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Dissertation Writing Skills in English

Teacher: Daniel Martín González
Duration: 16 hours
Sessions: 19, 21, and 26 of April; 3, 5, 10, 12, and 17 of May 2022 | 5.30-7.30 pm (CET)
Classroom: 4.1.D03, Torres Quevedo Building (Leganés Campus)
Required level of English: B2 / C1 (Previous validation from the teacher required)
Credits: 2 cross-curricular credits

A minimum attendance to 6 sessions is required to obtain the credits

Objectives

All theses, no matter what the subject or discipline, contain similar sections which involve similar language. In this course, we will analyze the standard structure of a typical doctoral thesis and study the language used for different sections. We will provide input, activities, and personalized guidance to help doctoral students make their theses read/sound more natural, fluent, and correct.

We will also discuss other issues involved in the writing process: language research, drafting, editing, and proofreading, style, and "wordiness".

Contents
• **Introduction:** stating the problem; explaining how you are going to deal with the problem; limiting your scope; outlining the structure of your thesis.
• **Background:** presenting the relevant history and the context of your study; explaining current knowledge, theory, and practice.
• **Core:** your hypothesis or research questions; explaining the methodology used to test your hypothesis; explaining why you chose the methodology; reporting the results.
• **Synthesis:** discussing the implications of your research; drawing conclusions; checking your conclusions match the introduction.
• **Language usage:** grammar and vocabulary key points for academic writing.

Methodology
Practical individual, pair work and group work activities of text analysis of samples from real doctoral theses; proofreading and editing activities; discussion of style; analysis of typical language and style errors.

Students will be required to do some writing as homework to practice the skills and language presented in class.

Course evaluation
Students must attend 75% of the course to receive a passing grade. The final mark is based on continuous evaluation (50%) and completion of classroom assignments (50%).

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Bibliography and references

Books

Bailey, J. (2018). *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*. Routledge.

Evans D., Gruba, P. & Zobel, J. (2014). *How to Write a Better Thesis* (Third Edition), Springer.

Gratton, P. & Gratton, G. (2020). *Achieving success with the engineering dissertation*. Springer.

McCarthy, M. & O'Dell, F. (2008). *Academic Vocabulary in Use*. Cambridge University Press.

Mewbur, I. (2012). *How to tame your PhD*. Thesis Whisperer Books.

Morley, J. (2015) *The Academic Phrasebank*. University of Manchester (http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/)

Porter, D. (2008). *Check Your Vocabulary for Academic English*. Macmillan.

Side, R. & Wellman, G. (2002). *Grammar and Vocabulary for Cambridge Advanced and Proficiency*. Longman.

Sword, H. (2012). *Stylish academic writing*. Harvard University Press.

Wallwork, A. (2016). *English for academic research: Writing exercises*. Springer.

Williams, K. (2010). *Planning Your PhD*. Palgrave Study Skills

Websites:

University of Toronto: Writing
http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/specific-types-of-writing
Using English for Academic Purposes
http://www.uefap.com/writing/writfram.htm
Purdue University: Online Writing Lab
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/2/