

M U N I
E C O N

Critical literary research

Methodology 1 course (DXH_MET1)

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Outline

1. Critical literature review
2. Citation format
3. Citation signals
4. Literature search

What is critical literature review?

"Critical" does not mean "negative".

What is literature review?

- An overview of published and unpublished materials which help answer fundamental questions.
 1. What are the current theoretical or policy issues and debates related to your topic?
 2. What is the current state of knowledge about these issues and problems?

A literature review surveys books, scholarly articles, and any other sources relevant to a particular issue, area of research, or theory, and by so doing, **provides a description, summary, and critical evaluation** of these works in relation to the research problem being investigated.

Literature reviews are designed to provide an overview of **sources you have explored** while researching a particular topic and to demonstrate to your readers how your research fits within a larger field of study.

Fink, Arlene. *Conducting Research Literature Reviews: From the Internet to Paper*. Fourth edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014.

What is Critical Reading?

Reading for facts = non-critical

Reading for interpretation = critical

To the critical reader, any single text provides but one portrayal of the facts, one individual's "take" on the subject matter. Critical readers thus recognize not only what a text says, but also how that text portrays the subject matter. They recognize the various ways in which each and every text is the unique creation of a unique author.

What a Text Says, Does, and Means: Reaching for an Interpretation

Three steps or modes of analysis are reflected in three types of reading and discussion:

What a text **says** – **restatement**

What a text **does** – **description**

What a text **means** – **interpretation**

What a Text Says, Does, and Means: Reaching for an Interpretation

You can distinguish each mode of analysis by the subject matter of the discussion:

What a text says – restatement – talks about the same topic as the original text

What a text does – description – discusses aspects of the discussion itself

What a text means – interpretation — analyzes the text and asserts a meaning for the text as a whole

What is a Critical Literature Review?

The aim of a literature review is to show that the writer has studied existing work in the field with insight.

It is not enough merely to show what others in your field have discovered. You need to synthesize, analyze and evaluate the relevant work of others critically.

Read academic papers critically

- What is the **motivation** for the research? Why should we care about this research (why is it important)?
- What is the **identification strategy** that helps to answer research questions?
(e.g. experiment design; change in legislation; cross-country differences; an exogenous shock)
- What is **a key part of the research** that allows authors to claim what they claim?
- What are the **main findings**? Are these surprising or rather expected? What **implications** do authors claim these findings have?
- How is this research **new**?

Begin by moving from a more general, wider view of the research area to the specific area you wish to focus on

‘Previous literature has looked at/concentrated on ...’

‘Previous work has focused on ...’

‘Early research investigated ...’

‘Substantial work has been carried out on ...’

‘Work done by ... (was) built on ...’

‘Recent work has concentrated on ...’

Avoid the laundry list literature review

- The laundry list is often called
‘He said, she said’

LAUNDRY LIST	
Topi/ Hat	Rp. 5.000
Baju Anak/ Child Shirt	Rp. 5.000
Pengering/ Drying	Rp. 5.000
Penyetrikaan/ Ironing	Rp. 5.000
Jas/ Jacket/ Blazer	Rp. 25.000
Kemeja/ Shirt	Rp. 10.000
Kaos/ T-Shirt	Rp. 8.000
Kaos Dalam/ Undershirt	Rp. 5.000

- Williams (1985) discovered... Stevens (1988) conducted similar experiments and find that ... Later Randle (1991) concluded that...
- By focusing on writers rather than the substantive issue under discussion, you may end up listing and then trying to draw things together. Your goal is not to summarise who said what but on **interpretations of the term.**

The purpose of a literature review is to:

- Place each work in the context of its contribution to understanding the research problem being studied.
- Describe the relationship of each work to the others under consideration.
- Identify new ways to interpret prior research.
- Reveal any gaps that exist in the literature.
- Resolve conflicts amongst seemingly contradictory previous studies.
- Identify areas of prior scholarship to prevent duplication of effort.
- Point the way in fulfilling a need for additional research.
- Locate your own research within the context of existing literature [very important].

Example

Clarifying the concept of neoliberalism neoliberalism is often used as a synonym for the inequalities of the economy more generally. Some scholars use the term very loosely, drawing unrelated life events to suggest that a clandestine power is ‘pulling the strings’ (Bell and Green, 2016, after Latour, 2005). Neoliberalism is also almost always derogatory when used to refer to economic/political policy (Fish, 2009) which produces austerity through the rationality of markets, entrepreneurialism and competition (De Lissavoy, 2014). The term is also associated with ‘bureaucratisation’ (Hibou, 2015), processes of rationalisation and professionalization, driven by the quest for neutrality, objectivity and professionalization, which govern key aspects of everyday life.

Compare with:

How then can the term neoliberalism be understood? Barnett (2005) suggests that it refers to the discreet alteration of the class-driven reform of the state to benefit free markets. Neoliberalism is a form of ideologically driven policies and government that supports privatisation, the free market and increased competition.

Produce an argument – do not simply report summaries of other people’s work, but make one/two points supported by evidence.

- avoid the repetitive use of he says, finds, proposes etc.
- made the writing more authoritative – remove the author's own view via 'therefore'
- moved some sentences from passive to active voice.
- highlighted the most important work that the author is using
- produced an argument – I'm not simply reporting summaries of other people's work, but have made two points supported by evidence.

The following reading strategies can help you to identify the argument of a source

- Identify the author's thesis (central claim or purpose) or research question. Both the **introduction** and the **conclusion** can help you with this task.
- Look for **repetition** of key terms or ideas, especially those occurring in the thesis. Follow them through the text and examine what the author does with them.
- Notice whether and how a **theory** is used to interpret evidence. Identify the **method** used to investigate the problem/s addressed in the text.
- Notice how the text is laid out and organized. What are the main sections? What is **emphasized**? Why? Accounting for why will help you move beyond listing contents and toward accounting for argument. Look also for paragraphs that summarize the argument.

In your literature review you might:

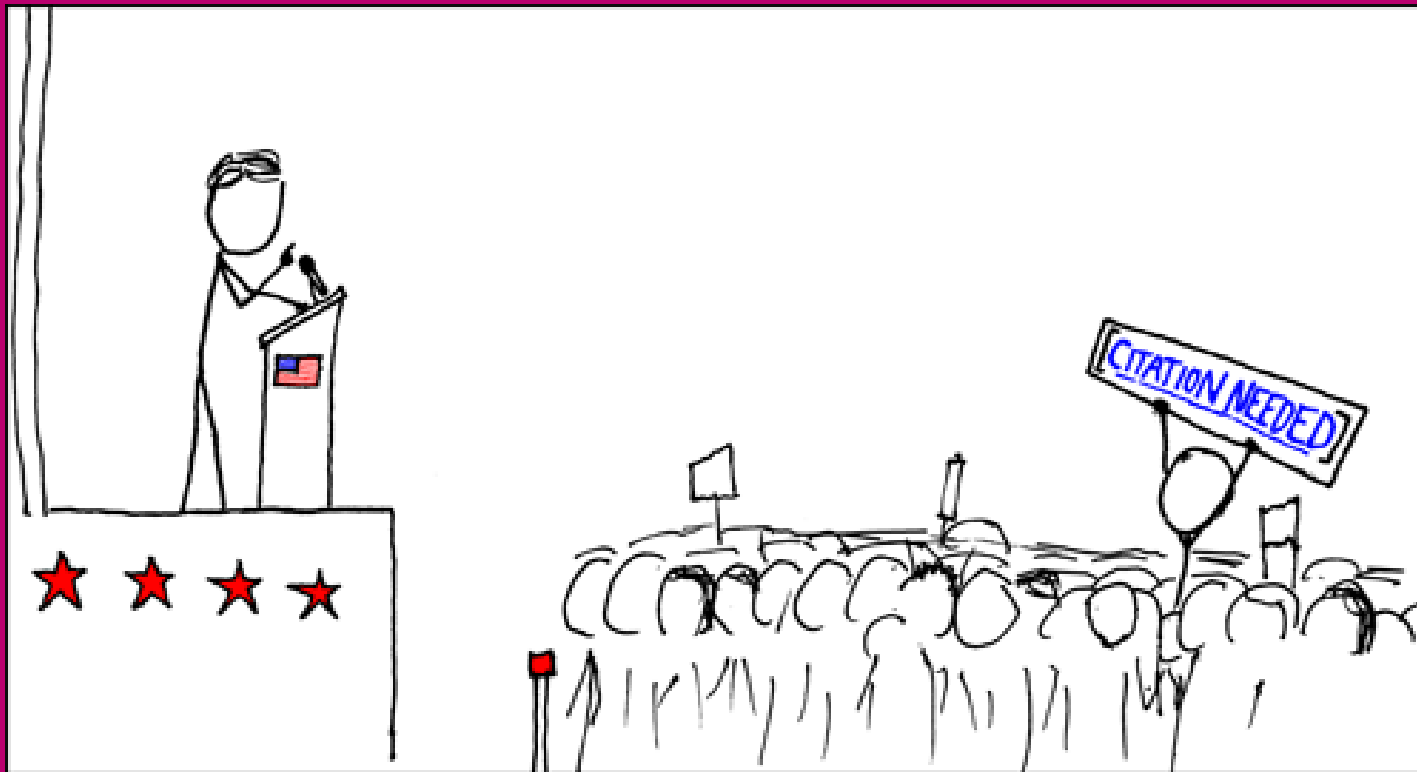
- Give a **new interpretation** of old material or combine new with old interpretations,
- Trace the intellectual progression of the field, including **major debates**,
- Depending on the situation, evaluate the sources and advise the reader on the **most pertinent or relevant research**, or
- Usually in the conclusion of a literature review, identify **where gaps exist** in how a problem has been researched to date.

Questions Your Literature Review Should Answer

- What do we already know in the immediate area concerned?
- What are the characteristics of the key concepts or the main factors or variables?
- What are the relationships between these key concepts, factors or variables?
- What are the existing theories?
- Where are the inconsistencies or other shortcomings in our knowledge and understanding?

- What research designs or methods seem unsatisfactory?
What views need to be (further) tested?
- What evidence is lacking, inconclusive, contradictory or too limited?
- Why study (further) the research problem?
- What contribution can the present study be expected to make?

In-Text Citations (APA format)



Basic principles

- Cite only works that you have read
- Cite primary sources when possible
- You can use both past and present tense for citations
e.g. Jones (1998) found; Jones (1998) has found; Jones (1998) finds
- All sources that are cited in the text must appear in the reference list at the end of the paper (ensure the spelling of author names)
- Avoid using online sources that cannot be retrieved
- If an idea or theory is in a textbook and does not carry a specific citation there, then you probably do not need to cite anyone.
- BUT empirical work is nearly always specific and must be cited.
- If in doubt – cite it!

Use of direct quotation

- When you use the work of others as primary data
- When you want to appeal to their authority
- When the specific words of your source matter because the wording of the original is particularly pertinent to an idea you are discussing
- To avoid any ambiguity or misrepresentation of source material
- You dispute your source and you want to state her case fairly
- The words of the source are especially vivid or significant

Direct quoting from a work

- **Short quotations** appear in double quotation marks
- **Long quotations** (40+ words) appear in the block quotation format
- Include the author, year of publication, and **page number**
- Use the abbreviation “p.” (for one page) or “pp.” (for more pages) before listing the page number(s). Use en dash for page ranges.
- For example: (Jones, 1998, p. 199) or (Jones, 1998, pp. 199–201)

- Do not use *italics* for quotations.
- Use *italics* for words in other languages, for titles of works, to provide emphasis, or to define the key terms.
- <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/italics-quotations/italics>

According to Jones (1998), "students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 199).

Jones (1998) found "students often had difficulty using APA style" (p. 199); what implications does this have for teachers?

She stated, "Students often had difficulty using APA style" (Jones, 1998, p. 199), but she did not offer an explanation as to why.

Mindfulness is defined as "the act of noticing new things, a process that promotes flexible responding to the demands of the environment" (Pagnini et al., 2016, p. 91).

Place long quotations (40+ words) in a free-standing block of typewritten lines and omit quotation marks.

Short quotation

Parallel to the process of the devaluing savings, communist leaders of the former socialist countries prepared for privatization. Enterprise reforms starting in the 1980s and in some countries even earlier were aimed at “lightening the amount of control of planners” (Nellis 2002, 3). The stated goal was to create incentives through more autonomy, but these measures had a serious side effect observed by Estrin, which was probably intentional.

Long quotation

Under communism, the monitoring of management and the incentives for efficiency were already weak. But with the collapse of central planning and the lack of any other external constraints, managers and insiders in transition economies gained almost total discretion to follow their own objectives, leading to “asset stripping” by managers, job and wage guarantees for workers and rent absorption by all parties. This pattern was exacerbated in countries with [a] well-entrenched black economy and sometimes led to a virtual “capture” of the state-owned apparatus, including the natural resource and utility sectors, by unscrupulous managers. (Estrin 2002, 107)

Text highlighting

The word *rent* in the preceding quotation is used in the economic sense—a payment in excess of the amount necessary to keep the resource in its current use. Given that

Paraphrasing Sources

- When you are more interested in content, in findings or claims, than in how a source expresses himself
- To summarize or acknowledge another author's ideas
- When you want to explain difficult material in a way which is easier for your reader to understand
- Don't cobble together a paper out of a series of quotations. You must make your own arguments with your own claims and evidence

Indirect citation

- Paraphrase as much as possible, rather than quote
- In parenthetical citations (**Author, year**) there is a comma between the author and year
- In narrative citations **Author (year)**, there is the date in parentheses after the author
- For 3+ authors abbreviate author names (e.g., first author plus “et al.”)
- All works in the reference list need to be cited in the text
- Avoid patchwriting = omit a few words and substitute synonyms
- Avoid overcitation = for longer paraphrases use one citation when introducing the idea and not repeated the citation

<https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/in-text-citation-checklist.pdf>

There were distinct perceptions of family and caste in 19th century accounts of bathing resorts (Somloi, 2001), which on closer analysis can reveal a great deal about the nature of perceptions of caste in society generally.

There were, as Somloi (2001) has rightly pointed out, distinct perceptions of family and caste in 19th century accounts of bathing resorts. Closer analysis of these perceptions can reveal a great deal about the nature of perceptions of caste in society generally.

Somloi, G. (2001) "Spa Resorts in 19th Century Hungary", *Hungarian Historical Journal* Vol.23, no.4

Citation and Qualification Signals

Reporting Verbs

- Hard sciences have a more detached reporting style

The relevant theory was developed by Bruno.

Stein et al. reported that a typical force..

Paiva and Venturinit presented an alternative formulation...

- Contrasted with soft sciences:

Baumgartner and Bagozzi (1995) strongly recommend the use of...

Law and Whitley (1989) argued, for instance, that.....

- Plus use of evaluative adverbial comment

He argues, correctly to my mind, that...

Churchland justifiably rejects this notion....

As Stern and Terrell, correctly assert...

Hedges

- Reduce the force of statements
- Reinforce tentativeness of proposition or an appropriate degree of prudence

...it could plausibly be reported that what seems attractive about it are just...

This suggests that a competition exists...which might account for...

In all probability, the sub-routines would require further development...

Boosters

- Increase the force of statements
- Allow writers to express certainty (or strong probability), mark solidarity with a source or audience, show conviction in argument

The essential role of interference between coherent wave functions is further strengthened by...

This clearly indicates that attractive interactions alone cannot explain...

Dimensions of Praise and Criticism

- Critique specific issues, praise more global features:

Klein's work is significant, not only for the detailed careful study she presents, but also for the myriad issues she raises....

In section IV, however, it is not made clear why the competitive inhibition of....

But this claim turns out to be misleading.

It does not give much of an explanation why neural networks are useful, and does not derive any of the equations

I found the model quite robust at the simplest level of explaining how the banking sector operated, but less convincing in explaining why the sector collapsed in the face of....

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Opening Hours

Monday – Thursday

8:00 am – 8:00 pm

Friday

8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Selected Saturdays

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Saturdays opening hours

In the autumn 2022 semester, the library will be open on Saturdays from Sep 17 to Dec 17, except Saturdays Oct 1, Oct 29, Nov 5, and Nov 19, when there is no teaching.

<https://www.econ.muni.cz/en/library>

MUNI
ECON

Remote access to electronic resources (outside eduroam network)

https://ezdroje.muni.cz/vzdaleny_pristup/?lang=en

To use a remote access please choose one of these options:

Use links to the EIZ only from the Portal of electronic resources. *After clicking to a link you will be prompted to sign in with your UCO and password; if these data are valid, you will be automatically redirected to a required EIZ and will be able to work with it immediately).*

Set up a VPN on your computer (see [OpenVPN](#)). *Recommended for frequent and intensive work with the resources.*

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3 months archive for the most titles

Literature study tips

Notice all interesting items

- Read abstract and research result

- Write down 2–3 sentences describing outcome

- Use a citation manager like [Citace PRO](#)

Be disciplined

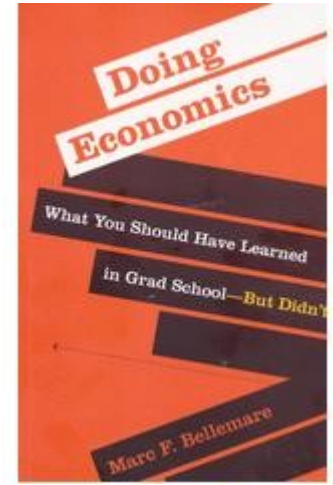
- Evaluate the quality of publications (journals)

- Stop reading when you're supposed to start writing

- Cite all the ideas taken

Suggested book

Doing economics : what you should have learned in grad school-but didn't (2022), Bellemare, Marc



E-book is available as E-Loan

<https://katalog.muni.cz/Record/MUB01006507361>

Chapter on Writing Papers is available in pdf

https://is.muni.cz/auth/do/econ/sm/akap/akademicky_text_a_proces_jeho_vzniku/Writing_papers_Bellemare_MIT_2022.pdf