

Writing up Qualitative Research

(ELTT course 10)

Independent Study version

Tony Lynch

English Language Teaching Centre

University of Edinburgh

© 2014

Contents

0 Opening: About the course	i-iii
1 Structure and Introduction	1-13
2 The Literature Review	14-28
3 The Methodology Chapter	29-37
4 The Data Chapters	38-54
5 The Final Chapter	55-73
6 The First Few Pages	74-83

About the course

Who is the course for?

ELTT course 10 is for PhD students working on a qualitative thesis who have completed their data collection and analysis and are at the stage of writing up. The materials should also be useful if you are writing up a 'mixed-methods' thesis, including chapters of analysis and discussion of qualitative data.

What does the course offer?

The focus is on improving your ability to write academic English appropriate to a qualitative study. We assume that by this stage of your PhD work you are familiar with key qualitative notions such as: *Grounded theory*; *Contextualisation*; '*Showing your workings*' (analytical rigour); '*Letting the data speak*'; *Reflexivity*; and *Transferability* (in contrast to generalisability).

How does the course work?

In each unit you focus on the different sections of a qualitative thesis (see Contents),

- Reflecting on advice on writing-up from leading qualitative researchers
- Analysing sample thesis extracts
- Studying English expressions relevant to writing up specific chapters
- Applying the ideas covered in the unit to drafting/revising your thesis sections

Are these Independent Study materials the same as the materials used in class?

Yes. These Independent Study (IS) materials have been written for students who are not able to attend the ELTT course 10 classes in Semester 1, or who want to use them independently, at another time of the year. The IS materials comprising the six course units, with additional *Independent Study notes* written specifically for students working without a language tutor.

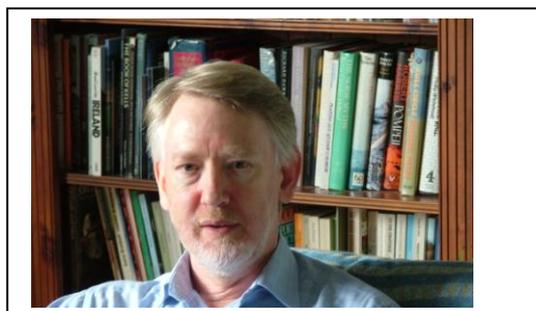
Acknowledgments

In writing this course I have used extracts from a number of qualitative studies, mainly PhD theses written by my ex-students and (former) colleagues at the Institute for Applied Language Studies, University of Edinburgh: Dr Lesley Gourlay, Dr Heather Hewitt, Dr Ko Chao-Jung, Dr Paul Mennim, Dr Joy Northcott and Dr Melada Sudajit-apa. I chose these particular sources to give the materials an appropriately 'local' orientation to what is expected of students writing up qualitative research for a doctorate. The course could not have taken this form without the willing help of those authors, and I thank them warmly for their cooperation.

I am also grateful to Dr Cathy Benson and Dr Joy Northcott for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of the materials.

Tony Lynch

Professor of Student Learning (EAP)
English Language Teaching Centre



References

The sources I have cited in the six ELTT course 10 units are listed below. If you have time to do further reading at this stage of your doctoral research, the two books I would recommend in particular are **Holliday (2007)** and the 'Writing Up' section of **Silverman (2012)**.

- Alasuutari P. (1995) *Researching Culture: Qualitative Method and Cultural Studies*. London: SAGE.
- Anderson K. (1993) 'Ut Supra Crepidam Sutor Iudicet: a genre analysis approach to the pedagogical description of non-science academic discourse'. MSc in Applied Linguistics dissertation, University of Edinburgh.
- Biggam J. (2011) *Succeeding with Your Master's Dissertation*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Bloor M. & Bloor T. (1991) Cultural expectations and socio-pragmatic failure in academic writing. In P. Adams, B. Heaton & P. Howarth (eds.) *Socio-Cultural Issues in English for Academic Purposes*. London: MEP/British Council. 1-12.
- Feak C. & Swales J. (2009) *Telling a Research Story: Writing a Literature Review*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Hart C. (1998) *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Imagination*. London: SAGE.
- Holliday A. (2007)** *Doing and Writing Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE.
- Hopkins A. & Dudley-Evans T. (1988) A genre-based investigation of discussion sections in articles and dissertations. *ESP Journal* 7: 113-21.
- Hyland K. (1999) Academic attribution: Citation and the construction of disciplinary knowledge. *Applied Linguistics* 20/3: 341-67.
- Hyland K. (2002) Options of identity in academic writing. *ELT Journal* 56/4: 351-58.
- Marx G. (1997) Of methods and manners for aspiring sociologists: 37 moral imperatives. *The American Sociologist*, Spring, 102-25.
- Mason J. (2002) *Qualitative Researching*. London: SAGE.
- Murcott A. (1997) 'The PhD: some informal notes'. Unpublished paper. School of Health and Social Care, South Bank University, London.
- Patton M. (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Phillips E. & Pugh D. (1992) *How to Get a PhD*. 2nd edition. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Rudestam K. & Newton R. (1992) *Surviving Your Dissertation*. London: SAGE.
- Silverman D. (2000) *Doing Qualitative Research: a practical handbook*. London: SAGE.
- Silverman D. (2012)** *Doing Qualitative Research: a practical handbook*. 4th edition. London: SAGE
- Swales J. & Feak C. (2000) *English in Today's Research World*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Swales J. & Feak C. (2004) *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*. 2nd edition. University of Michigan Press.
- Swales J. & Feak C. (2012) *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*. 3rd edition. University of Michigan Press.
- Weissberg R. & Buker S. (1990) *Writing up Research*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Wolcott H.F. (1990) *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Sources of the illustrative extracts

- Gourlay, Lesley (2003) 'Classroom discourse and participation in an English for Specific Purposes context'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh.
- Hewitt, Heather (2006) 'Front desk talk: a study of interaction between receptionists and patients in general practice surgeries'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh.
- Honarbin-Holliday, Mehri (2005) 'Art education, identity and gender at Tehran and al Zahra Universities'. Unpublished PhD thesis, Canterbury Christ Church University.
- Ko, Chao-jung (2010) 'Early-stage French as a Foreign Language in Taiwan: a case study involving second-language oral proficiency, motivation and social presence in synchronous computer-mediated communication'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh.
- Lynch, Tony (1997) Life in the slow lane: observations of a limited second language listener. *System* 25/3: 385-398.
- Mennim, Paul (2004) 'Noticing tasks in a university EFL presentation course in Japan: their effects on oral output'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh.
- Northcott, Joy (2011) 'Teaching English as a Foreign Language: Perceptions of an In-service Diploma Course'. Unpublished EdD thesis, Open University.
- Sudajit-apa, Melada (2008) 'Systematising EAP materials development: Design, evaluation and revision in a Thai undergraduate reading course'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh.