By the Vietnam War." *IHT.com*. 2005. International Herald Tribune. 11 July 2005
<<http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/07/14/features/writer.php>>.

Article from a Website

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Concord Hymn." 1837. *American Transcendentalism Web*. 1999. Virginia Commonwealth University. 10 January 2007
<<http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/emerson/poems/concordhymn.html>>.

Online Dictionaries

"Secular, 3b." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. 23 January 2007 <<http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50218143>>.

Other (e.g. Institution)

American Psychiatric Association. *DSM-III-R: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 3rd rev. ed. (DSM-III-R) Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Association P, 1987.

If the URL is too long to be quoted, give instead the URL of the site's search page, if such a page exists, otherwise give the URL of the site's home page.

For other cases refer to Joseph Gibaldi. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1998.

Part III: Research Paper Structure

1. Didactics and Linguistics

After gathering your literature (texts, essays, dissertations, etc.), you are ready to start with your own thesis. Observe the IMRD format: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, or more specifically, a more differentiated version containing the following sections:

1.1. Introduction

The introductory section should include the following points:

- the research question(s) you want to answer in your paper
- the motivation for research (e.g. research gap)
- brief details on research (e.g. which linguistic variable you investigate, which linguistic theory/ framework you base your research on, which method you use, etc.)
- the structure of your paper

(cf. Schiavetti, Nicholas and Dale Evan Metz (2006), *Evaluating Research in Communicative Disorders*. 5th edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, ch. 7.)

1.2. Literature review

Your paper is supposed to be a contribution to the scientific discussion. To be able to accomplish this, you need to be aware of the ongoing discussion in your field. In the literature

review you should give an overview of the findings that are relevant for your research question(s). It is, however, not sufficient to simply provide summaries of the studies. You should also critically discuss the studies you mention. You should also aim at grouping studies with similar findings together, contrasting them with studies which present different results, etc.

In sum: It is necessary to supply a critical status of current research before you start with your own work. In case of an empirical paper: Give reasons for conducting the research and offer any information that might be needed to understand the research problem.

1.3. Methods

In empirical papers it is essential to describe and discuss the methodology you have employed to collect your data. You should answer the following questions in your method section:

Questions to address:	How to answer them:
Which method did you use?	Experiments, participant observation, corpora, questionnaires, etc.
Which advantages does your method have?	State why your method is best suited to answer your individual research question.
Which disadvantages does your method have?	State honestly which disadvantages your method might have (is thought to have) and why you think it is still a valid tool to answer your research question. You should also say what you have done to compensate for the disadvantages.
How did you proceed in data collection?	Be careful to be brief and relevant in this part. Do not produce a lengthy narrative account of what you did.
How many participants did you have?	Provide demographic information about your participants that are relevant to your question.
Which corpus did you use?	State how big is it (usually number of words), which genres is it composed of, which variety of the language is represented, when were the data sampled, which speaker groups are represented in it, etc.
What did you do with your data once you have obtained them?	Describe how you transcribed (e.g. using a specific transcription system/ software), coded and analysed your data. If applicable, you should also describe which statistical tests you used in your analysis.

1.4. Results

In this section, you present the 'answer' to the research question. Here you show, describe, and analyse the data found in your research. Remember: You do not interpret your result in this section. You simply state what you have observed. It is often desirable to present your findings not only in text but also graphically as tables or figures. You should, however, be careful to explain your tables and figures properly. Never insert tables or figures without referring to them in the text and without naming, numbering and explaining them!

1.5. Discussion

Here, you have got the opportunity to discuss the implications of your results. This section may also summarise your findings, discuss, compare, and contrast the data to other research articles on similar topics.

Questions to address:	How to address them:
What conclusions can you draw?	For each major result: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Describe the patterns, principles, relationships your results show.- Explain how your results relate to expectations and to literature cited in your literature review. Do they agree, contradict, or are they exceptions to the rule?- Explain plausibly any agreements, contradictions, or exceptions.- Describe what additional research might resolve contradictions or explain exceptions.
How do your results fit into a broader context of research in your field?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Suggest the theoretical implications of your results.- Suggest practical applications of your results.- Extend your findings to other situations or other genres?- Give the big picture: do your findings help us understand a broader topic?

Note: You can also combine the chapters "results" and "discussion" to one big chapter.

1.6. Conclusion

Looking back on your work: Can you define what kind of contribution you eventually made with your work? There are different options:

- You may have recapitulated the debate in order to evaluate the different present positions.
- You may have supported an existing argument with your own look at a certain text.
- You may have modified a perspective you found in public statements choosing a more scientific approach.
- You may have promoted research in a certain direction.

In any case:

- summarize the main results of your study
- link the results to your main research question/hypothesis at the beginning of your work
- evaluate critically (if applicable)
- set your work into the larger context of research in your field describe future research that could follow from your work
- describe shortcomings of your work/method (if applicable) - however, be careful, keeping in mind that you still want to 'sell' your work

2. Literary and Cultural Studies

The process of writing research papers can be divided in three phases:

2.1. Phase 1: Research – Finding Your Topic

- Start from an observation or a question that you found remarkable in some manner. (Try to grasp what it is that strikes you about this phenomenon.)
- Check the state of research: Has this been asked or observed before (long ago, only recently)? Do critics agree or are there controversies? For this purpose, you need to use bibliographic tools (such as the MLA bibliography), and to read and excerpt the materials that make reference to your topic.
- Return to the primary material you plan to analyse, picking out passages and aspects that are particularly relevant to your topic.

2.2. Phase 2: Structure – Planning Your Paper and Formulating your Thesis

Once you have looked at the state of research and examined your materials, review the results: How do the various results of your research fit together? Are they sufficient to account for your initial question in a satisfactory way? If so, good. If not, even better. In either case, you can now go about presenting your evidence and your evaluation of it to an academic audience.

- *Define your goal (i.e. formulate your thesis):* Make up your mind about what precisely you want to demonstrate concerning the topic you have chosen. Try to state this as completely, precisely and concisely as possible. (This usually takes several attempts, and is done parallel to the two following steps.)
- *Choose a structure that leads to your goal:* Arrange the results of your research (both primary and secondary materials) in such a way that all the relevant materials, information and arguments are presented in such an order that they lead to the goal that you have set yourself. In order to reach a particular result, it is usually necessary to take several steps of analysis and reflection.
- *Make the structure of your argument explicit:* The structure of your outline (i.e. the headings in the table of contents) should match the line of argument you have chosen, and should provide the reader with a ‘map’ of the steps of analysis and reflection that he or she is invited to take.

2.3. Phase 3: Writing and Revising your Paper

Once you have arranged the results of your research in such a way that they lead towards demonstrating the proposition you have formulated, you are ready to start writing.

Term papers usually are written in this order:

- The **introduction**: state what you are going to examine and what you are hoping to show, how you are going to proceed (between which alternative methods did you choose) and give reasons for both (why is the topic relevant to an academic debate? why do you choose to treat the topic in the way you have chosen?).

NOTE: In your response to the questions what?, how? and why? take into account the current state of research (which you have established in phase 1 and 2). If an extensive report on research should be necessary, you may give this an extra chapter heading after the introduction.

- The chapters that make up your **main part** (i.e. the headings in the table of contents) should match the line of argument you have chosen, and should provide the reader with a ‘map’ of the steps of analysis and reflection that he or she is invited to take.
- The **conclusion** does not introduce any new analytical steps. You should summarise at a higher level of abstraction, the results of the analytical steps you have taken. Then address the question of what follows from your analysis. What questions remain unsolved? What new questions have become visible in the course of your analysis? What direction could the debate take at this juncture?
- **Revision.** Having written a first draft of your text, check your text and your argument for cohesion, and especially revise the introduction, if necessary.

2.4. Final Steps

2.4.1. Settle for a Title

If you have not decided on your title before, this is the time to do it. Titles usually consist of two parts. The subtitle should indicate the material(s) and topic(s) dealt with. The main title should indicate the special perspective you wish to establish on the material(s) and topic(s) (one example from the bibliography above: main title: *The Unwritten War*, subtitle: *American Writers and the Civil War*).

2.4.2. Check for Formal Correctness

Reread for typing errors, spelling, grammar and syntax, incomplete sentences, style, formatting specifications.

Make sure the chapter headings in the table of contents and the headings used in the paper are the same.

Make sure that all the sources you are quoting are listed in the bibliography, and that the bibliography does not contain any entries that are not referred to in the paper.

Make sure that you have documented all sources for ideas or statements that you take over from other sources (avoid the appearance of plagiarism).

2.5. Further Questions?

Here are some further considerations about aspects of the research, structuring and writing process. If you feel you could do with further guidance, you may try thinking about these points.

2.5.1. Joining a Discussion / Joining a Conversation

Before you start and while you are writing you may find it helpful to think of your paper as a contribution to a conversation or a discussion. Before you make a contribution to a conversation, you will want to be aware of the issues that have been talked about and of the things that have been said before.

- You will not generally make statements simply ‘because they are true’ (even if they *are* true). If you refer to something that has been said before, you will tend to indicate somehow that you are aware of this.
- Neither will you just say once more what someone has just said before you. If you introduce information, you will tend to make clear, why you are mentioning this.
- In any case, you will generally check that your contribution is relevant to this conversation. You will also make clear what your own position is in the conversation: Is

your purpose to agree with previous speakers and support what they have said? Is it to contradict them? Is it to add a different angle or to start a new topic?

There are differences, of course: In everyday conversations you will check the relevance of your contribution more or less intuitively. In written academic work, this process must be made explicit as part of your contribution, and it usually takes a good deal longer.

As you are doing your research and finding your topic, structuring your ideas and your argument, and finally writing and revising your paper, it may help you to bear this in mind.

2.5.2. Providing a Map and Putting up Signposts

As you are writing, make sure you signpost your paper: Where will you be taking the reader, by what means and by what route are you going to do this, and why should a reader want to go there with you? Make sure that you have addressed these questions in your introduction. Give your readers a map, and set up signposts at appropriate places (e.g. at the beginning and / or end of chapters) in order to prevent them from getting lost, and make sure that at the end they know where you have taken them and why they should want to be there.

2.5.3 Relating to the Work of other Critics and Scholars

- If other scholars have already dealt with this topic, ask: Do they agree with each other? Is there a current controversy? Were there controversies in the past? What were the points that were debated, what arguments were used (what kind of references were made to the primary materials you have analysed)? Was there a shift in opinion?
- If few or no other scholars have dealt with this topic (made this observation, raised this question): why have they overlooked it? Is it simply too obvious, too easy to answer? Have they focused on something else instead (on what, and why)? What has prevented them from making this observation (or raising this question)? What would be gained by raising this question? Were they right or wrong to ignore this question (Perhaps it is too obvious or trivial? Perhaps they were prevented from perceiving its relevance by some kind of unjustified bias?)

2.5.4 Defining Your Own Position

Your line of argument will depend on where you stand in relation to this state of research. Is your goal to compare and evaluate critically the (different) existing research positions and measure them by the degree of insight and relevance they have for the question that you have chosen? Is your goal to add new perspective to the research?

Once you have looked at the state of research and the primary material as it relates to the topic that interests you, you can formulate a proposition that you will seek to substantiate. Here are a few typical lines of argument that may help you decide, which argument should guide your structure:

- *One typical line of argument:* Scholars have always agreed that this phenomenon should be described as [x], but I disagree. The reasons [if any] they have given, are the following... The reasons why I disagree are the following.
- *Another typical line of argument:* Scholars have never been able to agree about whether we should describe this phenomenon as [a] or as [b]. Those who favour [a] argue that ..., those who favour [b] argue that ..., a critical evaluation of their arguments shows that ... [a is right / b is right / both are partly right and partly wrong / both are wrong and c is right]...

- *A third typical line of argument:* Scholars have never noticed [a]. They have been talking about [b] and [c], however. In my judgment, the following reason(s) may be responsible for the fact that they have done so. I will now try to show why they were right [wrong] to ignore [a], for the following reasons...
- ...

Part IV: Frequently Asked Questions

1. How long should my paper be?

The number of text pages you are expected to write generally depends on the number of credit points you can obtain.

- *Term papers in seminars* are usually ca. 10 pages of text for 3 KP, 15-20 pages for 6 KP (this is in addition to the KP earned for attendance, oral presentations, etc.).
- *BA theses* are usually 30-40 pages.
- *Master theses* in the M.Ed. are usually 60-70 pages (M.Ed. Gym) or around 50 pages (M.Ed. WiPaed); Master theses in the M.A. are 60-80 pages.

Page numbers may vary according to the type of material you are working on. In general, and especially if you feel you need more space, it is a good idea to check with your supervisor.

2. Who will supervise my paper / thesis?

[link to prüfungsberechtigungen]