Exploiting Rapid Change in Technology
Enhanced Learning… for Post Graduate Education

MFT Group. Session 7: Discussion of Findings
“An oil lamp becomes brighter after trimming, a truth becomes clearer after being discussed.”

Chinese Proverb
Agenda

1. Examples of the application of last session learning.
2. Links to make in the discussion chapter.
3. How to discuss the findings.
4. Common flaws in the findings chapter.
5. Q & A
6. Exercise
Exercise

Practice is necessary to master academic writing

Plan your findings chapter. You may use any organizing tool you feel comfortable with. Focus on the organization of the presentation, not on the actual results.

Write also a paragraph in which you reflect about your goal for that chapter and the challenges you may face.
The purpose of my “Findings and Results” chapter is to present the key results of my research without interpreting their meaning. The challenge is to determine which results to present that are most relevant to the research questions. My data is organised under headings that chronologically follows the same order as in my research instrument. The headings in this chapter are also reflected in my chapter on method and the discussion chapter in order to enhance coherence. A combination of tables, and graphs such as bar graphs, pie charts and histograms will be used. The text will complement the graphs and tables and not repeat the same information. Graphs and tables will be numbered in the same sequence they are mentioned in the text. My main goal is to keep this chapter simple, short and straightforward.
Discussion of Findings
Discussing findings/results you build the promotion of your thesis/dissertation.
Main Goals of the Discussion Chapter

1. Discuss findings in terms of how they answer the research questions and relate to the literature review

2. Summarize the implications of the study

3. Make recommendations for the application of findings (if possible) and for future studies
Process to Develop the Discussion

- Research Question(s)
- Findings
- Literature Review

Discussion
General Principles to Approach the Discussion

- Discuss results according to the research question they refer to.
- Link the discussion to the literature review in a critical way.
- Support your arguments with citations.
- Discuss any unexpected result.
- Restrict your conclusions to what the data shows.
- Make specific recommendations.
Each university has its own required outline to discuss results, but the following elements are usually present.
Elements to Include

- Answer(s) of research question(s)
- Interpretation of answer(s) by linking it/them to what was discussed in the literature review.
- Discussion of the implications of the study.
- Recommendation(s) in relation to the application of findings and future studies.
How to Discuss Findings
Start the chapter with one paragraph that outlines the topics and content to be covered therein.
Example of the Introductory Paragraph

This chapter discusses the findings of the research. It explains the data and provides this researcher’s perspective on the findings while also linking the findings to prior research and thoughts on the subjects of digital writing, the writing process, digital learning, and educational technology. The study’s strengths and weaknesses are evaluated, along with the implications and applications of the study in regards to writing instruction and curriculum development for rural middle schools. Recommendations for future research are given as well.
Rely on the Findings Chapter

Build on the work done in the findings chapter where data is completely laid out and discuss its validity, credibility, and reliability.
Interpret Critically

Develop the discussion interpreting data, relating them to your questions, and linking the discussion to your literature review in a critical way.
Link to Previous Research

Discuss the similarities and differences between your conclusions and those raised in your review of literature by other authors.
Express Your Own Voice

Speak in a passionate and dramatic voice about the issues on which you feel strongly
To express your own voice, you need to:

• State your own point of view on strengths, weaknesses, and appropriateness of your findings.
• Show how confident you are about your own position. Words like “certainly, definitely,...” show confidence.
• Use evaluative adjectives (E.g. accurate, meaningful,...) and adverbs (E.g. appropriately, ...) to make relationships explicit.
• Indicate strength of claim through verb usage, modality, and evaluative language forms.
Example of How to Discuss Findings

The final research question dealt with digital writing as a whole: “How do collaborative peer-editing writing processes affect a digital writing curriculum?” Considering the student responses from above, it was clear that students wanted to use aspects of both types of peer-editing: traditional and digital. They wanted the communication found in traditional editing, coupled with the easy-of-use and transformative practices found using digital tools. That is coherent to what Tarusk (2010) said “...it is crucial that teachers of adolescents accept the variety of tools that students use as their literacies to read, write, learn, and communicate” (p.551).
Ending the Discussion

End with one or two paragraph(s) that amount to your final "takeaways" for readers and include a call for action because you feel passionate about the fact that people can make a difference on the issue you are discussing.
Common Flaws in the Discussion Chapter

- Simply repeating the results section, with little reference to existing literature.
- Making conclusions that cannot be made from their data.
- Exaggerating findings.
- Focusing too much on the limitations of the study.
- Repeating what was already said in the introduction without linking it to the results.
- Providing no conclusions.
- Introducing topics that were not covered by the study's results/findings.

Adapted from Rucker, M. (2016)
How to Avoid Those Mistakes

• Explain how your findings/results relate to what is already known in the field as well as to what you expected to find.
• If your findings were unexpected and/or contradictory, you need to explain why you think that was.
• Try to show both sides of your argument.
• Show that you are aware of the limitations of your study without exaggerating.
• Provide one or two recommendations for future research or follow-up studies.
• Make sure you address all your results, including those that were not statistically significant.
• Revisit your introduction section and put more emphasis on studies that have proven relevant for the interpretation of your results.
Advanced Idea for Today:

A discussion chapter in which you interpret your findings, link them to previous research, and express your own voice becomes the best promotion of your work.
Q & A

In the next minutes, you are invited to ask questions about what has been discussed today. Feel free to not only ask questions but also answer them and make suggestions to improve the group work.
References


Plan your discussion chapter and reflect upon the task, especially about what you should avoid to do.

Exercise
Practice is necessary to master academic writing
What’s Up at DoctoralNet?

Theme for December: PEACE ON EARTH, WORLD, COMMUNITY, WITHIN.

1. Phone apps for both IOS and Android available soon.
2. Boxed sets cluster your favorite topics in one place - [https://resources.doctoralnet.com/boxed-sets.html](https://resources.doctoralnet.com/boxed-sets.html)
3. Upcoming webinars...
   
   1. Mastering Academic Writing: Evaluation of the Group Work
   2. Moving Forward with Theses: Evaluation of the Group Work

For full list through end of year go to [https://www.bigmarker.com/communities/doctoralnet/conferences](https://www.bigmarker.com/communities/doctoralnet/conferences)