

UNIT- II

KINDS OF WRITING

A thesis in a literary analysis or literary research paper can take many forms. When given an assignment to analyze a work of fiction, poetry, or drama, you must first determine the requirements of the assignment. Make sure that you understand the nature of the assignment and that you follow the instructions of your professor. Once you decide what work you will analyze, you will begin the analysis of the work and do any research required. As you think about your topic, be sure to construct a thesis that will guide your analysis as well as serve to focus and organize your essay. A good thesis is specific, limited in scope and offers a perspective or interpretation on a subject.

A literary thesis should be clear and focused, setting up an argument that the essay will support with discussion and details from the work. **SAMPLE THESIS STATEMENTS** These sample thesis statements are provided as guides, not as required forms or prescriptions. #1 The thesis may focus on an analysis of one of the elements of fiction, drama, poetry or nonfiction as expressed in the work: character, plot, structure, idea, theme, symbol, style, imagery, tone, etc. Example: In “A Worn Path,” Eudora Welty creates a fictional character in Phoenix Jackson whose determination, faith, and cunning illustrate the indomitable human spirit. Note that the work, author, and character to be analyzed are identified in this thesis statement. The thesis relies on a strong verb (creates). It also identifies the element of fiction that the writer will explore (character) and the characteristics the writer will analyze and discuss (determination, faith, cunning).

Hypothesis

Just as a thesis is introduced in the beginning of a composition, the hypothesis is considered a starting point as well. Whereas a thesis introduces the main point of an essay, the hypothesis introduces a proposed explanation which is being investigated through scientific or mathematical research. Thesis statements present arguments based on evidence which is presented throughout the paper, whereas hypotheses are being tested by scientists and mathematicians who may disprove or prove them through experimentation. Here is an example of a hypothesis versus a thesis:

Argumentative Thesis

As explained in **Research**, not all essays will require an explicitly stated thesis, but most argumentative essays will. Instead of implying your thesis or main idea, in an argumentative essay, you'll most likely be required to write out your thesis statement for your audience. A thesis statement is a one- to two-sentence statement that presents the main idea and makes an assertion about your issue. You may have a longer thesis for much longer essays, but one to two sentences is a good general guideline. And, remember, in an argumentative essay, the assertion you present in your thesis is going to be particularly important.

When you make your assertion in your thesis, it should be clear and direct. You want your audience to have no doubt about your point. Of course, how assertive you are in your thesis and the content you choose to include depends upon the type of argumentative essay you are writing. For example, in a **Classical or Aristotelian** argument (explained in pages that follow), your thesis statement should clearly present your side of the issue. In a **Rogerian argument** (explained in pages that follow), your thesis should bring both sides of the issue together. Still, there are some basic guidelines to keep in mind when it comes to an argumentative thesis statement.

- Your thesis statement should be **one to two sentences**.
- Your thesis statement should **clearly present the main idea of your essay and make some kind of assertion** (even if that assertion is about bringing two sides together).
- Your thesis **should not make an “announcement”** about what your essay will cover. Instead, it should just present your assertion. For example, a thesis like this makes an announcement:

I will discuss the importance of the environment in this essay.
- While there is no such thing as a “required” place for your thesis statement, most academic essays will present the thesis statement early on, usually **near the end of the introduction**. There is a reason for this. Audience members are more likely to understand and absorb each point as readers if you have told them, in advance, what they should be getting out of your essay. Still, you should check with your professor if you would like to present your thesis somewhere else, such as at the end of your essay.
- **Your thesis statement is the most important sentence in your essay.** It's your chance to make sure your audience really understands your point. Be sure your assertion and your writing style are clear.
 - Narrative research

- Narrative research is a term that subsumes a group of approaches that in turn rely on the written or spoken words or visual representation of individuals. These approaches typically focus on the lives of individuals as told through their own stories.
- The emphasis in such approaches is on the story, typically both what and how is narrated.
- Narrative research can be considered both a research method in itself but also the phenomenon under study.

In a basic linear approach, they encompass the study of the experiences of a single individual embracing stories of the life and exploring the learned significance of those individual experiences. However, in most cases one will be creating an aggregate of narratives each bearing on the others. Whether or not it is a part of a great presentation or whether it is a stand alone piece of research, it has to be accepted on its own merits as individual experience and the interpretation of thereof. The question arises as to the accuracy of the story looked at objectively even though it must be viewed in its socio-cultural context. The narrative gives one's individual view to be accessed on its merits. Such validation is possible by corroboration from another narrative. While some types of qualitative analysis have a standard set of procedures, narrative research is questionable in this regard. One of the weaknesses of studying narratives is that the text is by its own nature linguistically subjective. i.e. difficult to quantitatively access in an objective manner since it is subjective i.e. personally meaningful.

A number of data collection methods can be used, as the researcher and the research subjects work together in this collaborative dialogic relationship. Data can be in the form of field notes; journal records; interview transcripts; one's own and other's observations; storytelling; letter writing; autobiographical writing; documents such as school and class plans, newsletters, and other texts, such as rules and principles; and pictures. To this list, one should add audio and video recordings, as these are also useful data in narrative research.

- **DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH:-**

The most characteristic features of descriptive writing are that it will describe something, but will not go beyond an account of what appears to be there. A certain amount of descriptive writing is needed to establish for example:

- the setting of the research;
- a general description of a piece of literature, or art;

- the list of measurements taken;
- the timing of the research;
- an account of the biographical details of a key figure in the discipline; or
- a brief summary of the history leading up to an event or decision.

Descriptive research is used to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. It does not answer questions about how/when/why the characteristics occurred. Rather it addresses the "what" question (what are the characteristics of the population or situation being studied?). The characteristics used to describe the situation or population are usually some kind of categorical scheme also known as descriptive categories.

For example, the periodic table categorizes the elements. Scientists use knowledge about the nature of electrons, protons and neutrons to devise this categorical scheme. We now take for granted the periodic table, yet it took descriptive research to devise it. Descriptive research generally precedes explanatory research. For example, over time the periodic table's description of the elements allowed scientists to explain chemical reaction and make sound prediction when elements were combined.

- Hence, descriptive research cannot describe what caused a situation. Thus, descriptive research cannot be used as the basis of a *causal relationship*, where one variable affects another. In other words, descriptive research can be said to have a low requirement for internal validity.
- The description is used for frequencies, averages and other statistical calculations. Often the best approach, prior to writing descriptive research, is to conduct a survey investigation. Qualitative research often has the aim of *description* and researchers may follow-up with examinations of why the observations exist and what the implications of the findings are in the Thesis.
- In addition, the conceptualizing of descriptive research (categorization or taxonomy) precedes the hypotheses of explanatory research.^[2] (For a discussion of how the underlying conceptualization of exploratory research, descriptive research and explanatory research fit together, see: Conceptual framework.)

- Descriptive research can be statistical research. The main goal of this type of research is to describe the data and characteristics about what is being studied. The idea behind this type of research is to study frequencies, averages, and other statistical calculations. Although this research is highly accurate, it does not gather the causes behind a situation. Descriptive research is mainly done when a researcher wants to gain a better understanding of a topic. That is, analysis of the past as opposed to the future. Descriptive research is the exploration of the existing certain phenomena. The details of the facts won't be known. The existing phenomena's facts are not known to the person.

Descriptive research methods

Descriptive research is usually defined as a type of quantitative research, though qualitative research can also be used for descriptive purposes. The research design should be carefully developed to ensure that the results are valid and reliable.

Surveys

Survey research allows you to gather large volumes of data that can be analyzed for frequencies, averages and patterns. Common uses of surveys include:

- Describing the demographics of a country or region
- Gauging public opinion on political and social topics
- Evaluating satisfaction with a company's products or an organization's services

Observations

Observations allow you to gather data on behaviours and phenomena without having to rely on the honesty and accuracy of respondents. This method is often used by psychological, social and market researchers to understand how people act in real-life situations.

Observation of physical entities and phenomena is also an important part of research in the natural sciences. Before you can develop testable hypotheses, models or theories, it's necessary to observe and systematically describe the subject under investigation.

Case studies

A case study can be used to describe the characteristics of a specific subject (such as a person, group, event or organization). Instead of gathering a large volume of data to identify patterns across time or location, case studies gather detailed data to identify the characteristics of a narrowly defined subject. Rather than aiming to describe generalizable facts, case studies often focus on unusual or interesting cases that challenge assumptions, add complexity, or reveal something new about a research problem.

Reflective Writing:-

Reflection offers you the opportunity to consider how your personal experiences and observations shape your thinking and your acceptance of new ideas. Professors often ask students to write reading reflections. They do this to encourage you to explore your own ideas about a text, to express your opinion rather than summarize the opinions of others. Reflective writing can help you to improve your analytical skills because it requires you to express what you think, and more significantly, how and why you think that way. In addition, reflective analysis asks you to acknowledge that your thoughts are shaped by your assumptions and preconceived ideas; in doing so, you can appreciate the ideas of others, notice how their assumptions and preconceived ideas may have shaped their thoughts, and perhaps recognize how your ideas support or oppose what you read.

Types of Reflective Writing

Experiential Reflection

Popular in professional programs, like business, nursing, social work, forensics and education, reflection is an important part of making connections between theory and practice. When you are asked to reflect upon experience in a placement, you do not only describe your experience, but you evaluate it based on ideas from class. **You can assess a theory or approach based on your observations and practice and evaluate your own knowledge and skills within your professional field.** This opportunity to take the time to think about your choices, your actions, your successes and your failures is best done within a specific framework, like course themes or work placement objectives. Abstract concepts can become concrete and real to you when considered within your own experiences, and reflection on your experiences allows you to make plans for improvement.

Reading Reflection

To encourage thoughtful and balanced assessment of readings, many interdisciplinary courses may ask you to submit a reading reflection. Often instructors will indicate to students what they expect of a reflection, but the **general purpose is to elicit your informed opinions about ideas presented in the text and to consider how they affect your interpretation.** Reading reflections offer an opportunity to recognize – and perhaps break down – your assumptions which may be challenged by the text(s).

Approaches to Reflective Inquiry

You may wonder how your professors assess your reflective writing. What are they looking for? How can my experiences or ideas be right or wrong? **Your instructors expect you to critically engage with concepts from your course by making connections between your observations, experiences, and opinions.** They expect you to explain and analyse these concepts from your own point of view, eliciting original ideas and encouraging active interest in the course material.

It can be difficult to know where to begin when writing a critical reflection. First, know that – like any other academic piece of writing – a reflection requires a narrow focus and strong analysis. The best approach for identifying a focus and for reflective analysis is interrogation. The following offers suggestions for your line of inquiry when developing a reflective response.

Experiential Reflection

It is best to discuss your experiences in a work placement or practicum within the context of personal or organizational goals; doing so provides important insights and perspective for your own growth in the profession. For reflective writing, it is important to balance reporting or descriptive writing with critical reflection and analysis.

Consider the purpose of reflection: to demonstrate your learning in the course. It is important to actively and directly connect concepts from class to your personal or experiential reflection. The following example shows how a student's observations from a classroom can be analysed using a theoretical concept and how the experience can help a student to evaluate this concept.

A Note on Mechanics

As with all written assignments or reports, it is important to have a clear focus for your writing. You do not need to discuss every experience or element of your placement. Pick a few that you can explore within the context of your learning. For reflective responses, identify the main arguments or important elements of the text to develop a stronger analysis which integrates relevant ideas from course materials.

Furthermore, your writing must be organized. Introduce your topic and the point you plan to make about your experience and learning. Develop your point through body paragraph(s), and conclude your paper by exploring the meaning you derive from your reflection. You may find the questions listed above can help you to develop an outline before you write your paper. You should maintain a formal tone, but it is acceptable to write in the first person and to use personal pronouns. Note, however, that it is important that you maintain confidentiality and anonymity of clients, patients or students from work or volunteer placements by using pseudonyms and masking identifying factors.

The value of reflection: Critical reflection is a meaningful exercise which can require as much time and work as traditional essays and reports because it asks students to be purposeful and engaged participants, readers, and thinkers. Thesis Statement A strong thesis statement articulates the unifying theme of an academic paper. It may present an argument or opinion, describe an idea, or provoke an analysis. Different disciplines and types of essays require varied forms of thesis statements. Reading example essays can provide a sense of what is expected in a specific paper. Creating the thesis statement In point form write the topic and main ideas of your paper Free write the most important conclusion or thought you have about your paper Try to make connections between the points and highlight implications, causes or applications; answer the question.

FORM AND STYLE OF THESIS WRITING:-

All the guidelines provide students at all the University with essential information about how to prepare and submit theses and dissertations in a format acceptable to the Graduate School. The topics range from writing style to the completion of required forms and the payment of fees. The majority of students submit an electronic version of their thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School.

A manuscript represents a pre-publication format; a thesis or dissertation is a final, completely edited, published document. Students should use these guidelines, not other style manuals, as the final authority on issues of format and style. Areas not covered in this document or deviation from any of the specifications should be discussed with a Graduate School format editor. Do not use previously accepted theses and dissertations as definite models for style. Composition and Structure Manuscripts consist of four major sections and should be placed in the order listed:

The preliminary pages should include only one Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, and List of Abbreviations/Nomenclature. Tables and figures should be placed within the text, not at the end as is customary in articles prepared for journal publication. Permission to Use Copyrighted Material The standard provisions of copyright laws regarding quoted material under copyright apply to electronic publication. Dissertations are scanned by ProQuest for previously copyrighted material. When a student has published portions of their dissertation as articles in a copyrighted journal, permission from the journal to include that material must be obtained. ProQuest requires written permission from the copyright holder of any extensively quoted material. Emailed approvals from the journals are accepted. Proper acknowledgement within the text of the manuscript must be made. Students should discuss questions about copyrighted material with their dissertation.

The aim of the dissertation or thesis is to produce an original piece of research work on a clearly defined topic. Usually a dissertation is the most substantial piece of independent work in the undergraduate programme, while a thesis is usually associated with master's degrees, although these terms can be interchangeable and may vary between countries and universities. A dissertation or thesis is likely to be the longest and most difficult piece of work a student has ever completed. It can, however, also be a very rewarding piece of work since, unlike essays and other assignments, the student is able to pick a topic of special interest and work on their own initiative. Writing a dissertation requires a range of planning and research skills that will be of great value in your future career and within organisations.

The dissertation topic and question should be sufficiently focused that you can collect all the necessary data within a relatively short time-frame, usually about six weeks for undergraduate programmes. You should also choose a topic that you already know something about so that you already have a frame of reference for your literature search and some

understanding and interest in the theory behind your topic. There are many ways to write a dissertation or thesis.

Organising your Time

However organised you are, writing your dissertation is likely to be one of the most challenging tasks you have ever undertaken. Take a look at our pages on **Organising your Study Time** and **Organisation Skills**, as well as **Project Management Skills** and **Project Planning**, to give you some ideas about how to organise your time and energy for the task ahead.

General Structure

Like an academic paper for journal publication, dissertations generally follow a fairly standard structure. The following pages discuss each of these in turn, and give more detailed advice about how to prepare and write each one:

- **Research Proposal**
- **Introduction**
- **Literature Review**
- **Methodology**
- **Results and Discussion**
- **Conclusions and Extra Sections**

Particularly for master's programmes, your university may ask for your thesis to be submitted in separate sections, rather than as a single document. One breakdown that is often seen is three-fold:

- **Introduction and/or Research Proposal**, which should set out the research question that you plan to explore and give some ideas about how you might go about it. If you are submitting it as a research proposal, it will be fairly sketchy as you won't have had a chance to review the literature thoroughly, but it should contain at least some theoretical foundation, and a reasonable idea of why you want to study this issue;
- **Literature Review and Methodology**, which are often combined because what you plan to do should emerge from and complement the previous literature; and

- **Results and Discussion**, which should set out what you actually did, the results you obtained, and discuss these in the context of the literature.

Footnotes

Footnotes are notes placed at the bottom of a page. They cite references or comment on a designated part of the text above it. For example, say you want to add an interesting comment to a sentence you have written, but the comment is not directly related to the argument of your paragraph. In this case, you could add the symbol for a footnote. Then, at the bottom of the page you could reprint the symbol and insert your comment. Here is an example:

This is an illustration of a footnote.¹ The number “1” at the end of the previous sentence corresponds with the note below. See how it fits in the body of the text?

1 At the bottom of the page you can insert your comments about the sentence preceding the footnote.

When your reader comes across the footnote in the main text of your paper, he or she could look down at your comments right away, or else continue reading the paragraph and read your comments at the end. Because this makes it convenient for your reader, most citation styles require that you use either footnotes or endnotes in your paper. Some, however, allow you to make parenthetical references (author, date) in the body of your work. See our section on [citation styles](#) for more information.

Footnotes are not just for interesting comments, however. Sometimes they simply refer to relevant sources -- they let your reader know where certain material came from, or where they can look for other sources on the subject. To decide whether you should cite your sources in footnotes or in the body of your paper, you should ask your instructor or see our section on citation styles.

Where Does the Little Footnote Mark Go?

Whenever possible, put the footnote at the end of a sentence, immediately following the period or whatever punctuation mark completes that sentence. Skip two spaces after the footnote before you begin the next sentence. If you must include the footnote in the middle of

a sentence for the sake of clarity, or because the sentence has more than one footnote (try to avoid this!), try to put it at the end of the most relevant phrase, after a comma or other punctuation mark. Otherwise, put it right at the end of the most relevant word. If the footnote is not at the end of a sentence, skip only one space after it.

What's the Difference between Footnotes and Endnotes?

The only real difference is placement -- footnotes appear at the bottom of the relevant page, while endnotes all appear at the end of your document. If you want your reader to read your notes right away, footnotes are more likely to get your reader's attention. Endnotes, on the other hand, are less intrusive and will not interrupt the flow of your paper.

If I Cite Sources in the Footnotes (or Endnotes), How's that Different from a Bibliography?

Sometimes you may be asked to include these -- especially if you have used a parenthetical style of citation. A "works cited" page is a list of all the works from which you have borrowed material. Your reader may find this more convenient than footnotes or endnotes because he or she will not have to wade through all of the comments and other information in order to see the sources from which you drew your material. A "works consulted" page is a complement to a "works cited" page, listing all of the works you used, whether they were useful or not.

Bibliography

A bibliography is a list of all of the sources you have used (whether referenced or not) in the process of researching your work. In general, a bibliography should include:

- the authors' names
- the titles of the works
- the names and locations of the companies that published your copies of the sources
- the dates your copies were published
- the page numbers of your sources (if they are part of multi-source volumes)

Isn't a "Works Consulted" Page the Same as a "Bibliography," Then?

Well, yes. The title is different because "works consulted" pages are meant to complement "works cited" pages, and bibliographies may list other relevant sources in addition to those mentioned in footnotes or endnotes. Choosing to title your bibliography "Works Consulted" or "Selected Bibliography" may help specify the relevance of the sources listed.

Viva voce is a Latin phrase literally meaning "with living voice" but most often translated as "by word of mouth."

It may refer to:

- Word of mouth
- A voice vote in a deliberative assembly
- An oral exam, especially in a thesis defence in academia
- Spoken evidence in law
- Viva Voce (band), an American indie rock band

Purpose and Format of the Viva Voce Examination

Literally, "viva voce" means by or with the living voice - i.e., by word of mouth as opposed to writing. So the viva examination is where you will give a verbal defence of your thesis.

Put simply, you should think of it as a verbal counterpart to your written thesis. Your thesis demonstrates your skill at presenting your research in writing. In the viva examination, you will demonstrate your ability to participate in academic discussion with research colleagues.

Purpose of the Exam

The purpose of the viva examination is to:

- demonstrate that the thesis is your own work
- confirm that you understand what you have written and can defend it verbally
- investigate your awareness of where your original work sits in relation to the wider research field
- establish whether the thesis is of sufficiently high standard to merit the award of the degree for which it is submitted
- allow you to clarify and develop the written thesis in response to the examiners' questions

The Examiners and Exam Chair

You will normally have two examiners:

- an internal examiner who will be a member of academic staff of the University, usually from your School/Department but not one of your supervisors
- an external examiner who will normally be a member of academic staff of another institution or occasionally a professional in another field with expertise in your area of research (candidates who are also members of University staff will normally have two external examiners in place of an internal and an external examiner)

Your supervisor should let you know who your examiners will be as it is important that you ensure you are familiar with their work and any particular approach that they may take when examining your thesis.

In some cases there may also be a Chair person for the examination. A Chair is appointed if the Graduate Dean or either of the examiners feels this is appropriate, for example where the examining team has relatively little experience of examining UK research degrees. The Chair is there to ensure the examination is conducted in line with University regulations and is not there to examine your thesis. If there is a Chair person, it will usually be a senior member of the academic staff of your School/Department.

Normally no one else is present in the exam.

Exam Venue and Arrangements

Your internal examiner is responsible for arranging your viva exam and they will contact you with the relevant details - date, time, venue, etc.

Usually the viva exam will take place in your School/Department, though occasionally another University location may be used. If you are unsure where you need to go, make sure you check this before the day of your exam.

If you returned your Notice of Intention to Submit Your Thesis three months before your submission date, your viva exam should normally take place quite soon after submission. Almost all viva exams take place within three months of the examiners receiving the thesis.

Format of the Exam

All viva examinations are different, so it is not possible to describe exactly what will happen - but there are general points which can be made which may be helpful, and you should have the opportunity before your examination to discuss what will happen with your supervisor or to attend the University's pre-viva examination workshop.

The purpose of the viva is to establish that your work is of a sufficiently high standard to merit the award of the degree for which it is submitted. In order to be awarded a research degree, the thesis should demonstrate an original contribution to knowledge and contain work which is deemed worthy of publication.

In order to do this, examiners may:

- ask you to justify your arguments
- ask you to justify not only things which you have included in your thesis but also things which you may have left out
- ask you questions about the wider research context in which the work has been undertaken
- argue certain points with you
- expect you to discuss any developments which may flow from your work in the future

Inevitably, your thesis will have strengths and weaknesses and the examiners will want to discuss these. It is considered a positive thing, indeed an essential thing, that you can discuss both the strengths and the weaknesses. You can think of the weaknesses as an opportunity to demonstrate your skill at critical appraisal.

Remember that examiners seek to find and discuss weaknesses in all theses - you should not interpret criticism as an indication that the examination will not end successfully.

Groups of Research Methods

There are two main groups of research methods in the social sciences:

1. **The empirical-analytical group approaches the study of social sciences in a similar manner that researchers study the natural sciences.** This type of research focuses on objective knowledge, research questions that can be answered yes or no, and operational definitions of variables to be measured. The empirical-analytical group

employs deductive reasoning that uses existing theory as a foundation for formulating hypotheses that need to be tested. This approach is focused on explanation.

2. **The interpretative group of methods** is focused on understanding phenomenon in a comprehensive, holistic way. Interpretive methods focus on analytically disclosing the meaning-making practices of human subjects [the why, how, or by what means people do what they do], while showing how those practices arrange so that it can be used to generate observable outcomes. Interpretive methods allow you to recognize your connection to the phenomena under investigation. However, the interpretative group requires careful examination of variables because it focuses more on subjective knowledge.

II. Content

The introduction to your methodology section should begin by restating the research problem and underlying assumptions underpinning your study. This is followed by situating the methods you used to gather, analyze, and process information within the overall “tradition” of your field of study and within the particular research design you have chosen to study the problem. If the method you choose lies outside of the tradition of your field [i.e., your review of the literature demonstrates that the method is not commonly used], provide a justification for how your choice of methods specifically addresses the research problem in ways that have not been utilized in prior studies.

The remainder of your methodology section should describe the following:

- Decisions made in selecting the data you have analyzed or, in the case of qualitative research, the subjects and research setting you have examined,
- Tools and methods used to identify and collect information, and how you identified relevant variables,
- The ways in which you processed the data and the procedures you used to analyze that data, and
- The specific research tools or strategies that you utilized to study the underlying hypothesis and research questions.

In addition, an effectively written methodology section should:

- **Introduce the overall methodological approach for investigating your research problem.** Is your study qualitative or quantitative or a combination of both (mixed method)? Are you going to take a special approach, such as action research, or a more neutral stance?
- Indicate how the approach fits the overall research design. Your methods for gathering data should have a clear connection to your research problem. In other words, make sure that your methods will actually address the problem. One of the most common deficiencies found in research papers is that the proposed methodology is not suitable to achieving the stated objective of your paper.
- **Describe the specific methods of data collection you are going to use,** such as, surveys, interviews, questionnaires, observation, archival research. If you are analyzing existing data, such as a data set or archival documents, describe how it was originally created or gathered and by whom. Also be sure to explain how older data is still relevant to investigating the current research problem.
- Explain how you intend to analyze your results. Will you use statistical analysis? Will you use specific theoretical perspectives to help you analyze a text or explain observed behaviors? Describe how you plan to obtain an accurate assessment of relationships, patterns, trends, distributions, and possible contradictions found in the data.
- Provide background and a rationale for methodologies that are unfamiliar for your readers. Very often in the social sciences, research problems and the methods for investigating them require more explanation/rationale than widely accepted rules governing the natural and physical sciences. Be clear and concise in your explanation.
- Provide a justification for subject selection and sampling procedure. For instance, if you propose to conduct interviews, how do you intend to select the sample population? If you are analyzing texts, which texts have you chosen, and why? If you are using statistics, why is this set of data being used? If other data sources exist, explain why the data you chose is most appropriate to addressing the research problem.
- **Provide a justification for case study selection.** A common method of analyzing research problems in the social sciences is to analyze specific cases. These can be a person, place, event, phenomenon, or other type of subject of analysis that are either examined as a singular topic of in-depth investigation or multiple topics of investigation studied for the purpose of comparing or contrasting findings. In either

method, you should explain why a case or cases were chosen and how they specifically relate to the research problem.

- Describe potential limitations. Are there any practical limitations that could affect your data collection? How will you attempt to control for potential confounding variables and errors? If your methodology may lead to problems you can anticipate, state this openly and show why pursuing this methodology outweighs the risk of these problems cropping up.