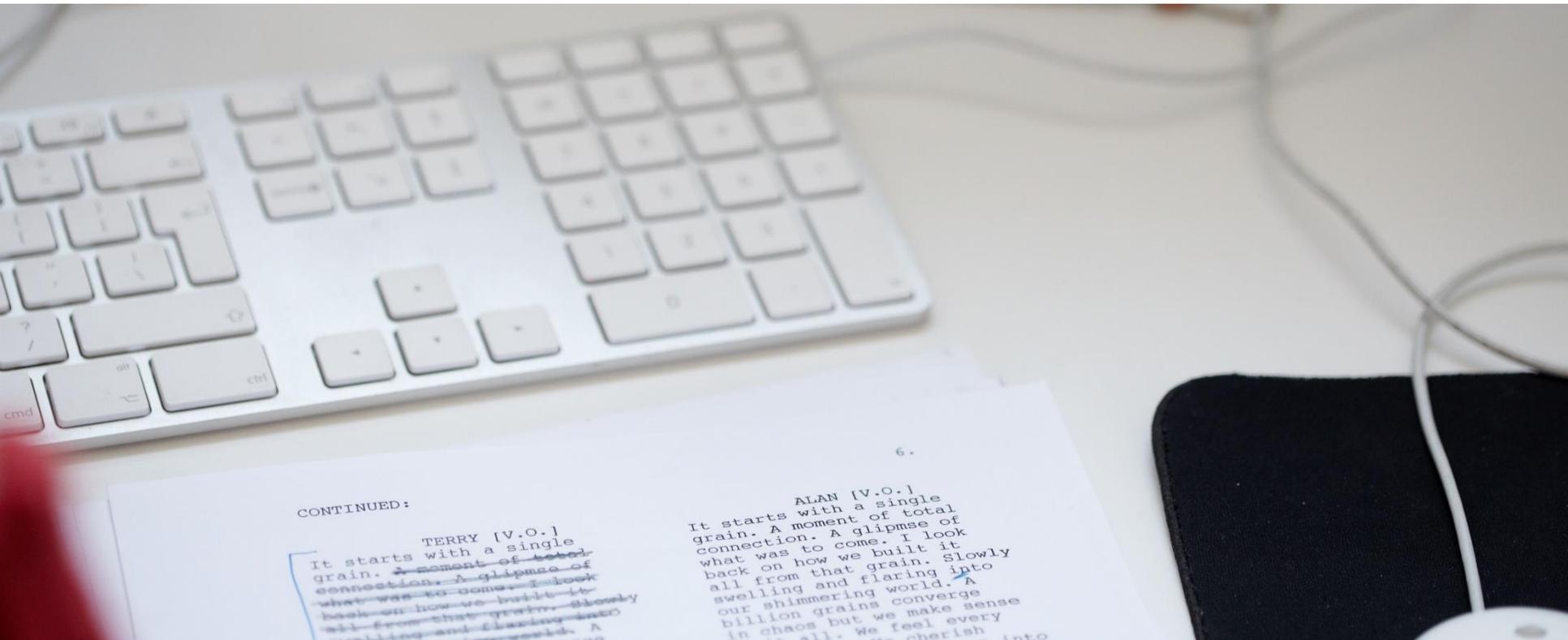


Research Writing, Presentation and Reading for the Doctorate

21 March 2017



Research Writing, Presentation and Reading for the Doctorate

Outline for today

10:00	Arrival/Welcome	Dr Nicola Palmer / Dr Elizabeth Scanlon
10:15	'What journal editors are looking for in a good article'	Prof Carol Taylor
11:00	'Writing in the Academy'	Dr Lisa McGrath
12:30	Lunch	
13:00	'Effective Research Writing'	Dr Frances Slack
13:45	Summing up / preparing for SUW	Dr Nicola Palmer / Dr Elizabeth Scanlon
14:00	Shut Up and Write!	Dr Nicola Palmer / Dr Elizabeth Scanlon
16:00	Close	

What journal editors are looking for in a good article

Prof Carol Taylor

Sheffield Institute of Education

slides to follow...

**Sheffield
Hallam
University**

Sheffield
Institute
of Education

Writing in the Academy

Dr Lisa McGrath

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Why talk about writing in the academy?

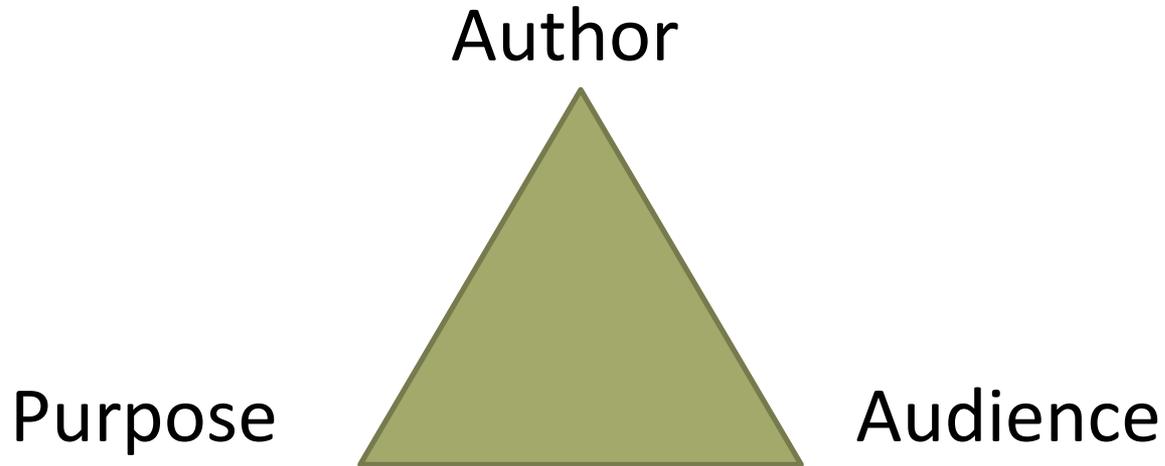
"The communicative demands of the modern university involve far more than simply controlling linguistic error or polishing style"

(Hyland & Shaw, 2016, p.1)

Today

- Some theory
- Some "rhetorical consciousness-raising"
- Some practice

The rhetorical triangle



These elements combined determine the **message** delivered, its **format** and **style**

The importance of context

Context: Writing as a socially-situated practice

You, the reader and the text....

Discourse communities (Swales, 1990, pp26-27)

- A discourse community is a group of people who are linked by common objectives
- A discourse community has mechanisms of intercommunication
- A discourse community utilizes genres
- A discourse community has acquired some specific lexis
- A discourse community has a threshold of members with a suitable degree of relevant content knowledge and discoursal expertise

Which discourse communities do you belong to?

Which genres are predominantly used?

Can you give some examples of specific lexis?

Genres

- "Genres are staged, structured, communicative events, motivated by various communicative purposes, and performed by members of specific discourse communities" (Flowerdew, 2011, p. 140).
- Genres are not texts. Texts 'draw on' or perform genres, which means that some texts are prototypical of the genre, while others are less so (Paltridge, 1997; Swales, 1990).

"Particular genres require writers and speakers not only to '**dance**' particular **attitudes** and **values**, but also to adopt particular rhetorical **stances**, to write or speak from particular **subject positions**"

(Coe, Lingard, & Teslenko, 2002, p.4)

Which of these genres have you "danced"?
What "attitudes and values" are conveyed?
Which "rhetorical stances" are adopted?

Examples of academic
genres at the PhD level:

- monograph
- research article
- abstract
- conference
presentation
- funding application
- RF1
- RF2

Examples of genres from
"real life":

- job application letter
- CV
- film review
- facebook post?

etc...

A writing identity

"Writing in a particular genre often requires writers to assume a particular identity in order to enter meaningfully into the conversations of the discourse community with which that genre is associated" (Clark, 2016 p5).

"Identity is not an essentialized, static construct but, rather, is multifaceted and alters frequently in response to various environmental factors" (Clark, 2016, p.2)

Identity

I am not Spock (Leonard Nimoy, 1975)

I am Spock (Leonard Nimoy, 1995)

(Clark, 2016, p. 1)



Recap...

- Writing in the academy is not straightforward!
- Texts are shaped by the author's communicative purpose(s) and intended audience
- Writers in the academy operate within discourse communities who have shared beliefs/goals
- Successful academic writing entails shifting towards/adopting an academic identity

Now let's look more closely at some genres....

Rhetorical Move Structure

Dear Dr XXXX,

Thank you for your interest in our university.

(acknowledgment)

I would like to congratulate you on being offered the position of Senior Lecturer at XXXX University. (good news)

This letter is your formal offer of employment.

In order for us to begin processing your appointment, I would be grateful if you would return the enclosed documentation at your earliest convenience. (administrative details)

We look forward to welcoming you to XXXX University, and wish you every success in your career with us. (welcoming close)

Yours sincerely, XXX

Dear Dr XXXX

Thank you for your application for the position of Senior Lecturer at XXXX University.

We have now completed the rigorous recruitment process . We received a very high number of applications , and while your profile met many of the criteria , we regret to inform you that your application was not successful this time.

We would like to thank you for the interest you have shown in our University, and wish you the very best for your future endeavours.

Your sincerely, XXX

*preparation for bad news

*reparation close

*bad news

*acknowledgement

Five rhetorical moves in the abstract

- **Move 1 - Background/introduction/situation**
- **Move 2 - Present research/purpose**
- **Move 3 - Methods/materials/subjects/procedures**
- **Move 4 - Results/findings**
- **Move 5 - Discussion/conclusion/significance**

Moves in the abstract

Most research on creativity describes it as a net positive: producing new products for the organization and satisfaction and positive affect for creative workers (Move 1). However, a host of anecdotal and historical evidence suggests that creative work can have deleterious consequences for relationships (Move 1). **This raises the question: how does creativity at work impact relationships at home (Move 2)?** Relying on work–family conflict and resource allocation theory as conceptual frameworks, (Move 3) **we test a model of creative behaviors during the day at work and the extent to which employees spend time with their spouses at home in the evening (Move 2),** using 685 daily matched responses from 108 worker–spouse pairings (Move 3). **Our results reveal that variance-focused creative behaviors (problem identification, information searching, idea generation) predict less time spent with a spouse at home. In contrast, selection-focused creative behaviors (idea validation) predict more time spent with a spouse. Further, openness to experience moderates these relationships (Move 4).** Overall, the results raise questions about the possible relational costs of creative behaviors at work on life at home (Move 5).

(Harrison & Wagner, 2015)

Business

- Identification is integral to mentoring relationships, yet we know relatively little about the process through which mentors and protégés identify with each other, how this mutual identification shifts through the phases of the mentoring relationship, and how identification impacts the quality of the relationship over time. In this article we integrate theories of the self, relationships, and relational mentoring to consider the role of identification in informal mentoring. Specifically, we theorize how the process of personal identification occurs in mentoring from the perspective of both the mentor and protégé and offer a model that demonstrates how shifts in identification relate to the quality of the relationship that develops over time. We conclude with a discussion of implications for research and theory in mentoring.

(Humberd & Rouse, 2015)

Education

- Research conducted in South Africa indicates that many South African students who register for undergraduate study each year are under-prepared for university education and that many of these students also have low levels of reading ability. This has an adverse effect on their chances of academic success. In order to meet the reading needs of students in the 21st century, educators are pressed to develop effective instructional means for teaching reading comprehension and reading strategy use. This paper outlines the format and structure of a strategic reading instruction component of an English for Professional Purposes course offered within a technology-enhanced environment. The results indicated that students who received strategic reading instruction in this environment received both statistically and practically significantly higher marks on three reading comprehension measures than did the students in the control group. This was true for successful students, as well as for those considered to be at risk.

(Dreyer & Nel, 2003)

Mechanical Engineering

- We present a study on pattern formation in a Newtonian liquid during lifting of a circular Hele–Shaw cell. When a confined layer of oil is subject to such a stretch flow, air penetrates into the liquid from the sides and a fingering instability, a variant of the classical Saffman–Taylor instability, evolves. This setting has the particularity that the finger growth takes place in a conserved volume of liquid and that the dimensionless surface tension, the control parameter which governs the Saffman–Taylor instability, is changing with time. This leads to a constantly evolving pattern, which we investigate with regard to number of fingers and finger amplitude. We distinguish in the pattern at each instant growing fingers and stagnant fingers. Systematically varying the properties of the viscous oil and the geometry of the Hele–Shaw cell, we show that the number of growing fingers is at each moment well described by a simple approach based on linear stability analysis and depends only on the dimensionless surface tension. In contrast, the finger amplitude and consequently the total number of fingers (growing and stagnant fingers) depend also on the cell confinement. We demonstrate that the finger amplitude has a distinct influence on the debonding force. Higher finger amplitude and number of fingers lead to lower forces.

Now let's look at some micro-level features...(after a brief interlude on discipline)

Discipline

- Disciplines are tangible organizations within academia which [...] have some "institutional manifestation" (Krishnan, 2009, p.9).
- Disciplines have common interests in terms of object of study, methodologies, concepts, theories (e.g. Becher, 1989).

Which discipline are you in? Is there a sub-discipline you identify with?



Characterising the writer and reader

Writers in the academy function as members of disciplinary groupings (e.g. Becher, 1989), and their disciplinary discourse is shaped by and shapes their practices, beliefs, and purposes (Hyland, 2004).

Academic Discourse



Disciplinary Discourse

"Whilst on a walk I came across some chopped wood that had some fantastic tree rings lit by the sun. It got me thinking about the age of trees and how I could use this to help inspire forms, concepts and a narrative for my exhibition space..."

(Vallance, 2015)

On the other hand, the sum

$$\sum_{i=1}^{k_0} \theta(n + h_i) - \log 3x$$

can only be positive if $n + h_i$ is prime for *at least* two indices $i = 1, \dots, k_0$. We conclude that, for all sufficiently large x , there exists some integer $n \in [x, 2x]$ such that $n + h_i$ is prime for at least two $i = 1, \dots, k_0$.

(Polymath, 2015)

Academic writing is persuasive

- Writing involves interactions: “Writers and readers clearly consider each other, try to imagine each other’s purposes and strategies, and write or interpret a text in terms of these imaginations.” (Hyland 2004:2)
- Writers need to **persuade readers** to adopt certain positions—both explicitly and implicitly.
 - Academic writing is *not* faceless and objective.
 - It is reader-oriented and “dialogic” by nature.

Is academic/disciplinary discourse factual and objective?

Hedges (*might, perhaps, possible, seem* etc.) - withholding the writer's full commitment to a proposition;

Boosters (*in fact, definitely, it is clear that,* etc.) - emphasising the writer's certainty in a proposition;

Attitude markers (*unfortunately, I agree, surprisingly,* etc.) - expressing the writer's attitude towards a proposition;

Engagement markers (*consider, note that, you can see,* etc.) - referring to or building up a relationship with the reader;

Self-mentions (*I, we, my, our,* etc.) - making explicit reference to the researcher.

Shared knowledge references: (*common, standard, well-known*)
- explicitly point out shared understandings of the discourse community.

Stance and engagement markers across disciplines (Kuteeva & McGrath 2015)

Number of stance and engagement markers per thousand words in pure mathematics articles compared to Hyland's 2005 results.

	P Mth	Phy	Bio	ME	EE	Phil	Soc	AI	Mk
Hedges	1.8	9.6	13.6	8.2	9.6	18.5	14.7	18.0	20.0
Attitude markers	2.7	3.9	2.9	5.6	5.5	8.9	7.0	8.6	6.9
Boosters	5.4	6.0	3.9	5.0	3.2	9.7	5.1	6.2	7.1
Self-mentions	0.8	5.5	3.4	1.0	3.3	5.7	4.3	4.4	5.5
Directives	6.6	2.1	1.3	2.0	2.9	2.6	1.6	2.0	1.3
Questions	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	1.4	0.7	0.5	0.3
Shared knowledge references	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.4	1.0	0.4	0.6	0.4
Asides	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0
Reader Ref.	20.3	2.1	0.1	0.5	1.0	11.0	2.3	1.9	1.1
Total	38.6	29.9	25.4	22.6	25.9	59.9	36.2	42.2	42.7

Accounting for disciplinary differences

Epistemology: set of assumptions about how knowledge is obtained.

Ontology: set of assumptions about the nature of reality and existence.

Different types of **Evidence**
Different types of **Questions**

Stance and engagement in literary studies

- “In discussing the relationship between *King Lear* and early modern religious culture, *I am not going to offer* a traditional religious reading of the play.”
- “*Elton is right to see* little evidence of redemption in the ending of *King Lear*... One of Elton’s contemporaries ... *offers a generally admirable* Christian reading of the tragedy, but on this point *he simply overreaches*...”
- “*Whatever one thinks* of Girard’s thesis, *it deserves attention* from early modernists...”

Is academic writing in Business "faceless and objective"?

- ...we shift the focus of stigma research inside organizational boundaries by examining its relationship with...
- Interestingly, the authors' analysis also illuminated how customers, suppliers, and regulators can themselves become stigmatized simply by associating with a bathhouse
- We find it surprising, therefore, that the effects of stigma on organizational identity have largely been glossed over
- ...because organizational stigmatization represents an extreme kind of evaluation (Hudson, 2008), its consequences for organizational identity may be highly significant.
- Our approach to data analysis followed common prescriptions for inductive qualitative data analysis...

Is writing in Physics faceless and objective?

- "We therefore believe that our sensitivity maps of the $d=1$ mm cylinder, which imply only weak mean flow, are good candidates..."
- "The seminal work of Srtykowski & Sreenivasen (1985, 1990) investigates the flow around a circular cylinder..."

Some mechanics of clarity....

Clarity

“The clarity principle is taken very seriously in English academic writing. [It] states that the writer should make everything clear to the reader”

(Hamp-Lyons & Heasley, 2006:50).

How well does this paragraph adhere to the clarity principle? What does the author do well and not so well? Can you improve it?

Lasers have found widespread application in medicine. Lasers play an important role in the treatment of eye disease and the prevention of blindness. The eye is ideally suited for laser surgery. Most of the eye tissue is transparent. The frequency and focus of the laser beam can be adjusted according to the absorption of the tissue. The beam "cuts" inside the eye with minimal damage to the surrounding tissue - even the tissue between the laser and the incision. Lasers are effective in treating some causes of blindness. Other treatments are not. The interaction between laser light and eye tissue is not fully understood.

(Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 26)

Flow: Old to new (Swales & Feak 2004)

Progression from **old** or given information (**subject position or early at the left end of the sentence**) to **new** information (**placed at the right end of the sentence**).

Lasers have found widespread application in medicine. **Lasers** play an important role in the **treatment of eye disease** and the prevention of blindness. **The eye** is ideally suited for **laser surgery**. Most of the eye tissue is transparent. The frequency and focus of the **laser beam** can be adjusted according to the absorption of the tissue. **The beam** "cuts" inside the eye with minimal damage to the surrounding tissue - even the tissue between the laser and the incision. Lasers are effective in treating some causes of blindness. Other treatments are not. The interaction between laser light and eye tissue is not fully understood.

Cohesion

Lasers have found widespread application in medicine. Lasers play an important role in the treatment of eye disease and the prevention of blindness. The eye is ideally suited for laser surgery. Most of the eye tissue is transparent. The frequency and focus of the laser beam can be adjusted according to the absorption of the tissue. The beam "cuts" inside the eye with minimal damage to the surrounding tissue - even the tissue between the laser and the incision. Lasers are effective in treating some causes of blindness. Other treatments are not. The interaction between laser light and eye tissue is not fully understood.

Lasers have found widespread application in medicine. For example, they play an important role in the treatment of eye disease and the prevention of blindness. The eye is ideally suited for laser surgery as most of the eye is transparent. Because of this transparency, the frequency and focus of the laser beam can be adjusted according to the absorption of the tissue so that the beam "cuts" inside the eye with minimal damage to the surrounding tissue - even the tissue between the laser and the incision. Lasers are also effective than in treating some causes of blindness, while others are not. However, the interaction between laser light and eye tissue is not fully understood.

Conclusion

- Successful writing in the academy entails control over different genres and the discourse of your specific discipline - attention to text and context;
- Academic genres are carefully crafted rhetorical acts, tailored to audience and purpose;
- Performing academic genres entails adopting an academic identity (momentarily, temporarily, permanently?)

Want to know more?

The University English Scheme

Writing development courses at SHU:

- English for research students (PhD level)
- Writing your Master's dissertation (Master's)
- Academic English skills (all levels)

Bespoke courses

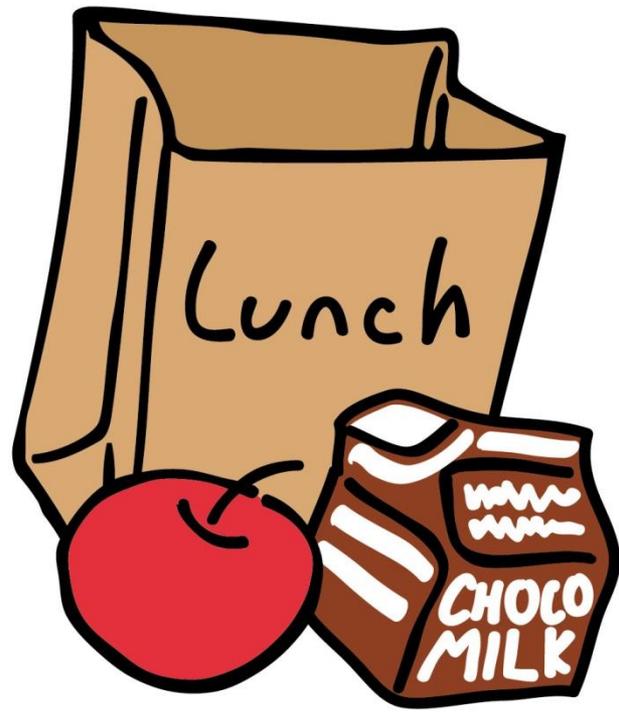
- Academic English for DBA students
- Writing your research article???

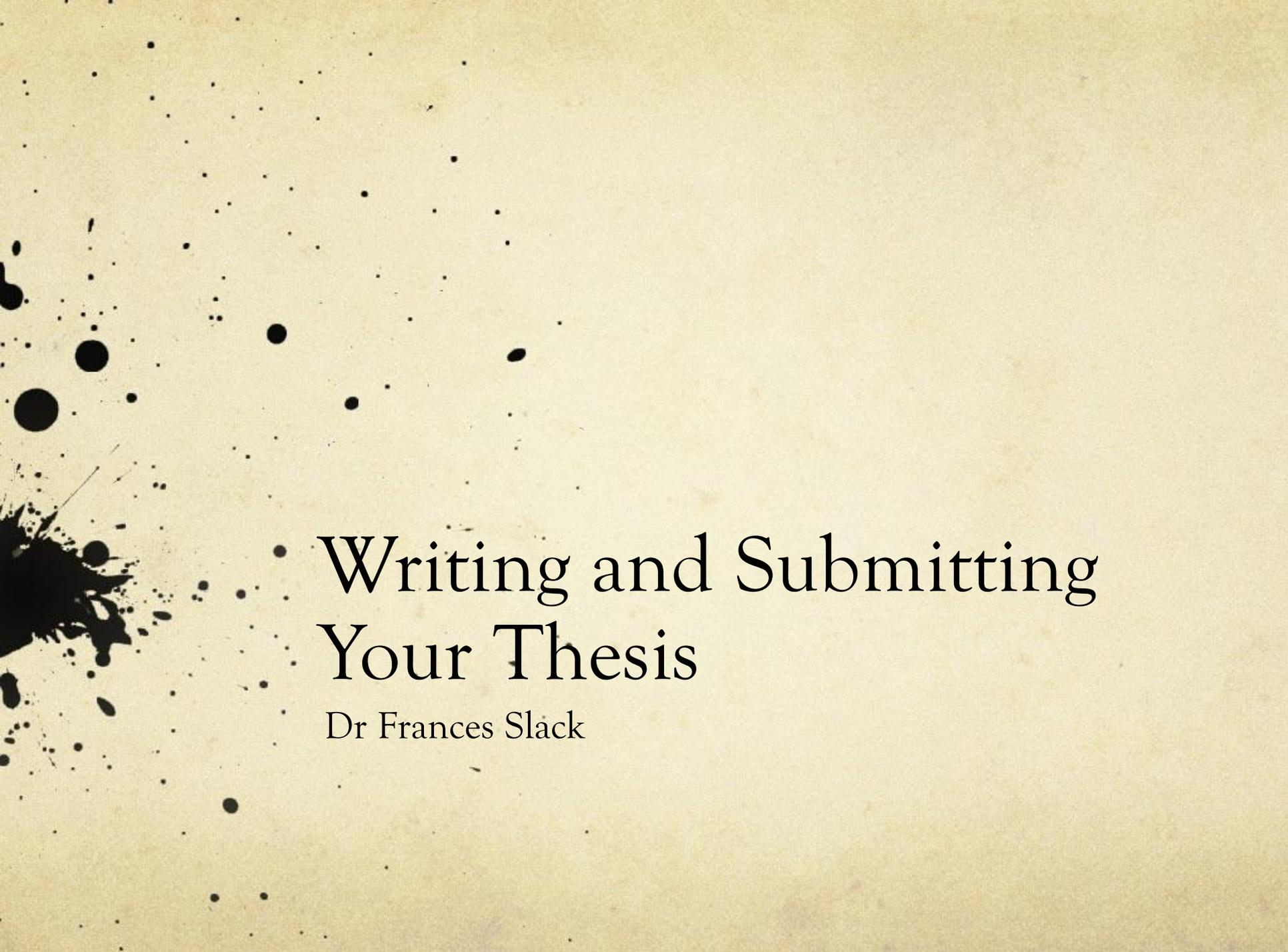
Questions?

Thank you very much!

Dr Lisa McGrath

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Writing and Submitting Your Thesis

Dr Frances Slack

Outline

- Tips for writing
- Using Turnitin
 - 3rd party copyright for e-thesis
- Before we start...
- How many of you have started writing?
- How many of you have nearly finished?
- On a sheet of paper write:
 - 3 things that make writing easier or more pleasant for you
 - 3 things that make writing difficult or more worrying for you

1 Read

- Your own writing
- Other completed theses
- Your literature
- Your colleagues' drafts
 - Peer support
 - A critical friend
- Things that interest you

2 Organise yourself

- Know what you are doing
- Know why you are doing it
- Know how you are doing it
- Know what is your contribution to knowledge

3 Write an abstract

- Start with your original contribution to knowledge
- This will help your supervisor find the examiners
- It will help you to write your introduction
- It will help you to structure your thesis
- You will rewrite it at the end

4 Write for your examiners

- They are the only people who will read your thesis in detail
 - Apart from you and your supervisors
- Don't send them to sleep
 - They are intelligent and knowledgeable
 - But you are the expert
- How could your new knowledge be of interest or use to others?
- What are the implications?

5 Signpost your thesis

- Chapter titles and sub-headings should tell the examiners what to expect
- Is there a logical flow leading to the conclusion?
- Connect the chapters – link, focus, overview
- Make the implicit explicit

6 The Conclusion

- No new data, no new literature
- Discuss the limitations of the research
 - But not the deficiencies
- Be reflexive
- Don't over-claim or under-claim
- Provide an answer to your research question

7 References and bibliography

- Be organised
- Be accurate
- Be consistent
- Be thorough

8 Turnitin demo

- Available on the student Blackboard site
- Check chapter by chapter
- Example...

9 RFDec

- Get it printed and bound
- Submission
- You have finished!
- Almost...

10 A useful link

- Professor Pat Thomson's blog
- <http://patthomson.net>

What's next for you?

Thinking about writing the thesis

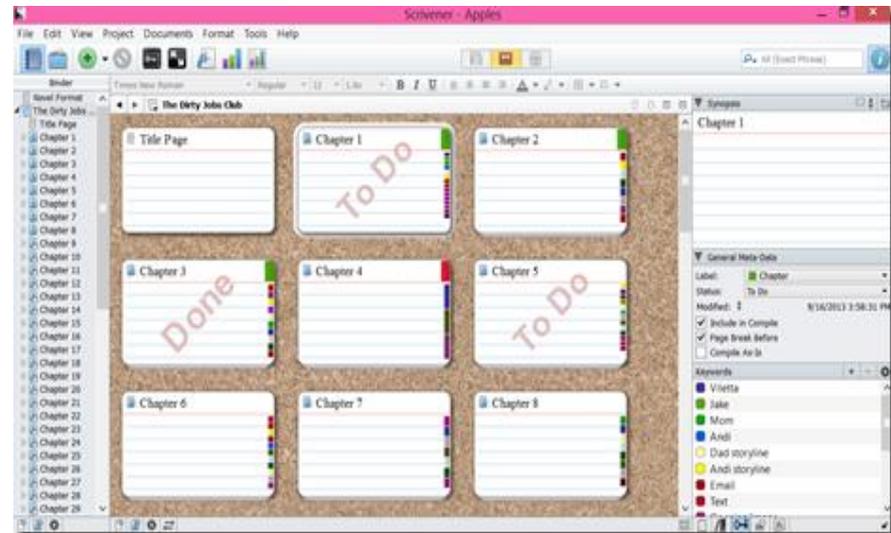
- *How often should I write?*
- *How much should I write?*
- *What are the 'hurdles' or 'barriers' to writing for me?*
- Discuss your responses to these questions with your neighbour(s)

Strategies for effective writing

- 'Know yourself' - work with your circadian rhythms etc.
- 'Be self-disciplined' - say 'No' to distractions, avoid self-sabotaging behaviours - <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/early-career-researchers-difficulty-saying-no-newbie>
- 'Set realistic targets' - do not try to write too much ('eat the elephant')
- 'Plan, plan, plan...' - be argument-driven
- 'Let it out' - get it down on paper and then polish or refine later.

Practical tools to support your writing

- Timetable your writing (prioritise and protect your time for this activity)
- Pomodoro Technique (time management)
- Scrivener's Corkboard or Apple Mac's Storyboard (plan your thesis structure)
- See: <https://patthomson.net/> for more Academic Writing tips



Support for effective writing

- Shut Up & Write
 - at SHU: see <https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/doctoralschool/events/>
 - Online: on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month Shut Up & Write sessions are hosted on Twitter - 10 a.m. GMT - [@SUWTUK](https://twitter.com/SUWTUK)
- Writing retreats
 - self-organised (e.g. SHU PSP students)
 - doctoral networks (e.g. NARTI, NECAH, DTA)
- Online communities and advice
 - Thesis whisperer - <https://thesiswhisperer.com/join-the-thesis-whisperer-on-phdchat/>
 - #phdchat
 - Pat Thomson - <https://patthomson.net/>
 - Hugh Kearns - <http://www.ithinkwell.com.au/hugh-kearns>

Shut Up and Write!