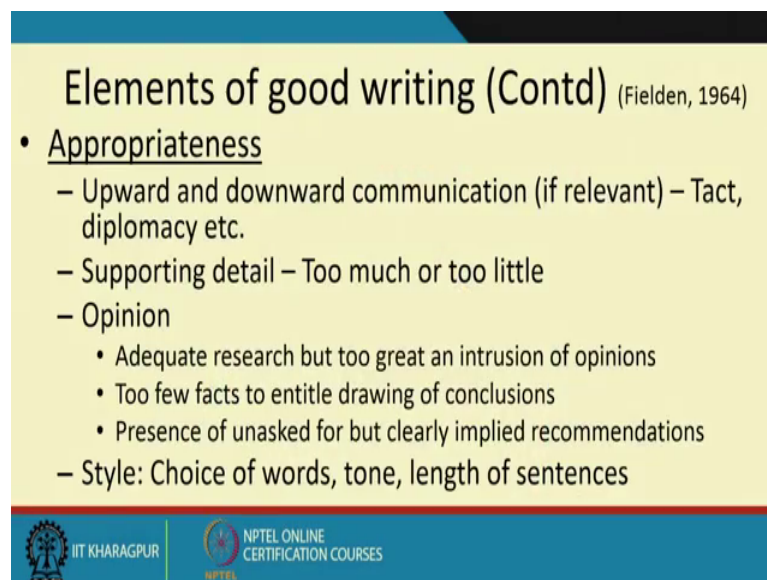


Research Writing
Prof. Aradhna Malik
Vinod Gupta School of Management
Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur

Lecture- 11
Reviewing Literature



Welcome back to the MOOC course on Research Writing. My name is Aradhna Malik and I am helping you with this course, and we have been discussing various things about research writing and in the previous class; we talked about the elements of good writing.

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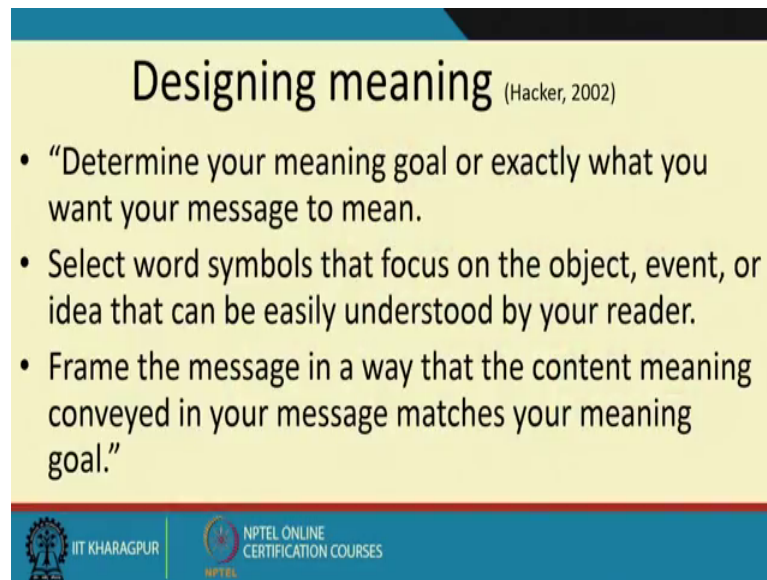
Elements of good writing (Contd) (Fielden, 1964)

- Appropriateness
 - Upward and downward communication (if relevant) – Tact, diplomacy etc.
 - Supporting detail – Too much or too little
 - Opinion
 - Adequate research but too great an intrusion of opinions
 - Too few facts to entitle drawing of conclusions
 - Presence of unasked for but clearly implied recommendations
 - Style: Choice of words, tone, length of sentences

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Now, in this class we will talk about how you start reviewing literature. We have talked about what you need to do when read some thing. Now how do you review literature ok, and then how do you start writing. So, see when we start writing what we are trying to do is, we are trying to design, meaning we are trying to put whatever we have learned into our own words what is it, what is your dissertation, what is the research paper? Your research paper is nothing, but the story of whatever you have of the new knowledge that you have created right. So, your research paper is the actual story of the new knowledge you have created. The reasons for identifying that gap in the knowledge base, the process of identifying that gap in the knowledge base, the method of filling up that gap in that knowledge base is presented either as a paper or as a dissertation or as some other version of a research document. So, how do you go about doing that?

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Designing meaning (Hacker, 2002)

- “Determine your meaning goal or exactly what you want your message to mean.
- Select word symbols that focus on the object, event, or idea that can be easily understood by your reader.
- Frame the message in a way that the content meaning conveyed in your message matches your meaning goal.”

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Now, the first thing we need to talk about is designing, meaning how do you design your meaning? You determine your meaning goal or exactly what you want your message to mean. Whenever you start writing you find, out what do you want your message to mean, what kind of message do you want should go through. You know what should be the output what are, how are do you want people to interpret your story, then you select word, symbols that focus on the object event or idea that can be easily understood by your reader.

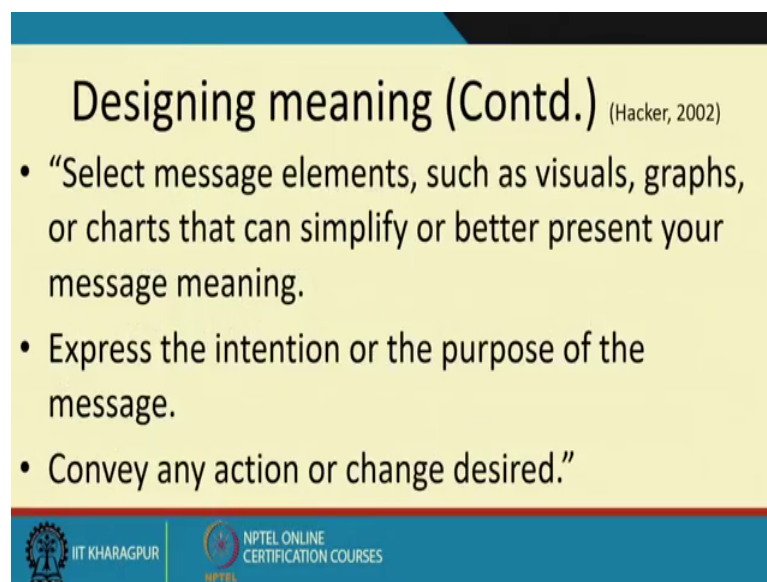
When we talk about research writing we go the exact opposite way we think, and many times we believe that very difficult words can help us get published; why, because they jargon, no jargon if used appropriately is very good; however, it can back fire, if you do not know the exact meaning. So, be very careful about the words you pick then. So, you pick the words that you can use. Then frame the message in a way that the content meaning conveyed in your message, matches your meaning goal.

Now what is your intention when you write a research paper, what is your intention, your intention is one to convince somebody else that you have actually identified a gap in the knowledge base, and you have tried to fill it two to get feedback on your work. So, you have tried to fill that gap in the knowledge base, you are trying to get opinions or inputs from other experts who have gone through the exact same process, to see if you really

succeeded in doing what you wanted to do ok. So, these are the two broad reasons for publishing or for coming up with the research document.

Now what you need to do is, you need to frame your message in a way that the meaning of whatever you have written in the message matches. What you want the message to do speech, act, theory is what I mean that, that is you know what this leads to in the sense that whatever you want your message to mean, should it actually speech act theory, something different. It means that your speech, whatever you say should, you know is connected with the action, but this is along similar lines that you want your content, meaning, whatever is conveyed through, whatever you have said should be coherent with what you want your message to do ok. So, we will come to this.

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Designing meaning (Contd.) (Hacker, 2002)

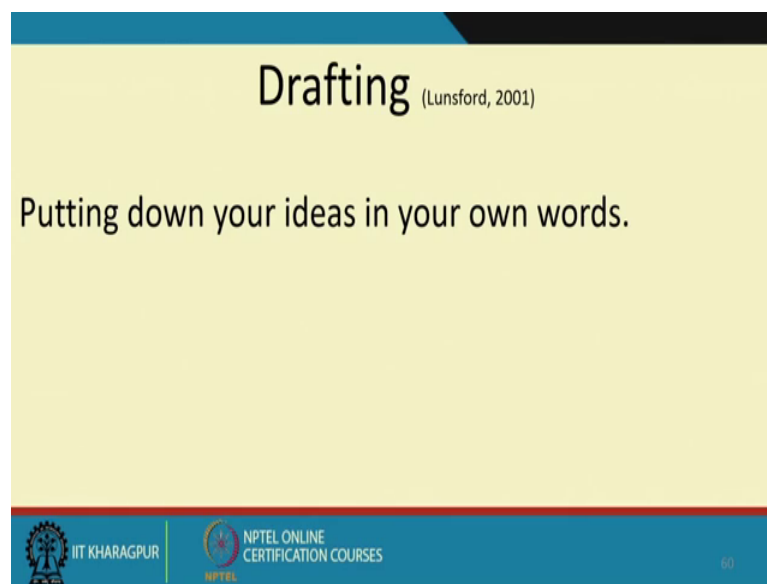
- “Select message elements, such as visuals, graphs, or charts that can simplify or better present your message meaning.
- Express the intention or the purpose of the message.
- Convey any action or change desired.”

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Now, you select message elements; such as visuals, graphs or charts, that can simplify or better present your message meaning. So, you pick the elements in your message that can present your, the meaning of your message in such a way that you know that it becomes visible, we call this infographics. Especially in research writing we use something called as infographics info. Infographics means informational graphics, which means your tables, are infographics, your charts are infographics, your diagrams are infographics ok, not drawings, but diagrams, diagrams are infographic. So, they are graphics that present information. You put certain numbers in the table.

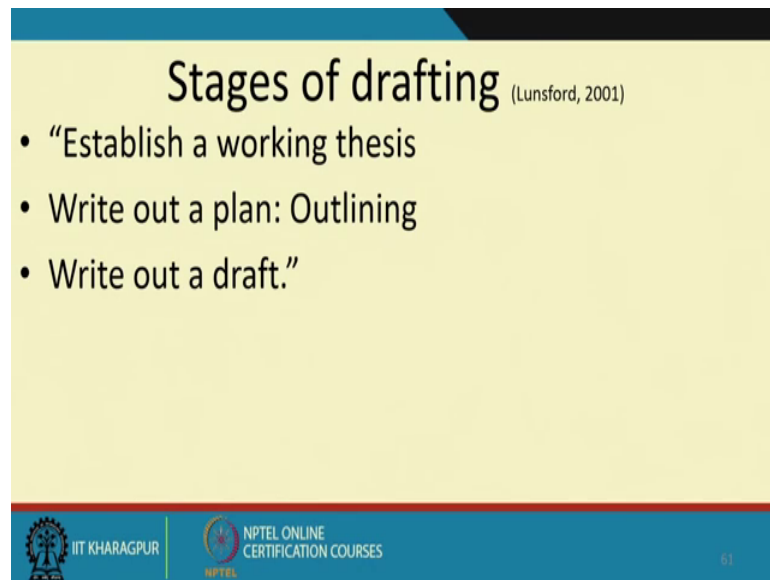
Anyone who is familiar with the presentation of similar numbers in similar tables will know exactly what you are getting it, without having to read the text we you know it is always better very good idea to briefly sum up whatever you have presented in the table; however, an experienced reader of research, similar to the one you have presented will know taking one look at the table, person will know what you have presented and will also be able to identify, whether what you have presented, means what it is supposed to mean or not? So, these are informational graphics, you put them out and you let people interpret them or you let people get information from what you have, whatever you have put out. It is not words, it is anything else other than words ok. Express the intention or the purpose of the message, what do you want the message to do and then convey any action or change desired. Let us see how this works.

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We come to a process called drafting. Now we are actually getting down to writing things down. What this drafting mean? Drafting means putting your ideas down in your own words, how do you start drafting, this means you are writing. So, it actually means that you start writing something on a, you know about whatever you have studied or done.

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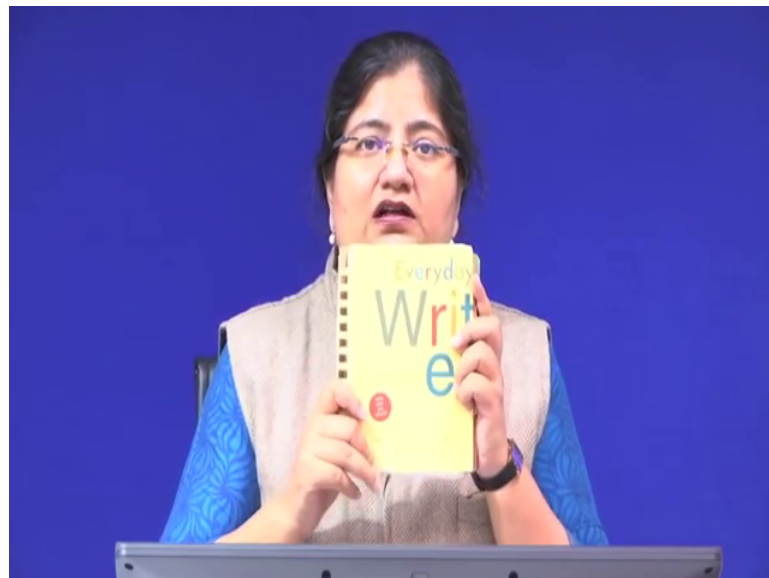
Stages of drafting (Lunsford, 2001)

- “Establish a working thesis
- Write out a plan: Outlining
- Write out a draft.”

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Stages of drafting; the first stage is establish a working thesis, then you write out a plan, you make an outline and then you pour your thoughts out in the form of a draft in and well go through each of these, this all this is from this book. I would really like to show you this book that I am using, please focus on the book ok.

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This is called the everyday writer by Andrea Lunsford ok. I got this book during my Phd days in the year 2001 or 02, and I use this to this day. Ok this is the foreign edition, it is published by Bedford St. Martins. The everyday writer author is Andrea Lunsford, this is

must or may ok. So, many times researchers may not really need to receive formal training in research writing, may receive formal training in research writing that could be one. Please focus on the screen I am trying to do something here ok. So, this should gets changed.

So, did you see what I did here ok? So, should got changed to may ok. So, as you read more you can change it. Now when you say researchers you mean all researchers. So, people who are in the beginning of their carrier or also researchers, people who are in the middle of their carriers are also researchers, people who are at the end of their carriers are also researchers ok. Now researchers can be modified to research students, depending I do not know, I mean you know if there is a possibility. So, you are not really. Please focus on the screen you are not really talking about the researchers, you are only talking about research students, why because we feel that after you had enough experience in research, in publishing papers, you may not require training in research writing.

So, we say research students or research scholars, researchers may receive formal training, but then the topic is modified to research scholars may will become, should or must receive research scholars, must receive training in research writing. So, the comment part is reduced here and this increases, depending on what you have studied. Now this becomes your topic, the topic changes from all researchers to just research scholars students, who are getting their Phds or Masters by research, must undergo formal training in research writing, this is a working thesis, this will be revised you know this is how your thesis gets revised.

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Characteristics of a successful working thesis
(Lunsford, 2001)

- “It is potentially *interesting* to the intended audience
- It is as *specific* as possible
- It limits the topic enough to make it *manageable*”

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Now, characteristics of a successful working thesis, it is potentially interesting to the intended audience ok. So, you are attempting to write, fill out gap in the knowledge base. When you build on existing literature, you find a body of literature that has been published, you share it with people who are working along similar lines, you publish in journals, you send your work to journals that are already publishing papers on your chosen area of interest, it is potentially interesting to the intended audience if it gets published; that means, the interest level is established, it is as specific as possible ok.

So, going back to the previous example, research scholars must receive formal training in research writing. So, you say research scholars must learn about research. Of course, that is a very vague statement, research scholars must learn about research or research scholars must know how to write, everybody knows how to write ok, but write what? Research scholars must know how to write papers, must learn how to write papers, know when you talk about be specific papers are just one part of it writing a dissertation writing proposals; everything is included in that, so you get very specific.

Research scholars must receive formal training in research writing. So, you are very specific, you do not say, must receive training, must receive or must undergo training in writing. Must receive formal training which means they sit in the class, they do it and they get feedback on their work and then they, you establish whether that is required;

why, because this will then lead to an action when you say research scholars must receive formal training in research writing.

You take your output, your output will be yes, research scholars must receive formal training or no research scholars, need not receive formal training always. So, you take that, if it says must receive, if it is a proven that you are hypnosis is proven, then you take the, or you are expected to convey your findings to somebody who can do something about it. So, you take your output and you share it with places like IIT and may be other institutes of higher education universities, and you say you must institute a formal mechanism of ensuring that scholars write. Now I will give you an example in IIT. Till several years ago we did not have a formal program in research writing, I joined here in 2008.

So, January of 2009; I was asked to teach this course called English for technical writing; the subject was called English for technical writing. I took the research writing portion, somebody else took the English portion, it was around that time I think a year or two, before that this course had been made compulsory for all research scholars on campus; why, because somebody in the higher administration realized that research scholars did not or are not very comfortable with writing. So, one their grammar needed improvement, and two they needed somebody to tell them what research writing was all about, what did they need to do in order to publish papers in order to go to conferences etcetera. So, they needed somebody sitting, somebody who had experience with all these things to write papers ok.

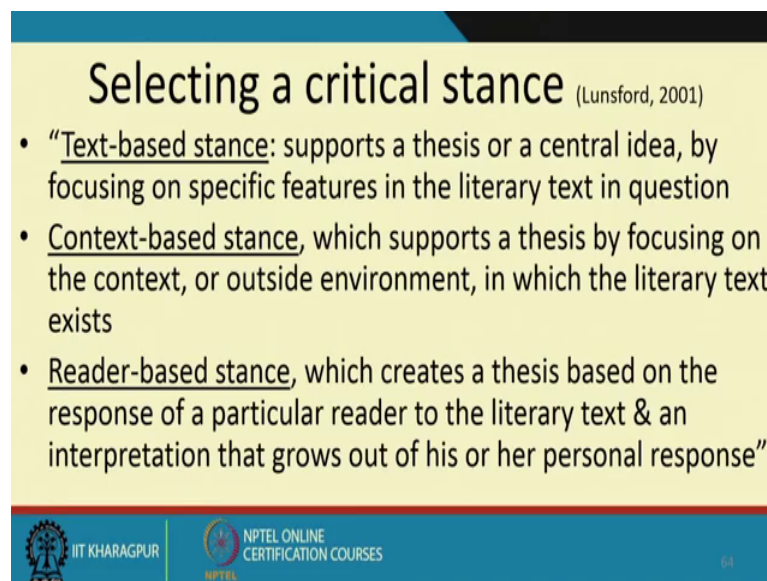
So, some study at some level; like some kind of study like this would have propelled the creation of this course, which is now a compulsory course for all research scholars on the IIT campus ok. So, that is the action oriented part of a thesis, it limits the topic enough to make it manageable. So, when we say researchers, again anyone doing research, must receive training in writing very vague, then you have to identify which kinds researchers or I will give you another example I was doing a study on the evaluation of facilities for the elderly. Now I started with the idea that something needs to be done about the; or we need to first find out what is the quality of the services for the elderly within India ok.

And then after going through a lot of information I realized that this was just not going to be manageable, I mean all of India and I wanted to cover everything down to the minutes

bit. So, I said all of this is not going to be manageable. So, what did I do? I narrowed it down and I picked a few focused areas and I picked a few locations and I brought it really down, and I said; what is the quality of services for say pre-school children in schools in IIT Kharagpur?

So, that really brings it down, if I say quality of services for preschool children in India I mean that is a humongous task, I will need several lifetimes to finish that; however, if I say quality of preschool services or services for pre-school children within Hijli township of Kharagpur or within the IIT Kharagpur campus depending on the time that I have, if it is a master's thesis then maybe you know just the campus schools could be taken up, if it is a PhD thesis may be in say two or three districts in West Bengal could be taken up, and those could be really properly studied. Now that will eventually make it manageable; however, if you take the whole of India, then you can spend several lifetimes on that ok. So, it has to be manageable within the time that you have alright.

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Selecting a critical stance (Lunsford, 2001)

- Text-based stance: supports a thesis or a central idea, by focusing on specific features in the literary text in question
- Context-based stance, which supports a thesis by focusing on the context, or outside environment, in which the literary text exists
- Reader-based stance, which creates a thesis based on the response of a particular reader to the literary text & an interpretation that grows out of his or her personal response"

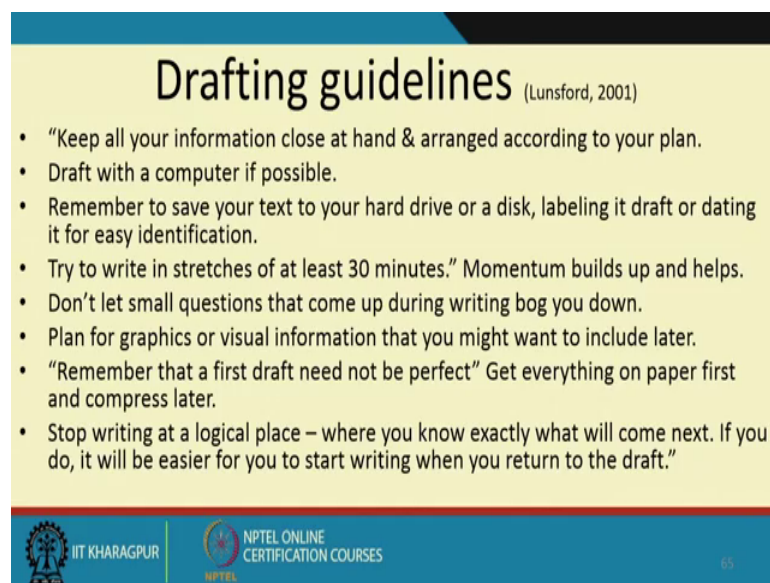
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Now, how do you select a critical stance, you need to take a stance, how do you select a critical stance, you have a text based stance, but text based stance, what is this stance? Stance is a support, stance is a perspective, text based stance supports a thesis or a central idea by focusing on specific features in the literary text in question. Context based stance supports a thesis by focusing on the context or outside environment in

which the literary text exists. So, the situatedness will give you a context based stance from this perspective this is what is true.

Reader based stance, you compare whatever you are presenting to something else that the reader may have experienced. So, it creates a thesis based on the response of a particular reader to the literary text, and an interpretation that grows out of his or her personal experience ok. So, you link it what you think or to how you think the reader is likely to respond to it.

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A presentation slide titled "Drafting guidelines" with a citation "(Lunsford, 2001)" in parentheses. The slide has a yellow background with a blue header and footer. It contains a bulleted list of seven guidelines for drafting. The footer includes the IIT Kharagpur logo and the NPTEL Online Certification Courses logo.

Drafting guidelines (Lunsford, 2001)

- "Keep all your information close at hand & arranged according to your plan.
- Draft with a computer if possible.
- Remember to save your text to your hard drive or a disk, labeling it draft or dating it for easy identification.
- Try to write in stretches of at least 30 minutes." Momentum builds up and helps.
- Don't let small questions that come up during writing bog you down.
- Plan for graphics or visual information that you might want to include later.
- "Remember that a first draft need not be perfect" Get everything on paper first and compress later.
- Stop writing at a logical place – where you know exactly what will come next. If you do, it will be easier for you to start writing when you return to the draft."

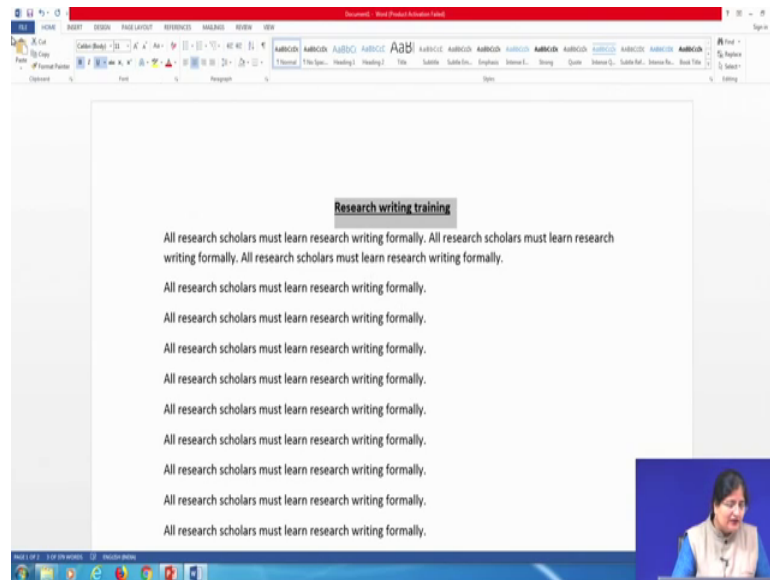
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How do you, how do you draft, how do you start writing your draft. The first thing you need to do is ok. So, so you have decided to start writing. Before you start writing please keep all your information close at hand and arrange according to your plan, do you want to write a chronological article, do you want to write. I mean if you are writing a literature review or you have an outline. So, you start with the literature review, do you want to arrange chronologically or conceptually however then.

Draft with the computer if possible. Now again the generation of people who are likely to be going through these classes were born into computers, but there could be some older lot who prefer to hand write things, many of us feel that when we hand write things we tend to remember them more, but draft with the computer for possible it helps to revise things. Now I am going to show you something on the computer, remember to save your text to your hard drive or a disk labelling it draft or dating it for easy

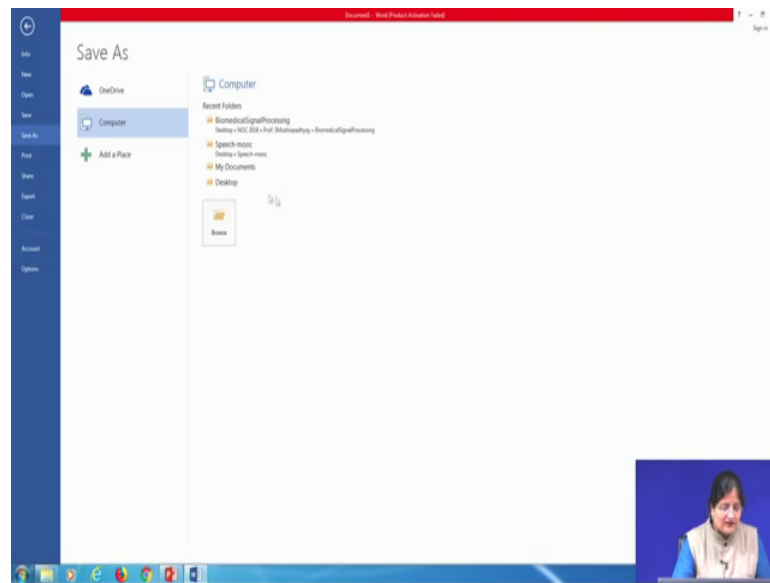
identification. Let me show you how I like to save my documents and I will create this in front of you. So, what do you do, you want Microsoft Word ok, and then I select a blank document here, and I start writing something on it.

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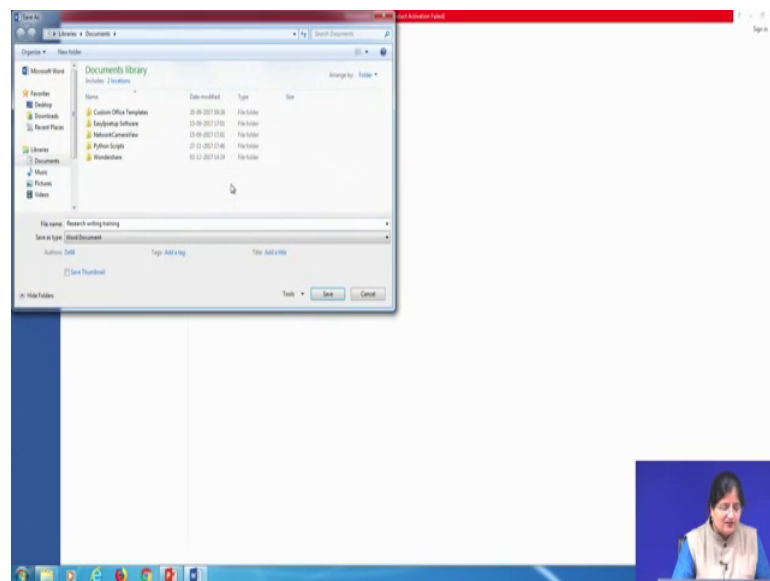


So, all research scholars must learn research writing formally. I say I right, may be a half a paragraph and. So, I am just going to copy this for the sake of convenience, and I want to save this document. So, let us say I have written two pages worth of why all researchers scholars must learn research writing formally, and I want to save this. Now today is, and this is part of the introduction. So, I have an introduction here and I say introduction to the topic, and the topic is formal or research writing training. let us say that is the topic of my document or my thesis, and I want to save it. So, what do I do. I say file, I say save as and I want to serve save it to my computer here, and I want to save it on the desktop here.

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And I say research writing training. Now this is draft one, it is just the draft version, it is not the final version and today is the fifth of December. So, what do I do? 05 12 17. I know in my mind that this is what I will be, let me see, I cannot increase the size of the text here, what I have written here is research, research writing training underscore draft underscore 05 12 17; that means, Today's date is there. So, I save it. Tomorrow when I add to this I saved it ok.

Now I close this, open the same document and I add something more to it, and I find that all research scholars may not need to learn research writing formally, may not learn research writing formally. So, I have added something here and then I add something here, and so I am writing something more on the next day and I want to save it again, what do I do. I go to file and I want to copy keep both drafts ok. So, I can do 1 of 2 things ok, I can say save as draft 061217 this is my way of doing it, you may come up with another way or I say research writing training draft updated, if I do it on the same day updated and I put down the date.

Its always a good idea to put down your date when you are writing a important document, or you may even want to put it, put the time here, now it is 6 pm here. So, I say 6 pm. So, you know exactly when you close shut down your computer 6 pm 051217. So, I know that may be I worked on the same draft for you know over say a period of may be 3 or 4 hours and then I shut it down, I did one draft in the morning then I got up you know had my lunch and rested a little bit, came back to work on the draft and I worked on the draft some more. So, I did the second draft.

So, I say draft updated 6 pm 5th of December 2017 and I save it. And this then I know when I have to pull up different versions, I say open. So, I have the draft for today and I have the updated draft for say 6 pm and then i will have another one for tomorrow. So, you can keep copies of your drafts. So, this is what we mean here ok. so very useful way of doing it, you label it any way you want, you date it any way you want, but make sure you have your own personal system in place.

Remember to save your text to your hard drive or a disk, labelling it draft or dating it for easy identification. I will tell you something very interesting, interesting personal story, when I was doing my dissertation, I was in the United States. This was the year 2007, sometime between February and may of 2007, I was writing my PhD dissertation and I was, I wanted to finish and I was you know I was, you know I was tired and when I started writing the final chapters and my guide them and they said ok. So, the day I would write the final chapter and I said this is the absolute final chapter, I would save it those days we pen drives were just coming up.

So, I had a tiny pen drive and there was a computer in the library that I used to work on. So, I did not have a laptop at that time. So, this was University of Denver USA and. So, I

would save a draft on that computer, one draft on the pen drive and you will not believe, I would email one draft to my father sitting in India, you know they say that could not be everywhere. So, he made parents. So, I would make one draft, one draft I would send to my father sitting in India, with the assumption that if all computers in America are failed there would be, I would still have a backup line back in India.

So, I would still have a copy of the draft in India, and my poor dad would go through it and he would read it and he would let me know in the morning what he thought of, whatever I had written from the perspective of a person who had not had any formal training in research or writing he is not a professor. So, you know, so that was the way I was very paranoid at that time, I did not want things to get lost, I did not realize that you could mail one to yourself, I do not think emails had that cap capability at that time I do not know, but I would mail it to him. So, he could download it and save it on his computer back in India. So, I would not lose it.

So, you know I mean we all come up with our own ways, when you put in so much of work into it your thesis and into your dissertation or document, you want to keep it safely. So, my sincere advice to you is please do not keep one copy, make multiple copies these days of course, you have access to things like you know Google drive or drop box or the cloud, I mean various things you can do. So, just save a copy in a place where you know you will be able to retrieve it from, do not only save it on your pen drive or computer, because if it crashes then you know it is a, lot of hard work that goes missing ok.

Try to, excuse me try to write in stretches of at least 30 minutes momentum builds up and helps. You write for thirty minutes and then you stop. So, you know if you push yourself to write for about 30 minutes then the momentum builds up your thoughts start coming and you sort of push yourself to keep writing, more writing is a habit that must be developed as soon as you enter a research programme, it will really come in handy. Now I think I have told you this earlier, but I am going to tell you this again.

One thing I advice all my students, is to write about 100 to 200 words about whatever new things they have learned, about their area of interest every single day in a live Google document, and they put their ideas there, and then I say ok. Just make it a habit, just like you brush, your teeth and you have your food and you have your glass of milk in

the morning. Get into the habit get addicted to putting down 100 to 200 words, only 1 to 200 words every single day about something new that you have learned or discovered or some new insight you had about your topic and you add that to whatever you have been doing, every single day. Now when you do that it adds up.

So, you look at your progress over the period of a week. Do not even take a day off at the end of the week just see how much progress you have made, and then you will be motivated to write more, it will take only 15 to 20 minutes, but then when it all accumulates ok. So, that helps. Do not let small questions that come up during writing bog you down, you have questions, when you start putting things down in writing, then there will be things that will come up that will really bother you, all that you want to know more about, do not let those pull you down, plan for graphics or visual information that you might want to include later.

So, think that you know this information I am writing, but may be at a later date I could put all this in a table. So, just make a notes saying that this could also be presented in, say through a table, through a chart, through a bar graph etcetera. Remember that a first draft need not be perfect, get everything on paper first and compress later. Please this is something that I tell all my students, when you start writing a document, you must be prepared to revise it at least 40 to 50 times. I think I have a fairly reasonable grasp over the language, and I collect my matter very meticulously; however, when I get down to write.

I mean it is, there are so many thoughts in your mind, so I have to sit and then I have to sleep over it for 24 hours, may be watch a movie, do something, take my mind away from it and then come back to it. So, you have to keep revising whatever you are doing, you will not believe when I am declaring this openly in through a public medium, when I wrote my dissertation I had to revise my literature review chapter 59 times. It went through 59 revisions the whole chapter, I am not talking about bits and pieces and drafts here and there, the full chapter and it was after I had finished I thought I have done a great job, and the first 19 times I was told that it was no good ok. So, my guide did not read beyond the first half page or one page before discarding it. So, I had to revise it. So, that is the amount of work that is required; that is very essential.

Stop writing at a logical place where you know exactly what will come next, if you do it will be easier for you to start writing when you written to the draft ok. So, when you know you do not stop writing in the middle of a sentence, finish one section and then take up your material from the that section in the next, the next time you start writing. So, you know that you know one section is complete, going into another section, you may leave some ideas, some thoughts that can stimulate you to write the next time you start writing, but it is always nice to wind up and then leave it and then give yourself some food for thought to think about and then pick it up from where you left off the next day, instead of just stopping in the middle of a paragraph or whatever, and not knowing what you are thinking about.

So, just put all your thoughts down on paper, and then cut it down it is easier to compress things later, instead of you know thinking about the word limit right in the beginning. Now these are some personal examples, personal stories, I hope you have found those useful. We overshot the time by several minutes. So, that is all we have time for in this class, and we will take up some more discussion on reviewing literature in the next class.

Thank you very much for listening