Help with

STRUCTURING AND VISUALIZING YOUR ACADEMIC TEXT

Structuring and visualizing your academic text - (bachelor) paper, master thesis - is important for its comprehensibility. Below are some general points of attention about the global structure of your text, followed by some specific tips & tricks.

Introduction

The global structure begins with the Introduction. In the introduction, you express the perspective of your text and begin to grab the reader’s attention. As a result, you not only state what you are going to talk about (the content, your scope, the purpose of your research, your research questions, your research methodology, ...), your arguments for your choices, but you also state which structure you are going to use and what the reader can expect the following parts and chapters. You then also stick to this stated order.

The middle part

This is the bulk of your text with chapters/sections/paragraphs that must be clearly written. Usually the 'middle' has a first part with the exploration of the existing work within your research domain and a second part with your own empirical research. Within each part there are chapters/sections/paragraphs. Each opening sentence is a link to the previous paragraph and the part after it flows seamlessly into this. Again, provide arguments for your choices and show empathy with your reader; leave clues, namely where he/she is in your text.

Conclusion

In a conclusion, you emphasize your thesis / perspective again and give a concise summary of the most important results. You do not state any new findings in your conclusion, but you do state any shortcomings in your research, which you can then immediately channel into suggestions for future research.

SOS Structuring and visualising: contact Studyguidance
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PAY ATTENTION TO:

➢ **Sections and Paragraphs.** The most important info is normally located at the beginning or at the end of a paragraph or a paragraph.

➢ **Typographical signals.** You can indicate important information by playing with fonts, line spacing and white space.

➢ **Key and signalwords.** These indicate the content and structure of your text respectively.

➢ **Introductions and (preliminary) conclusions** are usually written as separate paragraphs. Provide new paragraphs for new topics, for examples or contrasts.

PRODUCE:

➢ **Classification-lay-out/building plan.** Divide the available information into topics and subtopics and then establish a sequence, which you then announce at the beginning of your chapter / paragraph.

➢ **A chronological order.** Especially in your structure.

➢ **Cause and effect.** Explain this throughout your text.

➢ **Similarities and differences.** Compare and contrast.

BUILD:

➢ **The division of your chapters** in main topics (sections) and subtopics (paragraphs), think of smooth transitions and announce everything in advance.

➢ **Your discussions** (in case of clearance of theoretical concepts or research results) that you conduct with relevant authors in the field; announce the authors you use in your discussion and don’t forget to give your own opinion at the beginning or at the end.