

Hello and welcome to the lecture on topic 7 to learn how to structure a literature review

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to
demonstrate an understanding of why a literary review is being written
list the main elements of a master's thesis
list the objectives of a literature review
organize the right structure of your literature review and list of references

First of all, think about why you are writing a literature review? Yes, because you need it for your PhD thesis. Let's think about the place of the literature review in the structure of your thesis

Most PhD theses are structured as shown below. Each part may be split into several chapter. But the parts commonly appear in the following order:

Title page

Acknowledgement (Optional)

Summary

Table of Contents that lists all chapters and subchapters of your thesis and provides the page number where each chapter starts

1. Introduction

2. Literature Review

3. Data Collection (or Research Methods)

4. Analysis (or Result&Discussion)

5. Conclusions

List of references

Appendix (Optional)

By the way, there is no mandatory length of a PhD thesis. Most well-written theses have between 100 and 120 pages.

Be aware that your PhD thesis will only be evaluated based on the written document and the defense.

If you did some nice work (that you might have shown to your adviser at some point) and forget to add it to your written document, it cannot be evaluated alas!

So, the literature review is a core element of your thesis and shows that you are capable of working scientifically. As you explain what other researchers have found on your topic, the reader will realize that you know this topic extremely well. This will build trust that you can provide a piece of work yourself that is scientifically relevant.

Equally important, you will need to identify a gap in the literature that you intent to fill. This is how you justify your thesis, and it helps the reader to assess the importance of your work. This gap may be

methodological ("I will develop a new method that is able to answer my research question, which previously applied methods cannot as well."),

use new data ("Other researchers used database X, but I will use data retrieved by Y."),

or a new application ("This method has never been applied to the city of Almaty.").

All this together is the correct answer to the question why are you writing a literature review?

So, How to Structure your Literature Review?

Imagine you're making a new model of mobile phone. You'd need to look at old models to see how other people are designing them (and so you know how yours will differ) and to see how they are made. You'll need to look for their flaws, and get an idea of where they can be improved.

That's because you can't make something new if you don't know what the old one looks like.

The literature review is the same. You use it to make the case for your research by surveying the work that's already been done in your discipline (and sometimes beyond). It's a bit like a family tree. You use it to trace the lineage of your study. Putting it in its place.

A literature review has three objectives:

Summarize what has already been discussed in your field, both to demonstrate that you understand your field and to show how your study relates to it.

Highlight gaps, problems or shortcomings in existing research to show the original contribution that your thesis makes.

Identify important studies, theories, methods or theoretical frameworks that can be applied in your research.

There are ten steps involved in conducting a literature review:

Pick a broad topic, read broadly!

Find the way in

Find out Who's saying what and when

Take notes

Narrow down the field

Narrow down the sources

Snowball. (That means increase quickly) If a plan, problem, idea, etc. snowballs, it quickly grows bigger and more important

Think about questions that haven't been asked

Write early, write quickly and write relevantly

Prepare a complete reference list that includes every important detail of all the sources you have referred to.

Here your list all references that are cited in your work, and only those references. References you read but did not cite do not appear here. After all, they were not relevant enough for this thesis to be cited, so they do not belong in your list of references.

It is strictly advised to use a documentary-note style, which means you put a number in your text to cite sources of information and the reference list is in

numerical order. In text citations are in square brackets and in order of citation (the first citation is [1] the next is [2]).

For example, “Thus, papers [1-5] use such a method (short description), the authors of [6, 7] propose a different approach (short description), etc.

There are some examples of documentary-note styles developed by
American Medical Association (AMA)
American Psychological Association (APA)
National Library of Medicine (*NLM*)

Let's see what these styles have in common. The authors of the article, the title of the article, the name of the journal (full or abbreviated), its volume and number, year of publication, page numbers and DOI (digital object identifier) of the paper are indicated everywhere.

You should do the same. Find complete information about the source you are interested in and take notes on this paper.

So, now you are able to
demonstrate an understanding of why a literary review is being written
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To test yourself, take a quiz that following this lecture and be prepared for a written assignment, which is quite expected after such a topic, isn't it?

This is the list of references used to create this presentation.
This is also an example of how to cite the internet sources.
You can find all these useful links in the final section of this topic.

About your control task

To complete this topic, you have to upload your writing assignment “List of references”. You can find this assignment at the Control task.

Please, keep and revise this list for your next writing assignment called "Writing a Literary Review." You can find this assignment at the Control task of this topic as well

You are strongly encouraged to start working on "Writing a Literary Review” assignment,

Thank you for watching this!