

NAGOYA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY WORKSHOPS 2016



Academic Writing

and

Logical Thinking

May 18 ~ June 15, 2016

Instructor: Dr. Paul Lai

NAGOYA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY WORKSHOPS 2016



Review



Main point of my talk

学術論文の基本的な目的は、結論へと至る論理的ステップを提示することによって、論文の主張する結論を受け入れるよう読者を説得することである。

**Training of logical thinking skills
is needed in order for your thoughts
to be communicated properly
in an academic paper.**

WRITING
教養教育院



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学術論文の基本的な目的は、結論へと至る論理的ステップを提示することによって、論文の主張する結論を受け入れるよう読者を説得することである。

**Training of logical thinking skills
is needed in order for the paper's
thesis statement to be **convincing**.**

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Thesis
Statement

Supporting
Premise(s)



Peter is either at his office or the library.
Peter is not at his office.
Peter is at the library.

Abstract

Introduction

Others



(Homework)

(i) Think about a paper that you are planning to write.

(ii) Develop a thesis statement for the paper.

(iii) Presenting your thesis statement on June 15.



How to make your writing clear

Group work:

Discuss with your group members about the paper that you are planning to write.

Summarise the main point of the paper.

Thesis Statement

Being Clear

Being Clear in Communication

Having a Clear
Thesis Statement

The Thesis Statement Recipe

*Textbook for
the Nagoya University Library workshop series on
Academic Writing & Logical Thinking Skills*

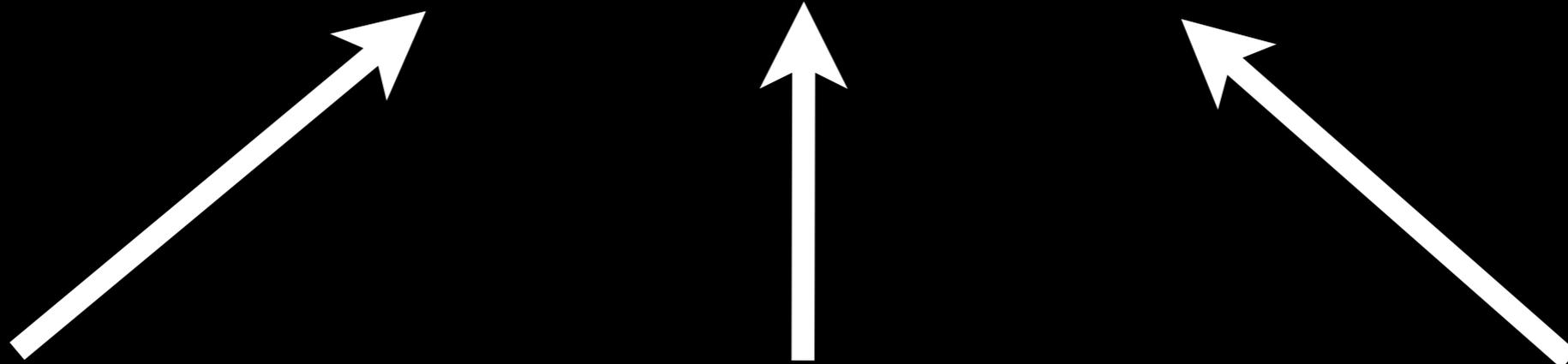


*Written by
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Director, Nagoya University Writing Center
(Mei-Writing)*

Concise Summary
of the
main research claim

one-sentence statement that
encapsulates
the main claim
of your research paper.

Thesis Statement



Support 1



Support 2



Support 3

Although a thesis statement is normally written in just one-sentence, it is **different from a normal sentence in many aspects.**

(I) A thesis statement must have a truth-value.

In other words,

a thesis statement must be either true or false.

(2) A thesis statement should be objectively verifiable.

In other words,

The truth value of a thesis statement should be independently verifiable from a third person point of view.

(3) The truthfulness of a thesis statement needs justification through argumentation.

In other words,

a thesis statement is not merely a representation of some factual event.

it is a **belief statement** that *such and such is the case*, whose truthfulness requires justification through collecting evidences and arranging them in a convincing way.

(4) A good thesis statement is not trivial.

Consider the following two belief statements:

“The earth orbits around the sun.”

Unlike when it was first claimed by Nicolaus Copernicus in 1543, the thesis statement now is trivial.

“The orbiting speed of the earth is getting slower, and after 10,000 years later one day will last 30 hours.”

This thesis statement is not trivial, and requires justification.

(5) A good thesis statement should be as specific as possible so that its truth values can be verified effectively.

Compare the following two belief statements:

“Japanese university education system is problematic.”

Too broad, what “problematic” means is unspecified.

Trivial too, no education system is unproblematic in practice.

“One fundamental problem in Japanese university education is the lack of logical thinking education.”

A specific problem is mentioned. And the thesis statement requires justification through argumentation, etc.

(5) A good thesis statement should be as specific as possible so that its truth values can be verified effectively.

For the same reason that it should not be a broad statement, a thesis statement should not be a vague statement.

e.g. “Smoking is hazardous to health.”

Too vague, what “hazardous” means is unspecified.

Trivial too, we all know that smoking is hazardous to health.

One possible improvement:

“Smoking is likely to cause heart disease.”

(6) A good thesis statement should have a non-compound sentence structure.

Everything in the thesis statement must be proven.

Group Exercises

Thank you very much!

Writing Is Thinking