

Intensive Course in Research Writing

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Intensive Course in Research Writing: Session 7 (6 July 2016)

Today

- Presentations by some class members
- Discussion: annotations of journal articles
- Presentation/discussion: ethical and other issues
- Presentation/discussion: aspects of writing style

Presentations by Some Class Members

Discussion: Annotations of Your Model Journal Article

- Some section-by-section annotations
 - Introduction
 - Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion
- Some other annotations

Ethical and Other Issues in Journal Publication

Authenticity and Accuracy

- Authenticity (not fabrication)
 - Have you heard of any cases of fabrication?
- Accuracy
 - Providing complete data (not only those supporting one's hypothesis)
 - Avoiding inappropriate manipulation of images
 - Using appropriate statistical procedures

Originality

- Not republishing the same findings (except under special circumstances, with permission and the original source cited)
- Not submitting the same manuscript to two or more journals at once
- Not dividing one small research project into many tiny papers ("salami science" or "cucumber science")

Credit

- Citing sources of information and ideas (also aids credibility, helps in finding out more)
- Avoiding excessive use of others' words
 - Recording sources when copying items or taking notes
 - Placing in quotation marks, or indenting, items used verbatim
 - Perhaps drafting some items while not looking at the source materials
 - Observing copyright and obtaining needed permissions

Ethical Treatment of Humans and Animals

- Treatment must conform to accepted international standards.
- Manuscript must document that the study was approved by an ethical review board before it was done.
- Note: Research on humans tends to be broadly defined. Thus, for example, it includes survey research.

Conflicts of Interest

- Can involve authors, peer reviewers, or editors
- Can be financial, ideological, or other
- Journals may require that conflicts of interest be reported
- Conflicts of interest may be noted in the journal

A Resource on Ethics

- *On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research*, 3rd ed (2009)
- From the US National Academies
- Largely for graduate students
- Available online at www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12192
- Video available at site

Another Resource on Ethics

- *Doing Global Science: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise*
- New (2016) book on ethics in research and publication
- From the InterAcademy Partnership
- Available at www.interacademycouncil.net/24026/29429.aspx

And Another Resource on Ethics

- *CSE's White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications*, 2012 update
- From the Council of Science Editors
- Available at <http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/resource-library/editorial-policies/white-paper-on-publication-ethics/>

Some Other Resources

- Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE): <http://publicationethics.org>
- World Association of Medical Editors (WAME): <http://www.wame.org>

Announcements and Reminders

- Presentations tomorrow by class members
- Homework for tomorrow
 - Reading (just one chapter)
 - Draft of discussion section
- Reminder: revised draft of results due Friday

Some Aspects of Writing Style

Small-Group Discussion: Chapters 30–33

- For this discussion, please meet with some people other than your usual small group.
- Questions
 - What are the most important things you learned from these chapters? (Please be specific.)
 - What questions do you have about these chapters?

Exercise:
Using Simpler Words

- attempt→
- currently→
- demonstrate→
- fundamental→
- numerous→
- subsequently→
- utilize→

Exercise:
Deleting Needless Words

- in the field of physics
- green in color
- is a very rare event
- to show whether or not it works
- of an efficient nature
- count the number of cells
- completely destroy

Exercise:
Condensing Wordy Phrases

- at high speed→
- at some future time→
- for this reason→
- in most instances→
- in the event that→
- the majority of→
- is able to→

Exercise: Using Verbs,
Not Nouns Made from Them

- have effects on→
- make contributions→
- produce relief of→
- provide help to→
- delivered a lecture→
- There is a wide variation in mortality.→
- It is my belief that→

Some Aspects of Comma Use

Avoiding Some Common
Comma Errors

In general:

- Use a comma between the main parts (independent clauses) of a compound sentence.
 - *Example:* We ate barbecue, and then we saw fireworks.
- Do not use a comma between parts of a two-part compound predicate.
 - *Example:* We ate barbecue and then saw fireworks.

Avoiding Some Other Common Comma Errors

- “Restrictive” and “nonrestrictive” elements (Note: You needn’t remember these terms, but it can be helpful to remember the concept.)
 - If a word, phrase, or clause after a noun makes the noun more specific, don’t put commas around it.
 - If a word, phrase, or clause after a noun just adds information about the noun, without making it more specific, place a comma before and a comma after it. Don’t forget the second comma. Perhaps envision the commas as handles that you can use to lift out the supplementary information.

Some Examples

- My friend Kathy is a lawyer.
- My oldest cousin, Dean, is a lawyer.
- A colleague who lives in Mexico helps with the course.
- Dr. Roberto Tuda, who lives in Mexico, helps with the course.
- Which of the following is correct?
 - My husband Tom enjoys singing.
 - My husband, Tom, enjoys singing.

Aspects of Semicolon Use

Only Two Main Uses of Semicolons

- To separate closely related independent clauses:
 - We live in Bryan; they live in College Station.
- To separate lists within a list:
 - This striped T-shirt is available in red, white, and blue; purple, orange, and green; and black, gray, and white.
- Beware: The grammar checker in Word sometimes says to use a semicolon when you shouldn’t do so.

A Good Resource: Grammar Girl

(<http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl>)

Another Good Resource: *AMA Manual of Style*

- Has good chapters on grammar, punctuation, usage, etc
- Chapters contain medical examples
- Online version includes quizzes and detailed answer keys

Questions and Answers

Grammar, Punctuation, Usage,
and More