

# Writing your thesis

These slides can be found at <https://adrianholliday.com/handouts/>

## **Part 2: Detailed writing, editing and submitting**

## Times, places, devices and rhythms

Where and when to write

Devising the best environment and devices

Perhaps moving from desktop to laptop, from library to home - and where else?

A daily rhythm that allows you always to keep your thesis at the front of your mind

Half hour spurts, making use of every single spare moment of the day

There will never be the better, longer time in the future

Stopping in the middle of something that can be picked up in the next sitting

## **Document technicalities, formatting, referencing and editing**

A lot of busy work you can be doing that will save mountains of time later

### **The document**

Devising styles for paragraphs and headings

Checking and applying them

Getting the details of the referencing style right all the time

Never leaving page numbers until later

Having a good personal method for recording literature notes and research diary

Good researchers keep meticulous records

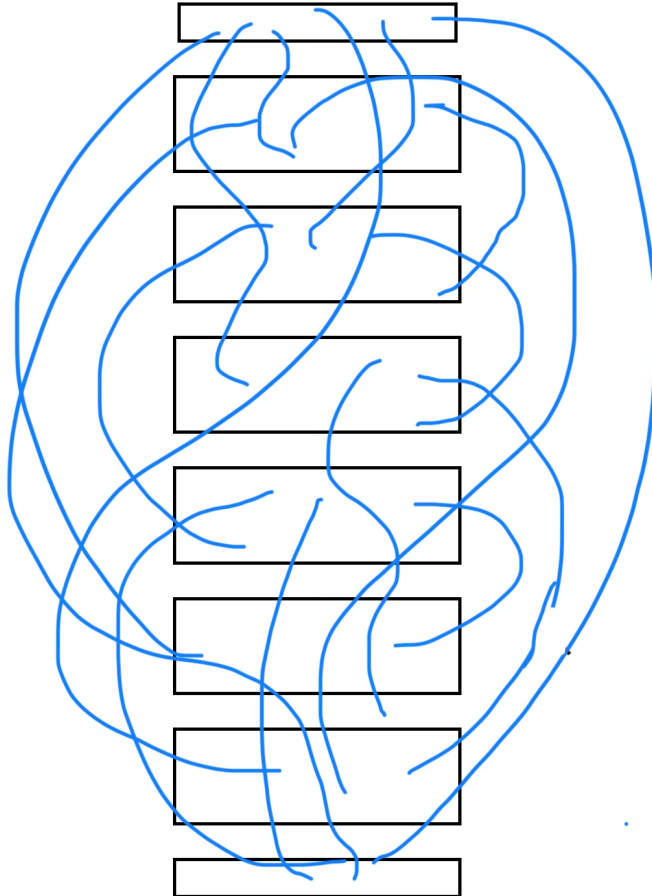
### **Editing**

Going back and editing what you have written will help you about what to write next

Always syncing what you write now, what you have already written

Always thinking about what the reader needs to know and when

## The totally synced thesis



The whole thesis is a single moment time

The chapters are not chronological

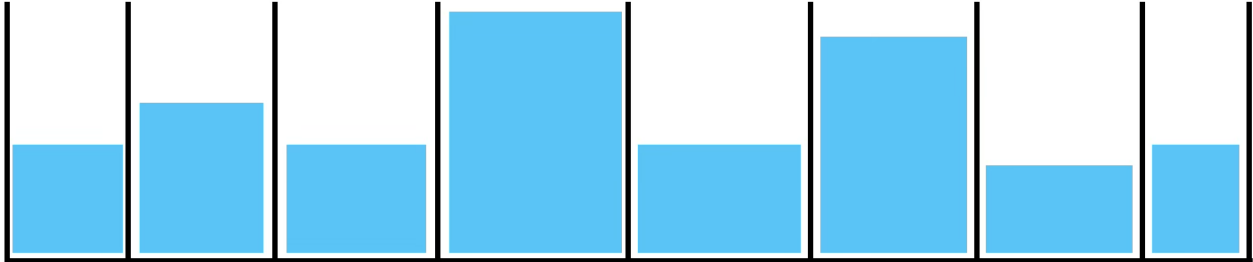
The entire research process is in some respects present in every chapter

“The thesis grows out of a conflict between ... and .... which ... This conflict will therefore be the main focus of the first literature review chapter.”

“The main finding, that ... contributes to an explanation of this conflict by ... Exactly how this emerges from ... will be demonstrated through ... in the data chapters”

“The choice of a ... methodology also emerges from this conflict in that .... This will be demonstrated in detail in chapter ...”

## Working on the whole document



Put everything you have into the whole thesis document

Growing it gradually

Perhaps moving things to other places

Constantly editing beginnings and endings to reflect changes

## Message and storyline devices

Working out key phrases to express your core concepts

‘Separated cultures model’, ‘informal orders’

Used strategically throughout the thesis

When you change them, change them everywhere (‘find and replace’)

“Throughout ... will be referred to as ...”

Branding

Chapter and section headings

Naming what you are writing helps you to work out what you are saying

Analysis and the ordering of the discussion and argument continues to develop through the process of writing about each theme

Efficient referencing back and forth

“A good example of this is Helen talking about ... in chapter 6, ...”

“This is very different to the argument expressed by ... (...) and ... (...) in the discussion of ... in chapter 3”

Not the same as repetition

Just enough to remind the reader and make the interconnection

## Deixis

That scribe wrote three scripts: One he could read but no-one else! The second both he and others could read. But the third neither he nor anyone else could read! That third is myself! (Saheb-e Zamani, 1972, citing Shams-e Tabrizi, saying 56)

Shams-E Tabrizi is often difficult to understand. He emphasises the self as the main interpreter. It is argued that there is a connection between the third script and the third space. Furthermore, there are multiple interpretations of the third space in the literature (MacDonald, 2019; Zhou & Pilcher, 2019). Moreover, the third space is dependent on the intersubjective understanding of the researcher and other people when engaging with the intercultural.

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Exactly what **this** means is difficult to ascertain, which is surely the intention, **and reflects** the multiple interpretations of the third space **in the literature** (MacDonald, 2019; Zhou & Pilcher, 2019). **However**, with humility, I wonder if **Shams's** reference to **'myself'** somehow places the onus for understanding on the intersubjective person of the researcher or whoever is engaging with the intercultural.

(9 words shorter)

## Tricky essential elements and putting off rumours

### Resisting false rumours

'Other students say that ...'

'My supervisor says that ...'

'In this method you should always ...'

'Everyone has to read and follow ...'

Following blindly versus working things out based on your own assessment of the bigger picture

E: Why did you decide not to ...

S: Because this is the method according to ...

E: But what were your reasons for ...

S: As I said, ....

Later, talking to the other examiner about the decision:

E: There are many reasons why ... but she wasn't able to explain. She seems therefore just to be following a method without any deeper understanding

E2: Yes, we could ask her to include the reasons in the methodology chapter; but I don't think she actually knows ... There's so much she could connect it with throughout the thesis that she hasn't