

THE FRAMEWORK OF A RESEARCH ARTICLE

Topic No. 160-166

Essential components (format) of a paper

- Title
- Author(s) and institution(s)
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Methodology (Method)
- Results
- Discussion and conclusion
- References
- Appendices (if any)

Finalizing your title

- Very important - critical
- Titles either attract or dissuade your readers
 - Focus
 - RQ(s)
 - Hypothesis
- Type of article
 - Primary research
 - Review of literature
 - Position paper
- Should not require unnecessary reading
- Short and succinct

- Telling the reader
- Examples:
 - Comparing the Effects of Reading and Writing on Writing Performance (Tsang, 1996)
 - Second Language Learning and the Teaching of Grammar (Zhongganggao, 2001)
 - Word Translation at Three Levels of Proficiency in a Second Language: The Ubiquitous Involvement of Conceptual Memory (de Groot & Poot, 1997)
- Three criteria
- Focus + type + succinctness

Finalizing your abstract

Five essential things

- a. Purpose of the study
- b. Source(s) from where the data are drawn
- c. The method(s) used for collecting data
- d. The general results, and
- e. General interpretation of the results
- May also add: implications and recommendations

Example: Treiman, Kessler and Bourassa (2001)

We analyzed spellings that were produced by children in kindergarten (N = 115), first grade (N = 104), and second grade (N = 77) in order to determine whether children's own names influence their spellings of other words. Kindergartners overuse letters from their own first names (or commonly used nicknames) when spelling. Kindergartners with longer names, who had more own-name letters available for intrusions, tended to produce longer spellings than did children with shorter names. Moreover, the spellings of kindergartners with long names tended to contain a lower proportion of phonetically reasonable letters than did the spellings of children with short names. These effects appeared to be confined to children who read below the first grade level. The results support the view that children's own names play a special role in the acquisition of literacy. They further show the children choose in a way that reflects their experience with the letters.

Analysis of an Example Abstract

<i>Essentials</i>	<i>Content</i>
Purpose of the study	This paper investigated whether knowledge of one's own name affected a child's spelling ability.
Sample	115 kindergartners, 104 first graders, and 77 second graders.
Method used for collecting data	They analyzed the children's spelling in comparison to the spelling and length of the children's names.
Results	Kindergartners differed from the older children in three ways, which they listed.
Interpretations of results	The results support the notion that knowledge of one's own name is involved in becoming literate.

Writing an introduction to your study

Introduction: the brains of the study

- Introducing the topic being investigated
- Why - important enough?
- Research questions + theory
- Hypothesis + predictions
- Constructs + special terms
- Typically - historical context
- Logical argument – statements – references

Build your argument – why this study is needed?

The 'methodology' section of your paper

Subsections of 'methodology' section

- Sample
- Research design
- Treatment(s) (optional)
- Techniques (optional)
- Materials (optional)

- Data-collection procedures
- Instruments (optional)
- Observational methods
- Procedures followed

The ‘results’ section of your paper

Trying to make sense of your data

- Depending on the nature of your research design
- Statistics
- Symbols – tables – graphs
- Qualitative (verbal) data
- Patterns - trends
- Descriptive statistics
- Strength and weaknesses of your study
- Choice of data analysis

Discussion and conclusion of your paper

The final section of a research study

- Combined or separate
- Discusses the results and conclude the study
- Results are interpreted in the light of RQs/hypothesis
- Findings to previous research studies
- Evaluate your own study in this section – strengths and weaknesses
- Further research and important suggestions