MASARYKOVA UNIVERZITA V BRNĚ

Pedagogická fakulta

Katedra anglického jazyka

Academic style and academic vocabulary

Vypracovaly:

Lektorství cizího jazyka-anglický jazyk

bakalářské (prezenční) studium

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When you are writing bachelor theses you should follow this structure.

- o First of all you have to decide on the <u>topic</u> and the <u>hypothesis</u> you are going to write about.
- o Secondly- find as many <u>facts</u> as you need. Do not forget that your arguments have to be backed up.
- o Thirdly- make an <u>outline</u> of your theses: **1** introduction
  2 research part
  3 conclusions / résumé
  4 bibliography

Academic style

Before you start writing you need to be aware of the audience you are writing for
→ an impersonal style of writing. It means that it is better to use:

- The <u>passive</u> voice.
- The <u>third person</u> than the first person- *It is suggested that*.....
- <u>Impersonal subjects</u> in the sentences- *The results show that*.......
- <u>Tentative statements</u>- tends *to, appears to, suggest that, would seem to, the audience indicates.*
- <u>No contractions</u>- *do not, will not and cannot*
- <u>Nominalised phrases</u>- ***The rapid increase in prices of food in causing problems to many families.***
  Not: Prices of food are increasing rapidly and causing problems.
- <u>Avoid direct questions</u>- *It needs to be considered which method is appropriate in this case.*
- <u>No phrasal verbs</u>- *instead of Bring up use Raise.*
- <u>No colloquial or informal language</u>.

To make your theses complex there are some suggestions of linking words and phrases you can use.

- For making your theses clear use <u>sequences</u>: *firstly, secondly, thirdly, next, last, finally, moreover, to summarise, one.., another.*
- For adding some <u>facts</u>: *in addition, furthermore, also, and, as well as.*
- For <u>emphasising</u>: *undoubtedly, indeed, obviously, particularly, especially, clearly.*
- For listing <u>examples</u>: *for example, for instance, such as, including.*
- For giving <u>causes</u> and causing <u>effect</u>: *for, because, since, because of, as, as a result, as a consequence, therefore, hence, consequently, due to, to affect.*
- For <u>contrasting</u> things: *however, nevertheless, although, even though, but, yet, despite, in comparison, whereas, on the other hand.*
- For <u>comparison</u>: *likewise, also, too, just as, just like, similar to, be the same as, not only……… but also, to compare with.*

To introduce the topic of your theses you can use some of these examples.

This bachelor thesis is aimed at….
~~I chose …….for my bachelor thesis because….~~
~~The aim of my thesis is to…~~
~~In this thesis I study…particularly…~~
~~In my bachelor thesis I am considering…..~~
~~As the title of my thesis indicates, I would like to……~~
~~My thesis focuses on….~~

It is a problem with many students that introduce their topic using first person singular pronouns. Instead, you should use construction like "the thesis concentrates on / deals with …" and other impersonal constructions.

The list of abbreviations you can use in your theses.

- **a.k.a.** – also known as
- **i.e.** - Latin *id est* = that is
- **e.g.** - Latin *exempli gratia* = for example
- **Cf.** - Latin *confer* = compare to
- **ca.** – circa, approximately
- **n.b**. - Latin *nota bene* = mark well, take notice
- **viz.** - Latin *videlicet* = namely
- **abbrev.** - abbreviation, abbreviated
- **et al.** - Latin *et alibi* = and elsewhere,
  Latin *et alii, et aliae* = and others
- **etc.** – and so on
- **ed. -** edited, edited by, edition, editoribid.
- **ibid.** – mentioned before
- **m.** - male, married, meridian, Latin *meridies* = noon, meter, mile, minute, month
- **p. / pp.** - page, pages
- **l, ll** - line, lines
- **cap.** - capital, capitalize
- **NB** – note bene, note well (something important)
- **No.** - number
- **fig.** – figure
- **i.e.** – that is
- **fml.** – formal
- **sc**. – which means
- **esp.** - especially
- **exc.** - exception
- **co.** - company, county
- **v.** – consult

Academic vocabulary

To avoid repetition of the same words all the time here are some synonyms you can use.
Synonyms which can replace:

> Verbs- *perform, complete function, operate, be situated, serve as, be placed, produce, become achieve, attain, gain, provide, offer, supply, allow, permit, enable, transfer, proceed, occur, possess, include, contain, be composed of, comprise, create, form, assemble, denote, imply, suggest, place, attach, insert, secure, implant and unite.*

> Adjectives - *a large number, numerous, large, great major, insignificant, difficult, suitable, appropriate, effective, efficient, inefficient, unsuitable, and unsatisfactory.*

> Adverbials- *frequently, occasionally, typically, currently, presently, greatly, considerably, increasingly, rapidly.*

> Nouns- *difficulty, a concept, a plan, an aim, a target, the purpose, a solution, an entity, an instrument, an object.*

Komentář [T2]: wrong form

Komentář [T3]: what can the replace?

Komentář [T4]: the list is not very useful

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Komentář [T5]: titles in the bibliography section should be either in italics or in double quotation marks depending on the character of the work

ACTIVITY

Find out how much you know about writing in an appropriate style by trying out these four learning activities. Check the answers on the last page.

Exercise 1

Here is a list of 'worn out' phrases we commonly see. For each, tick the word that could be used as a substitute.

1. In view of the fact that
    _ Therefore
    _ Because
    _ So
2. At this precise moment in time
    _ Precisely
    _ Momentarily
    _ Now
3. Are found to be in agreement
    _ Agree
    _ Similar
    _ Apparent
4. Undertake a study of
    _ Give an undertaking
    _ Complete an action
    _ Study
5. In view of the foregoing circumstances
    _ Consequently
    _ Incidentally
    _ Whenever
6. In virtually all sectors of the environment
    _ Wherever
    _ Everywhere
    _ Where

Exercise 2

Here is a paragraph that should be written in a more academic tone. Read it through and underline the parts that need to be rewritten. Look at the answers at the back to see if you've identified them all, and read the suggestions to make these elements more academic.

Given the general knowledge of the health risks of smoking, it's no wonder that heaps of smokers have tried at some time in their lives to quit. However, in most cases, their attempts are unsuccessful.

People begin smoking, often when they're adolescents, for lots of reasons, including the example of parents and pressure from peers. If others in one's group of friends are starting to smoke, it can be hard to resist going along with the crowd. Once people start smoking, they're likely to get hooked.

The addiction to smoking is partly physiological; smokers become used to the effects of nicotine and experience painful withdrawal symptoms when they give it up. In addition, people become psychologically dependent on smoking as a way of reducing anxiety and coping with particular situations.

Exercise 3
Identify the words or phrases that make the sentences below informal. Then choose a word from the list below that could be used to replace the words or phrases and give the sentences a more appropriate academic style. Note that you may need to change the grammar of the word (e.g. fluctuate = fluctuating.) assist reduce create investigate raise establish increase determine fluctuate eliminate

1. Expert systems can help out the user in the diagnosis of problems. ..……………..
2. The program was set up to improve access to medical care. ..……………..
3. Research expenditure has gone up by nearly $3.6 million.
4. Researchers have found out that this drug has serious side effects. ..……………..
5. The use of optical character readers (OCRs) should cut down on the number of problems with Australia Post. ..……………..
6. Building nuclear power will not get rid of the power crisis. ..……………..
7. Researchers have been looking into this problem for more than fifteen years...……………..
8. The issue was brought up for investigation. ..……………..
9. Engineers have come up with better designs using computer simulations. ..……………..
10. The emission levels have been going up and down. ..……………..

Activity 4:
Look at your most recent written work for your program. Underline any words or phrases you think might not be in an academic style and make some changes.

Answers

<u>Exercise 1:</u>
1. Because
2. Now
3. Agree
4. Study
5. Consequently
6. Everywhere

<u>Exercise 2:</u>
Given the general knowledge of the health risks of smoking, (1) it's (2) no wonder that (3) heaps of smokers have tried at some time in their lives to (4) quit. However, in most cases, their attempts are unsuccessful. People begin smoking, often when
(5) they're adolescents, for (6)lots of reasons, including the example of parents and pressure from peers. If others in one's group of friends are starting to smoke, it can be hard to resist (7) going along with the crowd. Once people start smoking, (8) they're likely to get (9) hooked. The addiction to smoking is partly physiological; smokers become used to the effects of nicotine and experience painful withdrawal symptoms when they (10) give it up. In addition, (11) people become psychologically dependent on smoking as a way of reducing anxiety and coping with particular situations.
1. Contracted forms should not be used – it should be 'it is'
2. This is conversational language – replace with 'to be expected'
3. This is too informal – replace with 'many'. It also needs backing up with evidence.
4. This is too informal – replace with 'stop smoking'
5. Another contraction – replace with 'they are'
6. Too informal – replace with 'many'
7. Conversational language – replace with 'behaving in a similar manner'
8. Another contraction – replace with 'they are'
9. Too informal – replace with 'addicted'
10. Conversational language – replace with 'stop'.
11. Too definite – suggest a more tentative 'many people'. It also needs backing up with evidence.

<u>Exercise 3:</u>
Here are the sentences written in a more appropriate academic style.
Expert systems can assist the user in the diagnosis of problems.
The program was established to improve access to medical care.
Research expenditure has increased by nearly $3.6 million.
Researchers have determined that this drug has serious side effects.
The use of optical character readers (OCRs) should reduce the number of problems with Australia Post. Building nuclear power will not eliminate the power crisis.
Researchers have been investigating this problem for more than fifteen years.
The issue was raised for investigation.
Engineers have created better designs using computer simulations.
The emission levels have been fluctuating.
These materials were produced by the RMIT University Study and Learning Unit.