

Research Writing Workshop

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Part 1

Research

**Research: Etymology: Middle French recherche, from rechercher to investigate thoroughly, from Old French, from re- + cerchier to search -- more at SEARCH
Date: 1577 ...**

... 1: careful or diligent search 2: studious inquiry or examination; especially: investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws 3: the collecting of information about a particular subject. (Britannica Webster's 1999: unpagged).

Research: verb Date: 1593 transitive senses 1: to search or investigate exhaustively <research a problem> 2: to do research for <research a book> intransitive senses: to engage in research. (Britannica Webster's 1999: unpagged).

Research: Methodical search for knowledge. Original research tackles new problems or checks previous findings. Rigorous research is the mark of science, technology, and the “living” branches of the humanities. It is typically absent from pseudoscience and ideology. Syn. Exploration, investigation, inquiry (Bunge 1999: 251).

Preliminary Research

Preliminary research explores the area within which a research question may exist.

**Typical questions
in preliminary research**

**“What kinds of issues
do I wish to explore?”**

**“What kinds of questions
do I want to ask?”**

**Typical tasks
of preliminary research**

Survey an area.

Map issues.

Understand the field of inquiry.

**Exploratory
research
focuses on
and explores
the research
question.**

**Typical questions
in exploratory research**

**“What kinds of questions
should I ask?”**

**“What kinds of methods may I choose
among to ask these questions?”**

**“What specific methods should I use to
ask these questions?”**

**Three
frames
of
research**

Basic Research
Applied Research
Clinical Research

Basic research involves a search for general principles. Abstract and general principles cover a variety of situations and cases. Basic research generates theory on several levels. This may involve macro level theories covering wide areas or fields, midlevel theories covering specific ranges of issues, or micro level theories focusing on narrow questions.

General principles often have broad application beyond their original field of inquiry. The generative nature of principles sometimes gives them surprising predictive power.

Applied research adapts the findings of basic research to classes of problems. Applied research may involve developing and testing theories for classes of problems. While applied research tends to be midlevel or micro level research, applied research may develop or generate questions that become the subject of basic research.

Clinical research involves specific cases, applying the findings of basic research and applied research to specific situations. Clinical research may generate and test new questions, or it may test the findings of basic and applied research in a clinical situation. Clinical research may also develop or generate questions that become the subject of basic research or applied research.

Any of the three research frames of may generate questions for the other frames. Each may test the theories and findings of other kinds of research.

Clinical research generally involves professional engagement. In the rush of daily practice, most research is clinical. There isn't time for anything else.

Most professional practice requires diagnosis. Diagnosis is a major form of clinical research.

Skilled professional practice often requires practitioners to choose among the results and findings of applied research for specific clinical solutions.

**Understanding basic research
establishes the frame for wise choices
and deepens the skills needed for
effective clinical practice.**

**Many
Kinds
of
Research**

**Theoretical
Empirical
Conceptual**

**Qualitative
Quantitative
Descriptive
Interpretive**

**Mathematical
Logical
Philosophical**

**Historical
Textual
Exegetical
Hermeneutic**

**Positive
Normative**

Phenomenological

**Practice-led
Expressive**

Research Methods

**Methods
Methodology
Methodics**

**Research methods
are how
we do research.**

Methodology is the comparative study of methods.

Methodics is the comprehensive repertoire of methods in a field.

Methodological awareness and methodological sensitivity involve our ability to understand research methods and use them effectively to answer questions.

Methodological awareness involves such questions as choice of method, understanding appropriate methods for examining kinds of questions, and awareness of theoretical presuppositions. It involves such issues as problem finding, problem selection, choice of research object, levels of analysis, units of analysis, and other research questions in any project.

Part 2
Writing

“There are only two kinds of research: perfect research and published research ...

“Perfect research is never published and published research is never perfect.”

Johan Olaisen

“Research results seem to be incomplete until they are written up, and in the writing come new insights into the work that you didn’t have when you were performing it. Language structures thought through rhetorical conventions which stimulate additional thought. Research activity proceeds in a fairly linear fashion, whereas language poses problems of explanatory necessity to complete its statements.

“You can often DO something immediately following a prior action, but you often cannot SAY something following a previous statement without setting the background for its understanding. I suppose the missing component is that when writing you understand that you cannot assume the reader had your same state of mind, whereas as the actor DOING things, you knew your state of mind.” (Amsler 2007)

Do

Introduce terms.

Define terms.

What does this term mean?

How do I use the term?

**What meaning and function do
these terms have in the context
of this inquiry?**

Sources

**Excellent sources for definitions
and language work in English**

**Webster's Collegiate Dictionary
Webster's Online at Britannica
Oxford English Dictionary
Shorter Oxford English Dictionary**

Do

Write carefully.

Build good sentences.

Link related sentences in clear paragraphs.

Work toward an overall structure.

Strunk and White

“Elementary Principles of Composition

Choose a suitable design and hold to it.

Make the paragraph the unit of composition.

Use the active voice.

“Put statements in a positive form.

Use specific, definite, concrete language.

Omit needless words.

Avoid a succession of loose sentences.

“Express coordinate ideas in similar form.

Keep related words together.

In summaries, keep to one tense.

Place the emphatic words of a sentence at the end.”

(Strunk and White. 2000: vi)

“An Approach to Style
(With a List of Reminders)

Place yourself in the background.

Write in a way that comes naturally.

Work from a suitable design.

**“Write with nouns and verbs.
Revise and rewrite.**

**“Do not overwrite.
Do not overstate.
Avoid the use of qualifiers.
Do not affect a breezy manner.
Use orthodox spelling.**

**“Do not explain too much.
Do not construct awkward adverbs.
Make sure the reader knows
who is speaking.
Avoid fancy words.
Do not use dialect unless your ear is good.**

**“Be clear.
Do not inject opinion.
Use figures of speech sparingly.
Do not take shortcuts at the cost of clarity.**

**“Avoid foreign languages.
Prefer the standard to the offbeat.”**
(Strunk and White, 2000: vi)

***The Elements of Style*
is the best, shortest,
and simplest writing
guide in English today.**

Buy a copy.

Read it.

Use it.

Do

When speaking as the author of an article, write in the first person using active verbs.

Take responsibility for opinions and findings.

Do

Use a well-designed physical and typographic format.

Set papers flush left, ragged right.

Use clear paragraphing. Indent paragraphs or use a line break between paragraphs.

Do

Cite direct quotations carefully and explicitly.

Cite indirect quotations and paraphrased quotations carefully and explicitly.

Do

Provide sources.

Offer evidence.

Reference and Citation

References are a conceptual tool for the writer *and* for the reader. Skilled authors recognize the stylistic and intellectual issues involved in referencing. Outstanding authors practice and master the art of referencing.

**Friedman's Ten
Commandments
of Reference and
Citation**

**I Use citations constructively
to substantiate the argument of
an article.**

**II Use citations creatively
to advance the argument of an
article.**

**III The author must argue a case
in the explicit narrative of the
article. External sources
support an argument. External
support for an argument cannot
replace the argument.**

Do not confuse the two.

IV Use precise, fine-grained references that permit the reader to locate, question, and challenge cited sources.

V Treat direct quotations, indirect quotations, and paraphrases the same way. Give precise references for all quotations and cited sources.

VI Always review and re-read cited passages from referenced sources.

VII Never use second-hand references. Never cite sources without checking them first hand.

VIII Never use loose or vague references.

IX Each item cited in the text must appear in the reference list. Every item in the reference list must appear in the text.

X Each source cited in the text requires an appropriate in-text citation. Every entry in the reference list must be complete. All citations and all references must use the same style. All citations and references must be complete and consistent to be correct.

**Avoid
These
Common
Problems**

Don't

Don't use footnotes for substantive content. Place issues in the body of the paper or cut them entirely.

Don't

Don't use footnotes for references if a publisher requires author-year style. Footnotes often lead to such substantive problems as missing notes, missing details, inconsistencies, poorly formatted entries, and confused styles.

Don't

An author should not enter the narrative without good reason.

An author should not narrate personal involvement unless he or she is a necessary actor.

Necessity

An author is a necessary actor who *should* write in the first person:

1 To narrate events that her or she has witnessed,

2 To narrate personal experience,

3. To take responsibility for findings and results, or

4. To state an educated or professional opinion.

Don't

Do not complain about the difficulty of a research project. State the challenges and problems, then stop. Never emphasize the work of writing with such phrases as "I asked myself," or "To prepare, I read many books and articles."

Don't

Don't use clichés.

Don't use stock phrases.

Don't

Don't use jargon. Use clear terms in common language.

If you must use a technical term, explain it in common language or define it.

Don't

Don't use professional, technical, or scientific terms that you cannot explain or define.

Don't

Don't use fancy words in an attempt to seem scholarly or scientific. If an author does not understand a word, it is likely that the reader won't understand it, either.

Warning!

If an author misuses a word that he or she does not understand when the reader does understand it, the reader may think of the author as a fraud.

Part 3

Work

Advice from My Grandmother

Start early.

Read and write.

Polish.

Get advice.

**Advice from My
Publisher**

Make a schedule.

Keep to the schedule.

Rhetoric

**Develop rhetoric carefully and
systemically.**

Ensure continuity.

**State the promise of the paper
and keep the promise.**

Development

Define terms.

**State assumptions.
Explain, clarify, and limit them.**

**Develop the paper with a sense
of narrative dramaturgy.**

Do

Clarify issues.

Explain key issues. Answer *what, why, how, and when.*

Use appropriate forms of demonstration: narrative, testimony, evidence, and models.

Do

Present and address contrary evidence.

Do

Work carefully with tense, time, and narrative sequence.

Pay careful attention to process. Make every process description clear.

Do

Use active verbs.

Establish agency.

Represent time flow.

Be clear.

Part 4

Start writing!

**What to do and
how to do it.**

A robust manuscript should meet several criteria. These criteria vary by discipline, field, and method. Use this checklist as a basic frame.

Adjust the checklist to suit the discipline, journal, book, or conference. Book chapters may be significantly different while meeting comparable requirements.

The author should:

- 1 State the theme of the paper.**
- 2. Introduce the subject.**
- 3. Promise a contribution.**
- 4. State the goals of the paper.**

- 5. Identify the issues of the paper.**
- 6. Give appropriate background information.**
- 7. Describe the approach and method.**
- 8. Describe the circumstances in which he or she did the work.**

9. Describe the research process.

10. State the structure of the argument and state how the paper will develop it.

11. Provide evidence for the argument.

12. Show how the evidence and the argument lead to a contribution.

Evidence may include empirical work and material from the literature of the field.

13. Describe the findings or conclusions and how they fulfill the goals of the paper.

14. State what the author learned or accomplished.

15. Suggest future work.

16 Provide a reference list containing all sources cited in the text.

Writing is a window!

Effective scholarly or scientific writing enables to reader to see what the author sees, to understand what the author knows, and to make a reasoned judgment on the author's conclusions.

Thank you.

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