

6

Structuring the literature review



Chapter summary

This chapter considers:

- the cyclical nature of all the activities involved in the creation of a literature review;
- the close relationship between the processes of reading and writing;
- ways of structuring the review;
- the complementary relationship between the introduction and the literature review;
- some examples from theses and dissertations which illustrate how different researchers organise their use of the literature.

The processes involved in the creation of a literature review

Searching for the literature, reading the source material and writing the review are all interconnected and cyclical processes. There is no clear cut-off point when one activity ends and another begins. Indeed, although there may be an intensive focus on the literature review in the earlier weeks and months of a research project, the processes connected with the review continue to be interwoven throughout the research project. In particular, Wellington et al. (2005) emphasise the significance of continually revisiting the research questions or research focus to help you determine and adapt more precisely what and how much you read in relation to your research topic. Figure 6.1 illustrates the continuous, cyclical and interconnected processes which all contribute to the literature review. The literature searching, reading and writing feed into each other constantly; and all the other activities,



such as formulating research questions and justifying the research problem, influence and are influenced by the literature searching and reading, providing inspiration for the writing. Your writing in turn helps you discover and clarify your ideas and can result in the refinement of the focus of your research and the content of your review.

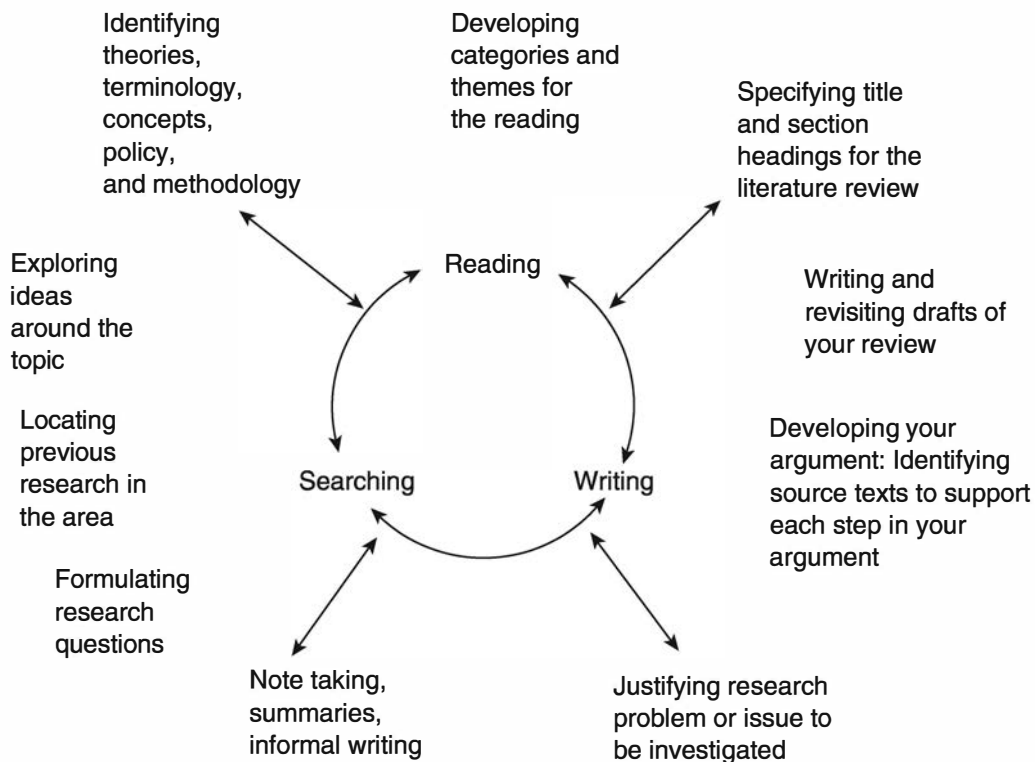


FIGURE 6.1 The literature review process

Beginning to write

It is a good idea to begin writing about the literature as early as possible and it definitely is not necessary to wait until you have a finalised plan or outline. Indeed, starting to write about the literature before the overall organisational structure of your review is clear in your mind is a means of helping you to understand the literature, and discover and clarify how you want to use it (see the sections on note taking and summarising in Chapter 4). In this vein, Murray (2011: 110) suggests various techniques to guide informal writing about the literature before moving on to more formal structured writing. She recommends regular writing to prompt questions, such as: ‘What do I know about my research topic?’; ‘What I am looking for in the literature is ... ’; ‘What are the schools of thought in the literature?’; ‘The “great debates” in my area are ... ’.

This type of regular writing is a means of establishing what you already know, identifying what further reading you need to do, clarifying how your research links with that of others, and developing your own understanding

and interpretation of the literature. Some of your informal writing may form the basis of drafts for your actual literature review which will appear in your dissertation or thesis.

The structure of the literature review

Gradually, as your reading, note taking, summarising and informal writing progresses, you should try to pull together the various threads and move towards an arrangement with headings and subheadings to provide a framework for your review. The categories that you develop to organise your reading material can often provide the basis for the outline of your written review. You will have your own preference for the stage at which you devise an outline for your literature review; some researchers like to do this very early on in the process whereas others prefer to spend longer exploring the literature in a more free-ranging way. But at whatever point you decide on an outline, it will almost certainly change and evolve through a series of drafts.

Because every piece of research is different, it is difficult to suggest a common organisational structure but some suggestions are given below to help you think about the possibilities. The important point to remember is that in your review you should present a logical argument that leads smoothly into your own research, justifying both the need for work and the methodology that is going to be used.

Even if the review is not presented in a single chapter and you integrate your citations fairly evenly throughout the thesis, it is still helpful to make it clear to your reader how and where you address the various issues which have come from your reading. If integrating the literature in this continuous way, an overview of your approach in the introduction of the dissertation or thesis as well as appropriate headings and subheadings in the different chapters throughout the text is recommended.

For the more conventional and still more common practice of writing your literature review in one or more distinct chapters, it is strongly recommended that you include the following:

- an introduction which explains how your review is organised;
- headings and subheadings that provide a map to show the various strands of your argument;
- a summary where the key arguments are reiterated in a concise way.

If the review is long, as is likely for a PhD thesis, summaries interspersed throughout the chapter are helpful; these explain what you have argued so far and how this connects with what follows. An example of a 'transition statement' between sections is given in Example 6.1. The researcher refers to

what she has discussed and makes a link with the relevant literature that she is going to address next. The italics indicate the signalling language which informs the reader about how the text is organised.



Example 6.1 The transition between sections

eg → *Having defined comfortable intelligibility as a target in pronunciation for learners, the next question to be addressed is how we can help learners to achieve this. The teaching profession believes that instruction does help; however an intuitive belief is not reason enough to plan a course of instruction. The next section will look briefly at research on the effects of second language instruction in general and then turn to the area of pronunciation instruction in particular.*

Source: Moore, 2001: 5

Although it is impossible to prescribe a uniform structure for a literature review, there are some organisational principles which are followed by many research writers. You may draw on a combination of the different approaches mentioned below depending on which is most suitable for each particular part of your review.

Weissberg and Buker (1990: 45–6) propose three ways for ordering citations:

- 1 Distant to close
Most distantly related to your work → Most closely related to your work
- 2 Chronological
Earliest related work → Most recent related work
- 3 Comparison and contrast of different approaches or particular features or characteristics of relevant theories and research
One approach → An alternative approach → Another approach

In relation to the first of these approaches, Rudestam and Newton (2007) talk about long shots, medium shots and close-ups to describe the different degrees of depth that you may go into when referring to source texts according to their closeness and relevance to your research. Long shots describe the references that provide the background context to the research. These references tend to be quite general, acknowledging that research has been done on the topic without going into detail. Medium shots are the references which have more bearing on the current research and although not critiqued in detail, enough information is given to show how they impact on the proposed

research. The close-ups are the references that are particularly pertinent for the proposed research and include a critical examination of the work cited. For example, it might be that a limitation in a study cited provides the basis for your research question in which case you would have to do a detailed critique of the study to show how your work connects to it.

I often advise research students who are uncertain about the best way to structure their literature review to think of it as having two distinct but related parts: one which presents the current state of knowledge in the field where your research is situated (including differing perspectives of pertinent theories and concepts) and the other which reviews and critiques relevant empirical research studies and shows how these provide a niche and lead into your own work. For example, if conducting research into how children learn to read, in the first part of the review, one would review and critique the competing theories on children’s literacy acquisition and learning and in the second part, empirical research studies which have investigated the topic would be discussed, focusing on the different methodologies and findings. You would then be able to show how your own research relates to and extends this work.

It may be helpful to visualise the structure of your review as a picture or diagram. Wellington et al. (2005: 82) use some diagrams to illustrate the possible ways of organising your use of the related literature (see Figure 6.2).

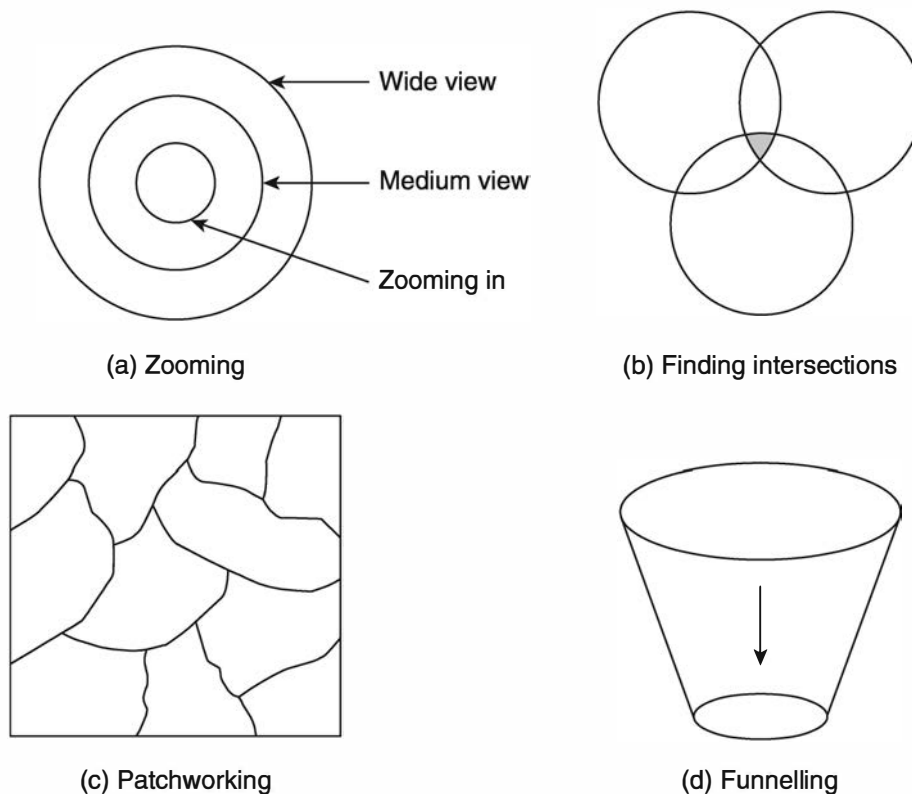


FIGURE 6.2 Organisational patterns for the literature review
Source: Wellington et al., 2005: 82

Based on these ideas, you may find it useful to devise your own picture or pictures to represent how you structure your review. You might draw a patchwork for the whole review, labelling each patch according to the different strands of your review, and devise other diagrams for each section. For example, for one theme in your review, you might choose to adopt a general to specific pattern moving from long shots to close-ups, in which case the funnelling or zooming diagrams would be suitable.



Example 6.2 Sample structure of a literature review from International Business and Management

The following example is from an MSc dissertation in the field of International Business and Management and provides an illustration of Weissberg and Buker's (1990) third approach to organising a review. The research consists of a case study which investigates the process of internationalisation and expansion for a company when entering an overseas market. The literature review explored the theory behind this process, breaking it down into four phases: pre-entry (2.2.–2.4), entry (2.5), growth and repositioning (2.6). Thus, from the contents page of the dissertation, we can see the following structure.

eg →

- 2.0 Literature Review
- 2.1 Literature Synopsis
- 2.2 Motives behind Internationalization
- 2.3 Choosing the Right Market
- 2.4 Deciding on When to Enter the Potential Market(s)
- 2.5 Entry Modes
 - 2.5.1 Establishing Wholly Owned Subsidiaries (WOS)
 - 2.5.2 Joint Venture (JV) as an Entry Mode
 - 2.5.3 Franchising as an Entry Mode
 - 2.5.4 High Control vs. Low Control
- 2.6 Expansion within the Market
 - 2.6.1 Growth Strategies – Corporate Level Strategy
- 2.7 Research Contribution

Source: Ovcina, 2010:7

In this chapter, the researcher explores chronologically the phases of a company's entry into a new international market from pre-entry to growth and repositioning. Within each phase he compares, contrasts and critiques different authors' theories and models. This review serves as the theoretical underpinning and framework for the case study analysis of a US retail company's entry into Latin American markets.

In the literature review example above, Dino provided a theoretical overview of a process which was then used to provide a basis for exploring a case study. As explained above, it is often relevant to also include a section or sections in your review which report on related empirical studies in your field. Findings are compared and contrasted, limitations in previous studies may be highlighted and a niche for your own work is identified (See Chapter 2, Example 2.13; Example 6.6 below, section 2.2.1; Example 6.7 below, section 1.3; Chapter 8, Example 8.2a). The tabular presentation of related empirical studies shown in Chapter 4 can provide a stepping stone for this part of the review. Thus, it is helpful to think about how the different purposes of the review will be realised in different sections and how the information and arguments in each may be presented in different ways.

Developing the structure of your review

Having considered the structure or organisational pattern of your literature review, it is important to consider the process which will help you achieve this. Swales and Feak (2000: 118–24) provide a practical reading and writing task which demonstrates, first, the importance of 'creating an architecture' for the literature review and, second, a means for creating this architecture. The underpinning principle to this process is that you put together an argument and draw on your source texts to provide support for your assertions. By developing your own argument, you show that you are using the literature for your own purposes rather than being controlled by the authors whose work you have read and are citing in your own writing.

The process involves devising an outline of your argument steps which then form the basis of the architecture of your review. For each step of your argument, group together the sources that contribute to or provide support for your assertions. If you number each of your references in EndNote or the filing system that you are using for your references, you can insert the relevant numbers beside each argument step at the planning stage. You may also wish to write down the page numbers from particular references that contain the information which is relevant for supporting your argument. Table 6.1 provides a scaffold for this planning.

TABLE 6.1 The literature review architecture

<i>Argument steps</i>	<i>Relevant references and page numbers</i>

From the argument steps that you devise, you can then develop the headings and subheadings that become the framework for your review. Using tables such as the one offered in 6.1, it is recommended that you create an overall architecture for the whole review and then more detailed ones for each section. Some researchers prefer to develop a plan like this before they start writing, whereas others write first and gradually extricate a framework from their writing.

The note card system described in Chapter 4 is a useful technique for grouping together ideas from different authors which support the particular points that you wish to make. You can physically move around the significant pieces of information from your source texts that you have recorded on your note cards according to where they best fit into your argument steps. The arrangements you make with your cards can then be recorded in an ‘architecture table’ such as the one shown in Table 6.1 (for a worked example, see Table 6.2).



Example 6.3 Planning your literature review

This example shows how a researcher planned and developed his argument for one section of the literature review, and is from a psychology PhD thesis first cited in Chapter 1, Example 1.6. In the extract from the contents page of this thesis shown in Chapter 1, we saw how the literature review was introduced in the first chapter and was then revisited in different places throughout the thesis, appearing before relevant research studies. The plan reproduced in Table 6.2 was created for a section of the literature review on goal-achievement which appeared at the beginning of Webb’s chapter 3, before two studies investigating the influence of personal goals on goal-attainment. The literature review discusses the wide variety of goal theories which influenced the focus of the empirical studies.

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TABLE 6.2 An example of the architecture of a literature review

Section title: Models of goal-achievement

<i>Argument steps</i>	<i>Relevant references</i>
Limited previous research on comparison of goal theories	Bagozzi and Kimmel, 1995; Fredricks and Dossett, 1983; Valois et al., 1988; Cacioppo and Berntson, 1995; Weinstein, 1993
Introduce 'Rubicon model': action phases (as a means of categorising goal theories): predecisional; preactional; actional	Heckhausen, 1987; Heckhausen and Gollwitzer, 1986, 1987
Predecisional action phase: theory of planned behaviour; models of goal setting	Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Sheeran, 2002; Bandura, 1977
Preactional phase: theory of self-regulation; implementation intentions	Locke and Latham, 1990; Carver and Scheier, 1981; Hyland, 1988; Baumeister, Heatherton and Tice, 1994; Emmons and King, 1988; Hook and Higgins, 1988
Actional phase: self-regulatory strength;	Bagozzi, 1992; Abelson, 1988; Latham and Locke, 1991
emotion;	Gollwitzer, 1990
social influences; performance feedback.	Baumeister et al., 1994; Luminet et al., 2000; Muraven and Baumeister, 2000; Baumeister et al., 1998; Webb and Sheeran, 2003
	Martin and Tesser, 1988, 1996; Keltner and Gross, 1999; Lazarus, 1991; Levenson, 1994; Kuhl, 1996, 2000
	Povey et al., 2000; Rutter et al., 1993; Deci and Ryan, 1985; Tauer and Harackiewicz, 1999

Source: Adapted from Webb, 2003: 50–1

In terms of a structural pattern for this section of the review, it involved a comparison of different approaches. The diagram of a patchwork from Figure 6.2 depicts it well, with each patch representing a different goal theory.



Task 6.1 Structuring your own literature review

Try the activities below in relation to your whole literature review or one or two sections of it.

- 1 Draw a picture which represents the structure of your own literature review.
- 2 Fill in a table outlining the steps of the argument that you intend to follow in your review. Give the supporting references and specific page numbers for each argument step. You will add to these references gradually and over time as your reading progresses.

The relationship between the introduction and the literature review

Another important aspect of the integration of the literature into your dissertation or thesis to consider is the relationship between the references cited in the introduction and those cited in the literature review. In some fields, such as medicine, the introduction is a long chapter which includes the literature review. However, in many other disciplines, you are likely to have a separate introduction followed by the literature review. If uncertain about the best approach to adopt, you can clarify the conventions and expectations in your field by consultation with your supervisor and by looking at previous dissertations or theses in your field.

Some of the multiple purposes of the literature review which were referred to in Chapter 2 of this book may be partially or fully realised in the introduction. These purposes are repeated here as a reminder of the variety of reasons for which we include references to the work of others in research writing.

- to provide a historical background for your research;
- to give an overview of the current context in which your research is situated by referring to contemporary debates, issues and questions in the field;
- to discuss relevant theories and concepts which underpin your research;
- to introduce relevant terminology and provide definitions to clarify how terms are being used in the context of your own work;
- to describe related research in the field and show how your work extends or challenges this, or addresses a gap in previous work in the field;
- to provide supporting evidence for a practical problem or issue which your research is addressing thereby underlining its significance.

If adopting a conventional structure for your thesis or dissertation, where in the final version of the paper you have an introduction that is followed by one or more chapters which constitute the literature review, there will be references to sources of information and related research in both these parts. As suggested above, it can sometimes be difficult to decide which references to include in the introduction and which ones to refer to in the literature review. Researchers make individual decisions about how to organise the information in these two parts of the dissertation or thesis. Nevertheless, there are some general principles regarding which purposes are likely to be fulfilled in the different chapters. The discussion below offers suggestions which will help you decide how to differentiate between the content you decide to include in these initial chapters.

The introduction is usually relatively brief compared with the literature review. An approximate guideline to bear in mind is that the introduction should be about 10 per cent of the whole dissertation or thesis and the literature review 20 per cent (Barnes, 1995 cited in Blaxter et al., 2010).

In the introduction, it is common practice to provide:

- a brief historical and/or contemporary context for the research;
- a concise reference to research already carried out in the field;
- an outline of the research problem that needs to be explored as a result of a gap left by previous research or an issue that needs resolving;
- a justification for the proposed research;
- an outline of the contents of the different chapters in the dissertation or thesis.

Some of these purposes will be revisited more comprehensively in the literature review. For example, you may expand on the historical and contemporary context in which your work is situated. You are also likely to identify and discuss the key theories, concepts and terminology which are relevant to your research topic and explore these in sufficient depth for the type and level of research that you are undertaking. Additionally, you will probably *explore* in more detail related empirical research studies in the field and once again highlight how your work extends that of others or fills a gap. Examples 6.4–6.7 included below show how different researchers have developed an organisational structure for their literature review. They illustrate how the categories for the reading led into argument steps and section headings in the literature reviews. The extracts also show how each of the researchers gives an overview of the structure of the literature review in the introduction of the chapter to signal to the reader how the argument will be presented.



Example 6.4 Reading, planning and signposting the structure of the review

For her masters dissertation in town and regional planning, Emma conducted research into the range of influences on planning decisions in urban settings. She was interested in the role universal values have in planning decisions, in particular those decisions which are concerned with conservation and regeneration issues. Her research focus was on how the various stakeholders in the process are conditioned by different values. She analysed this in the context of two case studies.

eg → To make the reading manageable, she broke it down under the following headings.

- 1 The role of 'values' in planning research
- 2 Stakeholders in planning decisions
- 3 Universal values in relation to planning

- 4 Particularity of place in planning decisions
- 5 Participatory planning
- 6 Conservation in urban settings
- 7 Regeneration in urban settings

This resulted in the following framework or 'architecture' for her literature review which appears as Chapter 2 after the introduction of her dissertation. The headings which appear on the contents page are shown below.

eg →

- 2.0 Literature Review: introduction
- 2.1 The importance of value
- 2.3 The public interest and stakeholder relations
- 2.4 The universal and the particular
- 2.5 The value of conservation and regeneration in historic urban quarters
- 2.6 Implications for conservation/regeneration initiatives: the case studies

Source: Adapted from Coveney, 2003: i

The connections can be seen again with the introductory paragraph of her review which outlines how she is going to discuss the literature which underpins her research.

eg → As stated in the introduction, this study is about values in planning and uses the relationship between conservation and regeneration in historic urban quarters as an illustration. This chapter introduces the 'values approach' to planning, looking firstly at why questions of value are so important. It then considers three notions fundamental to the approach in more depth: those of the public interest and stakeholder relations, the relationship between the universal and the particular, and finally the implications for participatory planning. The final part of this chapter considers the relationship between the practices of conservation and regeneration and the values surrounding them and explains the choice of the case studies.

Source: Adapted from Coveney, 2003: 5



Example 6.5 Signposting and structuring the review

In her PhD thesis on Education for sustainable development, Ling outlines the organisational structure of her literature review in two different places: in the Introduction, Section 1.4,

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'Outline of the thesis', and in Section 2.1, which is the introduction of her literature review (see Table of contents of full thesis in Chapter 1, Example 1.4). I include the paragraph from the beginning of her literature review (Section 2.1) below.

eg → The main body of this review consists of five sections. To set the scene for and to provide contextualising information about the research topic, I critically review the notion of SD (section 2.2), and the history of sustainability education (section 2.3). I move on to discuss four key curriculum perspectives – technical, socially-critical, liberal-progressive and postmodern perspectives – and their relevance to sustainability education (section 2.4). Amongst the four perspectives, I focus on the last three as the theoretical framework of the research. Finally, I introduce English and Chinese HE and their respective responses to sustainability education, their differences and similarities (section 2.5) as well as issues involved in learning across national and cultural boundaries (section 2.6).

Source: Feng, 2010: 14–15

To focus more specifically on one part of the literature review chapter, we shall now turn to Section 2.2. In preparation for this part, where the concept of sustainable development is explored and critiqued, Ling organised her reading into the following areas. These themes later led to her choice of the subheadings for the Section.

eg →

Sustainable development: origins and ongoing issues (2.2)

Interpretations of 'sustainable' (2.2.1)

Interpretations of 'development' (2.2.1)

Sustainable development and capitalism (2.2.2)

Intragenerational equity: developing countries and climate change (2.2.3)

Anthropocentrism and ecocentrism (2.2.4)

Overall complexity and uncertainty of the concept of sustainable development (2.2.5)

Positive and encouraging examples which support the potential of sustainable development (2.2.6 and 2.2.7)

The subheadings below show how Ling organised her critique in the thesis. Sections 2.2.1–2.2.5 raise a number of challenges to the concept of sustainable development and then in Sections 2.2.6 and 2.2.7 she argues how specific international conferences, documents and events offer hope for overcoming some of these and thus support sustainable development.

eg →

2.2 The notion of sustainable development (SD)

2.2.1 Oxymoron?

2.2.2 Business as usual

- 2.2.3 Intragenerational equity
- 2.2.4 Anthropocentrism versus ecocentrism
- 2.2.5 Complexity and uncertainty
- 2.2.6 A way forward
- 2.2.7 Changes occurring

Source: Feng, 2010: i

Examples 6.6 and 6.7 below illustrate the choices different researchers have made with regard to way they have used the related literature in the introduction and the literature review. No hard and fast rules exist with regard to what is covered in each part of the dissertation or thesis, but from these two examples we can see how two more researchers have organised their content to fulfil all the necessary purposes of using the literature for their particular piece of research.



Example 6.6 The introduction and the literature review

This example is taken from doctoral research which investigated information management among health visitors in the UK. Extracts in Example 6.6 are adapted from Bacigalupo (2000).

eg →

The title

The Information Management of Health Visitors: with particular reference to their public health and community development activities

The research questions

How can the way that health visitors deal with information in public health and community development settings be understood in relation to the health service context and current information management concepts and processes?

What are the implications of that understanding in terms of developing recommendations and guidelines for practice?

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Reading categories

The researcher developed the following categories for her reading:

- Information management
- History
- Concepts
- Processes
- Previous research
- User studies
- Information needs
- Information seeking behaviour
- Information audit (methodology for assessing needs)
- Information management in the NHS
- Strategies
- Problems
- Achievements
- Needs and resources
- Public health
- Health visiting
- Community development work
- Government policy and legislation in public health

This led into the following structure for the first three chapters of the PhD thesis.

The contents page

eg →

- Chapter 1 Introduction (pp. 3–9)
 - 1.1 The motive for the research
 - 1.2 The research questions
 - 1.3 The current context
 - 1.3.1 Changes in the UK National Health Service
 - 1.3.2 Changes in UK government policy: a focus on the community
 - 1.3.3 NHS policy: maximizing the potential of IT

- 1.4 Focus of the research
- 1.5 Definition of information management
- 1.6 Justification for the research
- 1.7 Outline of the chapters of the thesis
- Chapter 2 Information management (pp. 10–39)
 - 2.1 Introduction
 - 2.2 Information management: history, concepts and processes
 - 2.2.1 Research in the context of information management
 - 2.3 Information management in the NHS
 - 2.3.1 Strategies
 - 2.3.2 Problems
 - 2.3.3 Achievements
 - 2.3.4 Resources
 - 2.4 Summary
- Chapter 3 Public health and community development (pp. 40–59)
 - 3.1 Introduction
 - 3.2 Public health
 - 3.2.1 History of public health and the development of health visiting
 - 3.2.2 Role of health visitors
 - 3.3 Community development
 - 3.4 Government policy and legislation
 - 3.5 Summary

Source: Bacigalupo, 2000: i

In terms of the purposes served by the references to the literature, the different chapters cover the following. The introduction outlines the current context in relation to the National Health Service, information management, and government policy; states the research questions and research focus; justifies the research; and provides a definition of information management. At the end of this chapter, an outline of the content of each of the chapters of the thesis is given.

Chapter 2 outlines the historical context of information management and information management in the NHS; introduces concepts and terminology relevant for the field; and shows how the current research addresses a gap in existing research. Chapter 3 gives more detail of the historical and current context within the field of public health.

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The conclusion to Chapter 2 is included below. The phrases used give an example of how the researcher signals what she is doing in relation to the literature in the different chapters of her thesis.

Summary of chapter 2

eg → This chapter has discussed information management concepts in general and recent developments with regard to information management in the NHS. The need for information management research into how health visitors deal with information has been highlighted. The next chapter reviews the literature regarding the public health and community development activities of health visitors in order to show that this area is particularly relevant for research.

Source: Bacigalupo, 2000: 39



Example 6.7 The introduction and the literature review

The study here was for a masters dissertation and looked at the effect of instruction on two aspects of EFL (English as a foreign language) learners' pronunciation: the production of specific features of pronunciation and general intelligibility. Extracts in example 6.5 are adapted from Moore (2001), referred to in earlier chapters.

eg →

The title

The Effects of Formal Instruction on EFL Pronunciation Acquisition: A Case Study from Germany

The hypotheses

H0 = a course of pronunciation instruction does not improve a learner's production of specific features of pronunciation.

H1 = a course of pronunciation instruction improves a learner's production of specific features of pronunciation.

H0 = a course of pronunciation instruction does not improve a learner's general intelligibility.

H1 = a course of pronunciation instruction improves a learner's general intelligibility.

Categories for reading

Features of pronunciation and 'intelligibility'

Second language learning and acquisition

Second language instruction

Pronunciation instruction

Other factors that influence effective pronunciation

The architecture of the first three chapters of the dissertation, which was developed from the reading, is shown in the following extract from the contents page.

The contents page

Introduction

Justification for the research

The context: the English Language Teaching Institution and the learners

Outline of the dissertation

Chapter 1 Literature review

1.1 Historical Background

1.2 Target Pronunciation and Intelligibility

1.3 Research into the Effects of Instruction

1.3.1 Second Language Research

1.3.2 Pronunciation Research

1.4 Specific Features of Pronunciation

1.4.1 Strong and Weak Forms of words

1.4.2 Contractions and Elision

1.4.3 Assimilation

1.4.4 Liaison

1.4.5 Stress

1.4.6 Intonation

1.5 Summary

Chapter 2 The experiment

2.1 Aims and rationale of the experiment: the hypotheses

Source: Moore, 2001: iii

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In terms of the purposes served by the references to the literature, the different chapters cover the following. The introduction introduces the topic of pronunciation; provides a justification for the research; outlines the current context of the research; and gives an outline of the content of each chapter in the dissertation.

The literature review (Chapter 1) provides a historical context, describes related research which shows how current research is filling a gap and extending work that has been done before; and defines relevant terms for the field of research. The hypotheses are given at the beginning of Chapter 2.

The final paragraph of the introduction is included below to show the way in which the researcher signals how the literature is integrated into the dissertation.

eg → Having briefly outlined the rationale behind the study, the first chapter will review the pertinent literature on the effects of instruction both on second language learning in general and also specifically on pronunciation. Other factors involved in the learning process will also be considered since second language acquisition is a highly complex process. By considering the research in the field, a general framework will be provided for this study and the discussion presented in the second chapter. Finally, the first chapter will present an outline of the specific features of pronunciation under consideration in this study. The second chapter will describe the experiment that was conducted to investigate the effects of instruction on pronunciation and present the data analysis and a discussion of the results. In the final chapter, the constraints of this study will be discussed, followed by implications for further research.

Source: Moore, 2001: 2



Task 6.2 Reflecting on your own research field

Ask your supervisor to recommend a thesis or dissertation in your field. Look carefully at the contents page and identify whether a distinct chapter or chapters constitute the literature review. Read the introduction and the literature review chapter/s. Identify the purposes for which the researcher is using the related literature. Note, in particular, the way the various purposes are realised in either the introduction and/or the literature review.



Summary

To summarise, this chapter has considered:

- the cyclical, continuous, and interconnected nature of the various processes involved in the literature review;
- techniques for starting to write about the relevant literature of your field;
- the various structures that might be adopted for the literature review or for different parts of it;
- the relationship between the introduction and the literature review;
- some examples from dissertations and theses which show how different researchers have organised their use of the literature.