WRITING WITH A PURPOSE,
WRITING WITH CONCEPTS

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Mekong-Salween-Red River Fellows Analysis & Writing Workshop
1-3 April 2016, Department of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University
The purpose of an article

- **Fill a gap** in knowledge by providing new evidence on a topic that is little known
- Provide a new **interpretation** of existing knowledge
- Offer an **explanation** for a puzzle or something that seems counter-intuitive
- **Test** a proposition or **answer** a key research question
- Respond to a **policy problem**
- Introduce a new **concept**, framework or **theory**
- Propose a new **method**
- **Synthesize** or integrate information that has not been jointly analyzed before
### Two examples of purpose statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explain a change</th>
<th>Improve understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• In this paper we explain how a shift from culture of the native black tiger shrimp to the exotic Pacific white shrimp took place in the Thai shrimp industry between 2002 and 2006.</td>
<td>• The purpose of this study was to improve the understanding of how river-based cage fish farmers in northern Thailand perceive climate-related risks and understand climate change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Find the purpose statement

Source C

Water resources and rural development 4 (2014) 40–53

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Water resources and rural development

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/wrr

Benefit sharing from Kamchay and Lower Sesan 2 hydropower watersheds in Cambodia

Prachvuthy Men a, Vathana Thun b, Soriya Yin c, Louis Lebel d

Analyze

• Where is it?
• Is it clear?

Source E

Journal of Global Economics

Research Article

Integrated Water Resources Management of Maetang Sub Watershed, Chiang Mai Province

Thunyawadee Sucharitdham a, Thanes Srikitchalamanphan a, Wichulada Matanboon a

Analyze

• Where is it?
• Is it clear?
Writing introductions

- Opening (teaser, compass)
- Context (very brief)
- Rationale
- **Identify relevant theory & define key concept(s)**
- Review what is known (and gap you will fill or task that needs to be done)
- **Statement of purpose**
- Last paragraph (with research questions)
Introducing key concepts

- Look at the title: what might be the key concept?
- What are the key concepts explained in the introduction?
- What do expect the paper to focus on when you read the results and discussion?

Deeper

- How are key concepts and rationale linked?

Source

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Benefit sharing from Kamchay and Lower Sesan 2 hydropower watersheds in Cambodia

Prachvuthy Men A, Vathana Thun B, Soriya Yin C, Louis Lebel D
Draw pictures & make tables to help make your conceptual framework explicit

- Guide and structure analysis
- Help make assumptions (of our internal model, hypotheses) explicit
- Help organize presentation of findings
- If keep, show readers how findings are organized
- If throw-away, no problem!

Int Environ Agreements
DOI 10.1007/s10784-010-9142-6

The role of social learning in adaptiveness: insights from water management

Louis Lebel · Torsten Grothmann · Bernd Siebenhüner
Writing about findings

• **Stick to your purpose** (and the research questions)
• Organize sections around those questions
• Analyze don’t just describe, **use key concepts as part of analytical framework to classify, measure and associate factors**
• Avoid statements not backed by evidence
• Make use of tables and figures, but don’t then repeat detailed information in text
• Avoid long description of methods in results section
The purpose of this paper is to analyse how fish farmers manage climate-related risks and explore possible ways to strengthen risk management under current and future climate.

Sources of risk
- Farm-level management of climate-related risks
- River basin management
- Early warning, event preparation, and compensation
- Risks and management practices
- Risk management and adaptation
Water management in each area differs according to area and people context. The factors or stimuli leading to integrated water management in Wiang Haeng are follows.

- With conditions and problems of the current global warming becoming more intense, rainfall pattern fluctuation, deforestation, lack of budget for problem solving and disaster prevention, these result in drought. Wiang Haeng district often suffer from water shortages both for agriculture and water consumption....
Writing a discussion section

- Concisely synthesize findings responding to key research questions
- Explore alternative explanations or balance of evidence
- Have you achieved your purpose?
- State significance for understanding and scholarship (theory, concepts)
- Explore consequences for policy or practice
- Note new questions or hypotheses
- Critically evaluate limitations (or reviewer will do it for you)

Do not

- Introduce a lot of new literature
- Introduce new findings (unless it is a section combined with results)
- Repeat the results
- Go too far beyond your evidence
The largest differences in temperature between surface and bottom layer were observed in integrated ponds during the hot season; whereas differences in the dry season were modest and in the wet season largely absent (Fig. 2). Four factors help explain these finding. First, the high load of nutrient and fertilizer inputs in integrated ponds caused phytoplankton blooms (Little and Edwards 2004; Szyper and Lin 1990).

In this study, concentrations of Chlorophyll-a and overall turbidity, were much higher in integrated ponds than the other two systems. Consequently, high biomass of plankton or suspended particles in the surface layer limits light penetration to the lower water layers (Litchman et al. 2004; Tadesse et al. 2004). Second, is that solar radiation in the hot season tends to be higher than in the other seasons of Thailand (Janjai and Wattan 2011). Factors one and two explain the high potential for thermal stratification to occur during the hot season...
Write simply

• Keep sentences short and simple
• Use simple English
• Be specific
• Use topic sentences to start paragraphs
• Keep paragraphs short & focused
• Avoid jargon & abbreviations

“If you can’t explain something simply, you don’t understand it well.”

- Albert Einstein