

Referencing philosophy and underlying systems

Adrian Holliday

Professor of Applied Linguistics & Intercultural Education | Canterbury Christ Church University | website: adrianholliday.com

This handout can be found at <https://adrianholliday.com/handouts/>

The nature of academic research writing

What is the difference between a thesis and other **highly specialist** texts

	Novel, poem, painting, film, piece of music	Journal article, book (monograph)	Thesis
The message, story, relevance, inspiration	To be discovered in the text, open to interpretation, different for different readers	Made explicit - to indicate contribution to the field	Ditto Must not be left alone with the reader Cannot risk multiple interpretations
The motivation approach, methodology, evidence How decisions were made and problems solved (How it was done)	Implicit, appreciated, imagined in the text, resonance Explained in separate author accounts	As above	Ditto With further explanation to demonstrate researcher ability to make choices and solve problems

Culturally strange and difficult for **everyone**

Practice-based, portfolio and 'by publication'

Performance, novel, exhibition, record of professional practice

Accompanied by a measurable statement of motivation and strategy (research questions and methods) how, why, what evidence, and contribution

By publication

Each subsequent publication must be a development from the previous one

In thinking, methods, evidence and findings

The accompanying statement **must** make this clear

What the examiners want to know in every case

'On what basis did you decide to ...?'

'Where do you explain this ...?'

'How exactly does what you claim relate to ...?'

What reviewers need to know

Contribution

Accountable and reliable methods

Knowledge of the field - in terms of how and what - and how you therefore position yourself

And examiners - more detail regarding how well it was done

The thesis (**written document**) has to contain **everything**

The viva establishes how far this is the case

Or what needs to be done to make it so (corrections etc)

Close referencing

As a means for making explicit the **finer workings**

As well as **acknowledging** what **specified** others have done

Relating to a **community** of other researchers and practitioners (**near and far**)

The source of evidence

What you are doing with it

How **precisely** you are doing this

Close reading

Like attention to detail and precision in all impressive texts

Not only the paintings but how they are hung

The choice and use of materials and techniques

Positionality and contribution

How does the research relate to the wider discussions in the field?

Literature review

Empty referencing

The following review is important for this study.

Some researchers discuss social construction and postmodern constructivism. Berger & Luckmann (1979) explain social construction. Crane (1994) and Delanty et al (2008) describe dominant images of the intercultural. Lyotard (1979), Mannheim (1936) and Mills (1970) speak about grand narratives. There is also reference to the relationship between language and nation (Li, 2018, p. 19). The separated cultures model and a paradigm revolution is also described (MacDonald, 2020; Kuhn, 1970).

Why would a reviewer or examiner want to read this?

‘Yes, they have read a lot and it looks about right, **but so what?**’

Strategic referencing

The approach underpinning this study involves **a** postmodern constructivism **which opposes** the positivist certainty implicit in **the** separated cultures model. **This** approach is **supported by** Berger & Luckmann (1979) on social construction, **e.g.** Crane (1994) and Delanty et al (2008) on the **falsity** of **dominant** images of the intercultural, and **e.g.** Lyotard (1979), Mannheim (1936) and Mills (1970) on the **falsity** of grand narratives. **Related to this** critique is **the** opposition to nationalist, colonialist perceptions of **'language'** as equal to nation (Li, 2018, p. 19).

The separated cultures model **is thus revealed** as an ideological construction and a **false** paradigm which cannot exist as a choice, but **which must** be moved on from through the process of paradigm revolution (MacDonald, 2020; Kuhn, 1970).

This enables the reviewer or examiner to **evaluate how well** the approach is put together

'This example is far too compressed'

Working with data

Empty referencing

The answer to the first research question - that Xian culture is collectivist - is confirmed in both the quantitative survey and the qualitative interviews.

88% of the questionnaire respondents agreed that their culture is collectivist.

....

In the interviews this is exemplified in most of the cases. This can be seen in the following responses:

A said the following ‘In my culture we always follow what the group agrees’.

G similarly stated that ‘In the classroom we never question the teacher’.

D also stated that ‘Generally speaking when we go out with our friends we very quickly agree what we are going to do.’

More strategic

In chapter 5 I explained how my **holistic** analysis of the data revealed a complexity that caused me to temporarily put aside **the initial** research questions. **The** emergent themes, and how they relate to the structure of the data chapters, are also listed **there**. **In this first data chapter** I will therefore begin with the **first** major theme

I will attempt to demonstrate **this** complexity in **the** interrelationships between **(a)** the questionnaire and **(b)** interview responses, but also in the light of **(c)** the questions asked and how they were asked, and **(d)** notes in my research diary taken at the time.

Table 7, chapter 5, **which** catalogues the different types of data and how they are referenced, should also serve as a useful map to see how **the** data I cite here fits into the whole corpus.

...

The **following** interview extract, **including** my questions and responses, indicates a significant degree of uncertainty around the question of collectivism:

[extract] (D, interview)

What D means **here**, **when** they say that ..., **could** be interpreted in a number of ways. On the one hand ... Alternatively ... That there might indeed appear to be a contradiction **could** be a result of my repeated question ... following them suggesting that ‘...’ **at the beginning** of the extract. There is also **some** resonance **here** with the **following** questionnaire responses, especially **given the** questions asked:

[extract, question and response] (questionnaire response 25)

[extract, question and response] (questionnaire response 32)

It is also significant that in **the** research notes I took **at the time**, I observe the **following** about D’s **probable** anxiety:

[extract] (D interview, research notes)

....

[Two pages later] **The** uncertainties about collectivism that emerge in **this** section puts into question claims in **the** literature (.....) **that** ...

How does this complex referencing work in other forms?

What makes novels, paintings, pieces of music etc convincing and resonant

What multiple types of referencing are always there?

Explicit, bracketed, to literature, other research and data

In the nature of sentences - deixis

Why does even scientific writing need to be heavily nuanced?

How far is the above (last) extract scientific?

Care with theories, hypotheses, propositions, claims

There is sufficient uncertainty in this qualitative study of an instance of ... to shake the theory that Xian culture is collectivist

Triangulation or thick description

If certain questions are asked in a particular way, then it is likely that participant responses might appear to support ...

How variables are controlled and how far they can be controlled

Dealing with the messiness of reality