

ACADEMIC LITERACY

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Academic literacy competencies

- Knowledge of subject (topic)
- Knowledge of research methodology
- Information literacy
- Critical thinking
- Knowledge of academic principles
- Knowledge of language culture

Characteristics of the scientific text

- Research text based on 1 problem
- Clarity
- Novelty of knowledge
- Addressee – scientific community
- Authors – scientists (young scientist)
- Completeness
- Peculiar style of language
- References are necessary
- Scientific review

Responsibility

The author of the scientific text is responsible for:

- chosen topic and research object
- problem, purpose of the work and formulation of tasks
- applied research methods and collected research material
- proposals and conclusions
- selected visualization
- correct writing
- presentation of the work

Choosing the topic

When choosing a theme, consider:

- personal interest
- academic career plans
- applicability of the theme in your professional life
- width of the theme
- relevance of the theme

Narrowing the topic

- Where? (*Lithuania, the Baltic States, European Union, ...?*)
- When? (*XIX century, years 2006-2016, when joined EU, ...?*)
- What?
- Related topics



Pictures source: <http://www.aljazeera.com>

Evaluation of information



Picture source: Crizmo.com

How to start reading?

- Read the title
- Read the abstract/ preface
- Find the arguments

Critical reading

When studying literature it is important:

- the main purpose of the text
- context
- the author's way of thinking
- evidence in the text

Evaluation of information

The literature used in the scientific text should be:

- objective
- accurate
- relevant
- reliable

Information evaluation - objectivity

- The problem is described impartially
- The aim of the research is to inform
- The aim is to evaluate all aspects of the problem

Information evaluation - accuracy

- Date of publication and last update of the source
- Reliance on facts/ opinions
- Completeness, detail
- Consistency
- References and the list of bibliography
- References to statistical data sources
- Possibility to clarify in at least two other sources

Information evaluation - relevance

- Information needed for your paper
- Scientific publication is intended for academic community

Information evaluation - reliability

- Author's qualification
- Author is recognized and knowledgeable in his field
- Author's affiliation to the institution is indicated
- Publisher is reliable
- Author's contacts are indicated
- Peer-reviewed publication
- No grammatical or style mistakes

Reliability of internet sources

The most reliable: scientifically peer-reviewed articles, information on governmental, military and non-profit organizations websites.

Less reliable: results from a regular online search with links to primary, secondary or even tertiary sources.

Unreliable: information without references in the blogs, articles, websites of the individuals, companies, institutions, etc.

Website domains

.com = commercial page

.edu = educational institution

.gov = governmental institution

.mil = military organization

.net = any organization or person

.org = usually non-profit organization

.ac = academic organization or institution

.co = commercial organization

Paper structure



Picture source: designisthis.com, designer Nauris Kalinauskas

Format

- Font - Times New Roman
- Font size - 12 pt
- Line spacing - 1,5
- Margins: 3 cm left, 1,5 cm right, 2 cm top, 2 cm bottom
- Page numbering (usually):
 - Bottom right
 - Starting to count from the title page
 - The number 1 is not inserted on the title page

Paper extent

- Course work extent – 20-30 p. (without annex)
- Bachelor thesis extent - ~ 40-70 p. (without annex)
- Master thesis extent - ~ 60-100 psl. (without annex)

Course paper

- Title page
- Table of contents
- List of abbreviations (could be)
- List of tables (could be)
- List of images (could be)
- Introduction
- Body text (theoretical part)
- Conclusions
- Summary
- List of bibliography

Bachelor and master thesis

- Title page
- Table of contents
- List of abbreviations (could be)
- Introduction
- Body text (theoretical part)
- Practical (analytical) part
- Conclusions and recommendations
- List of bibliography
- Summary
- Annex

How to start writing?

- Discuss
- Write down ideas, possible solutions, various remarks
- Make a plan

How to start writing - methods

Brainstorming – ideas generated by a group of people.



Picture source: Axel Rouvin, Flickr

How to start writing - methods

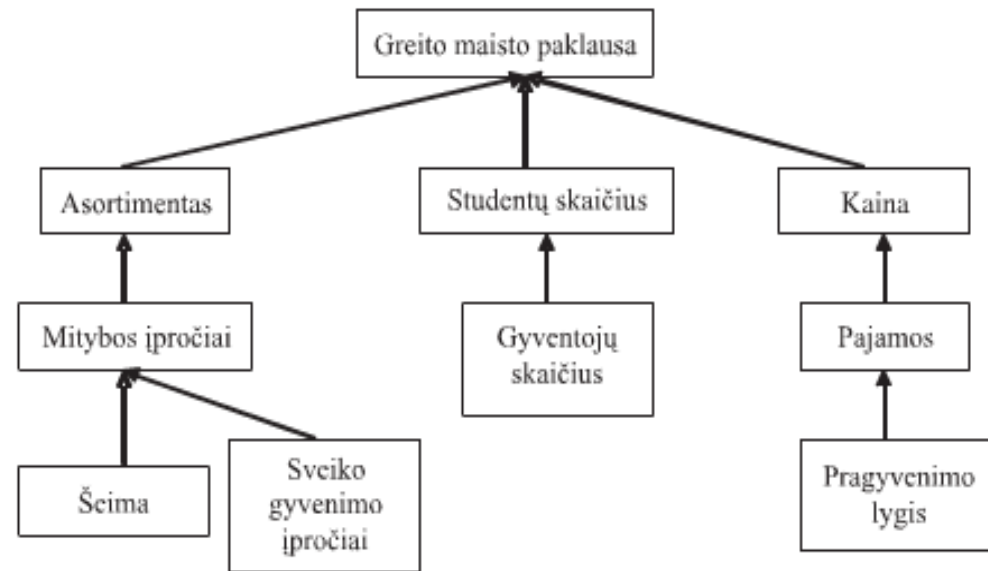
Mind mapping - a colorful diagram in the center of which is the main topic or keyword – ideas and concepts are written around it.



Picture source: conceptdraw.com

How to start writing - methods

Concept mapping – a hierarchical diagram in which lines or arrows connect concepts from the most important to the most specific.



Picture source: Bilevičienė, T. ir Jonušauskas, S. *Atvirojo kodo programų taikymas rinkų tyrimuose.*

Writing difficulties

- Personal problems:
 - Inability to manage time
 - Fear of appearing too poor
 - Too much ambition
 - Distraction because of other activities
- Problems related to information:
 - Too less information sources
 - Too many information sources



Picture source: Pink Sherbet Photography, Flickr

Academic ethics

Proper citation indicates that you:

- **recognize** the other author's publication
- **have read** literature related to the topic
- placed your work in a **broader academic context**
- **mastered** the technique of giving references

Plagiarism

Plagiarism – missing or incorrect references.

Quotation – the exact idea (with punctuation) of the author in quotation marks. Reference to the source is mandatory.

Paraphrase – the other author's thoughts are presented in your own words. Quotation marks are not required. Reference to the source is mandatory.

Referencing - a short retelling of larger other author's text in your own words. Quotation marks are not required. Reference to the source is mandatory.

Quotation length

Law on Copyright and Related Rights of the Republic of Lithuania:

Article 21. Quotation.

1. Reproduction of a **small proportion** of a work, published or otherwise made available to the public, both in the original language and translated into another language, as a quotation in another work without the permission of the author or other copyright holder of that work. Such reproduction must be fair and its extent does not exceed that required for **the purpose of the quotation**.
2. The quotation must indicate the source and the name of the author, if it is indicated in the work from which the quotation is taken.

MRU Code of Academic Ethics:

„The University does not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty (falsification of data, fraud, inequity, deception, theft, plagiarism, bribery, purchase and sale of works, presentation of other authors' works as their own, unreasonable co-authorship, copying during exams and other unfair practices.”

Language and style

- Clear, non-emotional, neutral language
- Simple sentence construction
- Professional terminology
- No uncertainties (someone, something, somewhere, etc.)
- No grammatical or style mistakes

Logical mistakes

- Ambiguity or uncertainty
- Irrelevant arguments:
 - Appeal to a man
 - Appeal to authority
 - Appeal to ignorance
 - Appeal to the crowd
- Ignoring the facts
- Post hoc ergo propter hoc (doubtful case, wrong reason)
- Hasty summarization
- Weak analogy

After writing the paper

Review again if the paper is:

- **Integral** - parts of the work, chapters are clearly related to the main topic
- **Coherent** - showing the logical connections and internal connections between parts
- **Consistent** – no “jumps of thoughts”
- **Completed** – topic is revealed without information overload
- **Properly** done according to methodological requirement of your faculty

Literature

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- VIKO - *Your guide to finding information and academic writing*. Prieiga per internetą: <http://www.ntnu.no/viko/english>