Map of the Book

Unit	Theme	Writing Skills	Language Study
1	Overview of Academic Writing P. 1	• Understand what academic culture is • Understand the essential components of academic writing • Differentiate between academic and non-academic writing • Recognize the common types of academic writing	• Recognize and apply an objective, formal and cautious academic language style
2	How to Choose Research Topics P. 27	• Understand the characteristics of a research topic • Apply the principles of choosing a research topic • Handle the common problems in selecting a research topic • Formulate research questions out of a research topic	• Recognize academic language in the humanities and social sciences
3	How to Write Literature Reviews P. 51	• Know what a literature review is and its significance • Understand the taxonomy of literature reviews • Write a literature review • Identify the common problems in writing a literature review	• Get familiar with the academic language used in a literature review
4	How to Write Literary and Cultural Criticism P. 83	• Understand what literary and cultural criticism is • Develop critical thinking skills with the help of critical theory • Interpret literary and other cultural products through one or several theoretical frameworks • Support the argument/thesis statement with textual evidence	• Get familiar with academic language in literary and cultural criticism • Acquire a mastery of basic literary terms

Unit	Theme	Writing Skills	Language Study
5	How to Write Methods: Social Science Research P. 113	• Identify commonly used social science research methods • Write the method section with different research strategies • Handle the common problems in writing the method section	• Write the method section in an academic format • Write the method section with academic language
6	How to Write Results/Findings and Discussion: Social Science Research P. 143	• Identify the structure and components of results/findings and discussion • Write results/findings and discussion of different types of research methods • Handle the common problems in writing results/findings and discussion	• Write results/findings and discussion in an academic format • Write results/findings and discussion with academic language
7	How to Write Introductions and Conclusions P. 177	• Understand the roles and importance of introductions and conclusions • Know what good and weak introductions and conclusions are like • Write effective introductions and conclusions	• Get familiar with the academic language used in writing introductions and conclusions
8	How to Write Abstracts and Acknowledgements P. 205	• Understand the definitions, functions and structures of abstracts and acknowledgements • Handle the common queries about abstract and acknowledgement writing • Write abstracts and acknowledgements for research papers	• Use phraseological units appropriately in writing abstracts and acknowledgements

Unit	Theme	Writing Skills	Language Study
9	How to Write Research Proposals P. 233	• Understand what a research proposal is and its function • Acknowledge the structure of a research proposal • Practice the steps for developing a research proposal	• Get familiar with the collocations used in research proposals • Know how to judge whether a multi-word expression is idiomatic or not by using search engines
10	Documentation and Referencing Mechanics P. 263	• Understand what plagiarism is • Identify plagiarism in academic writing • Make direct quotations, paraphrases and summaries to avoid plagiarism • Cite sources in APA or MLA style • Create a References page or a Works Cited page for research papers	• Get familiar with language resources to construct academic writing identity

3
Unit
How to Write Literature Reviews

> " I don't read for amusement; I read for enlightenment. I do a lot of reviewing, so I have a steady assignment of reading. "
>
> —Joyce Carol Oates

> " 读书无嗜好，就不能尽其多。不先泛览群书，则会无所适从或失之偏好。广然后深，博然后专。 "
>
> ——鲁迅

Objectives

Writing Skills

► Know what a literature review is and its significance
► Understand the taxonomy of literature reviews
► Write a literature review
► Identify the common problems in writing a literature review

Language Study

► Get familiar with the academic language used in a literature review

Pre-class Reading and Research

1 **Do preliminary reading and research on the following questions: 1) What is literature in the context of academic writing? 2) What is a literature review? 3) What might be the reasons for researchers to write a literature review? Summarize your research findings on the following lines and be prepared for a 5-minute class presentation.**

What is literature in the context of academic writing?

_____

_____

What is a literature review?

_____

_____

What might be the reasons for researchers to write a literature review?

_____

_____

2 **Work in groups of 4-5 and share with your group members the common sources where you would go for information for your other courses. Make a list of the sources and explain their respective strengths and weaknesses.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part 1: Learning the Writing Skills

☐ What Is Literature?

Academic writing learners often find the concept of "literature review" confusing and its meaning elusive. In order to better understand what a literature review is, we will start from the question of what literature is.

Unlike the word in "American/British literature," this "literature" refers to the published materials in a certain research field or the existing research about/on a particular subject/topic. It includes not only scholarly articles and books, but also theses and dissertations, conference proceedings, etc. It should be credible and authoritative.

Nowadays the sheer volume of articles, books and electronic resources is overwhelming. How can we locate the appropriate and reliable research material? The following are a few criteria to refer to when we evaluate the credibility of the literature.

First, check the credibility of the publisher. Academic papers are usually published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals, which means that the papers have already been vetted by experts in a certain field. If it is a book, it should be published by academic publishers with high standings, such as prestigious university presses, which also operate peer-review processes.

Second, look at the background of the author(s). The authors of academic literature are usually faculty members of universities or are affiliated with research institutions. And the author credentials are usually listed.

Third, examine the style of the work. The language style of a professional academic work is formal, and special terminology in the related field is often used.

Fourth, academic works must include references. All the authors of academic writing are standing on the shoulders of giants, that is, previous scholars in the field. And

they should give due credit to those scholars. So both in-text citations and references (or bibliographies) at the end of the writing are required parts in academic literature (see Unit 10).

☐ What Is a Literature Review?

A literature review summarizes, interprets and critically evaluates significant literature published on a specific topic. It may include a review of books, journal articles, research papers, theses, government publications and conference proceedings. We may resort to libraries, databases, the Internet, bibliographies and reference lists, encyclopedias and handbooks for them.

A good literature review can be called a "research/knowledge synthesis," since it emphasizes the process of "synthesis." We need to synthesize what we have read into writing based on our own understanding of the literature. Our way of organizing the literature, or our perspective to view the literature, should be seen in the writing. A good literature review can be a "stand-alone," that is, a publishable journal paper in its own right. Therefore, it should NOT be a purely historical overview, which merely follows the sequence of the publication time. Also, it should NOT be an annotated bibliography, which is a list of brief descriptions of the content of the sources. Simply put, a good literature review is not a summary of one work after another. There should be a focus: It may be the theme, methodology, etc. It is quite different from a book review, in which the reviewer gives opinions on (usually) one book.

Since the literature is often in overwhelmingly huge amount, learner researchers may feel at a loss about what to do at the beginning. We can start from reading other scholars' references or footnotes. If a certain source is repeatedly referred to by scholars in different academic papers or books, that source probably would be one of the most fundamental works in this field. We should consider incorporating it in our literature review.

Some beginners may wonder why we need to write a literature review, since we are going to write something "new" of our own. But are you sure that what you write is totally new, without learning of previous research conducted by others? And remember that everyone stands on the shoulders of giants so that we can see farther. So we need to show these "giants" our respect. In other words, reviewing the literature is also a kind of acknowledgement to their intellectual efforts. But we need to incorporate a literature review into our academic writing for more reasons than this.

A literature review is a proof that we know the field. It can tell our readers what we already know about the topic, and explain the major theories and relationships between key concepts and variables. A good literature review is the basis of a good research paper. If the literature review is flawed, the entire paper will also be called into question by other researchers. Besides, a literature review can place the research into a historical context and at the same time update the readers on the latest development in

this field.

Spending time on writing a literature review will save time for the author. This seems to be a paradox. But indeed, without first reading and understanding the literature, a researcher cannot have an overview of this field, design a proper research project or do decent research in this field. The author needs to read relevant literature, so that he/she will not repeat what has already been done in this field. Otherwise, it will be a waste of time for both the researcher and the readers. That is why in the literature review the author needs to tell the reader what has been done, what has not been done and therefore what needs to be done in this field. In this way, the researcher can also justify the significance of this paper by relating the present study with previous studies and proving how it contributes to the research in this field.

A good literature review can help the readers gain knowledge about the major researchers, theories, methods, etc. in this field. Besides, in the process of reading previous literature, the researcher will gain new insights into the research, and develop new perspectives to approach the issue at hand.

Specifically, a literature review can:

1. Provide the reader with a clear picture of the research development so far by sorting out the relationship of previous works. For example, how does the study in this field evolve? Is there a trend in the study? Are there any major debates? Do scholars reach a consensus or are there still controversies? Which works are the classic ones, landmarks or turning points in this field?
2. Provide the relationship between previous works and the present study. For example, is there a gap to fill in? Is there a mistake to be corrected? Is there more research to be done on a certain aspect of the subject under review?
3. Prepare for and justify the research questions or hypotheses of the present study. A literature review provides reasons why there is need for further study in this area. For example, are there inconsistencies in the theories? Are the methods or designs correct and appropriate? Is the current evidence inconsistent, inconclusive or limited? There is a juncture where the present study is needed. Usually at the end of the literature review, the author develops the research questions or hypotheses.
4. Point out the areas of study so as to avoid repetition. For example, which aspect of the issue has been studied extensively? Which aspect has not been fully examined? Which aspect has not been given enough attention? What needs to be improved? What needs to be further explored?
5. Add authority to the present study. This is just like what authors do in argumentative writing. It is a kind of "quoting" from authorities to support the present research.

ACTIVITY 1

Read the following literature reviews and discuss in groups of 4-5 how they serve the purposes of literature reviews.

Literature Review A

Examining English Language Learning Motivation of Adult International Learners Studying Abroad in the US

The genesis of much L2 motivation research can be traced to the bilingual context of Canada and Gardner's socio-educational model (Gardner, 1985, 2001; Gardner and Lambert, 1959). Emerging from the language attitude research tradition, Gardner's motivation model centered on the constructs of orientations and language attitudes: '[A learner's] motivation to acquire the [target] language is considered to be determined by both his [or her] attitudes toward the other group and by his [or her] orientation toward learning a second language' (Lambert et al., 1963: 358). Regarding attitudes, subsequent studies of EFL learners have operationalized attitudes as scales of attitudes toward English speakers (e.g. Dörnyei et al., 2006) and attitudes toward language learning (e.g. Clément et al., 1994). In the EFL context, the strength of positive attitudes toward English speakers may be in a state of transition, with positive attitudes declining as English is increasingly considered a global language of necessity (e.g. Brown et al., 2001; Dörnyei et al., 2006). Regarding orientations, research has explored a variety of operationalizations. The integrative orientation scale includes items that 'emphasize the notion of identification with the community' (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003: 139), whereas the instrumental orientation includes items that reflect 'practical reasons for learning the language, without implying any interest in getting closer socially to the language community' (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003: 139).

A third noteworthy orientation is the cultural interest orientation that has been associated with learners' interest in media-based products (Csizér and Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Dörnyei et al., 2006). This cultural interest component has been part of the dialogue to revise the construct of integrativeness, a revision for which many have argued, particularly in the context of learning English and a globalizing world. For example, Mori and Gobel (2006: 205) argued that the integrative factor better represented learners' 'interest in traveling and studying overseas, rather than a desire to integrate into the target language community'. Similarly, Yashima (2002; Yashima et al., 2004) recast integrativeness as international posture, in order to index learners' association of English language abilities with the ability to gain access to international communities. Studies of EFL learners have also shown that integrative and instrumental orientations may be conjoined (Kimura et al., 2001; Lamb,

2004).

Such findings on learner orientations have supported the call to reframe not only integrativeness but also instrumentality. The framework of the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009) has been posited as one means of doing so. In this framework a learner's ideal L2 self includes both 'traditional integrative and internalised instrumental motives,' whereas the ought-to L2 self includes 'more extrinsic (i.e. less internalised) types of instrumental motives' (Dörnyei, 2009: 29). Thus the degree of internalisation is theorized as the fulcrum between the two possible selves.

In addition to refining theories of language attitudes and orientations, language motivation research has also investigated people's perceptions of their competence in using or learning the target language. This construct has been investigated under different labels—including linguistic self-confidence (Dörnyei et al., 2006) and (its obverse) anxiety (Gardner, 1985; Schmidt et al., 1996). Building on the work of Clément (1980; Clément et al., 1994; Clément and Kruidenier, 1985), Dörnyei and Kormos (2000) also contrasted the two terms by defining language use anxiety as 'anxiety experienced while using the L2' (2000: 284) and linguistic self-confidence as self-perceptions of competence for language learning, or 'a favorable self-conception of language aptitude, satisfaction with [one's] progress and a belief in one's ability to succeed in L2 learning' (2000: 284).

[Weger, H. D. (2013). Examining English language learning motivation of adult international learners studying abroad in the US, *RELC Journal*, *44*(1), 87-101.]

Literature Review B

Kicking the Hornet's Nest: The Rhetoric of Social Campaigning in Stieg Larsson's Millennium Trilogy

Larsson is by no means the first writer of crime fiction to attempt to address contemporary social ills or to raise awareness of injustices and political failings. The hardboiled tradition was very much concerned with exposing the seedy underbelly and corruption underlying American society in the early decades of the 20th century, and Cobley (2000) has charted how the American thriller of the 1970s dealt with the drama of government corruption playing out at that time in the public sphere. More recently, Munt (1994) has identified the emergence of 'didactical narratives' concerned with exposing gender inequalities, and characterised by an often rather overblown political correctness. Thus it seems that while the specific sources of fear and paranoia may change, the impulse towards social criticism remains constant. In Scandinavia, crime fiction with a social conscience is usually traced back to Sjöwall and Wahlöö's Martin Beck series of novels which began in the 1960s, hailed by many as leading

the way in exposing the problems facing social democratic countries as their dreams of equality and social justice appeared to become increasingly hollow and tainted. Sjöwall and Wahlöö's writing in particular demonstrated a kind of political engagement perhaps not seen before in the crime genre, and in her recent article 'Can Scandinavian crime fiction teach socialism?', Orr (2011) argues that their novels represented a shift away from the convention of the detective as a lone genius towards demonstrating the reliance of the detective on others with whom he (or less often, she) works as part of a collective.

[Thomas, B. (2012). Kicking the hornet's nest: The rhetoric of social campaigning in Stieg Larsson's Millennium trilogy. *Language and Literature*, *21*(3), 299-310.]

Literature Review C

Disaster News: Framing and Frame Changing in Coverage of Major U.S. Natural Disasters, 2000-2010

A disaster is "a potentially traumatic event that is collectively experienced, has an acute onset, and is time-delimited." Disasters may have natural, technological, or human causes. Natural disasters include events such as a hurricane, tornado, or earthquake; technological disasters are nonintentional events such as a chemical spill or meltdown at a nuclear power plant; and human-caused disasters include intentional events like a terrorist attack or other acts of mass violence. Disasters can have physical, social, psychosocial, sociodemographic, socioeconomic, and political consequences, and the severity of disaster effects is seemingly increasing.

From a communication or mass media perspective, much of the academic literature on disasters concerns crisis and risk communication. Crisis communication stems from the study of organizational communication or public relations and is generally concerned with how to protect an organization's image relative to a crisis, while risk communication primarily explores how to influence individual understanding of and behavior related to risk. Both these lines of research generally take a persuasive or strategic approach to communication. Understanding news depictions of disasters and the effects of those depictions is relevant to both crisis and risk communication but has not been central to either line of study.

While communication or mass media research focusing directly on media coverage of natural disasters is limited, it has used a variety of approaches. For example, previous disaster news research has examined depictions of authority in natural disasters, the use of images in newspaper coverage of disasters, and qualitative explorations of one or more disasters. A few broadly applicable results have emerged, including the finding that the news media generally rely on official sources for disaster information, that news coverage of a disaster is not sustained for long, and that the

news media focus on "dramatic descriptive qualities of the events rather than upon causal explanations." In addition, three stages of disaster news have been documented through previous research: normalcy tragically disrupted, people escaping and helping, and officials working to restore order and find cause. Using these findings as a starting point, the current project examines media frames specific to disasters, as well as frames that have been found to be more broadly applicable.

[Houston, J. B., Pfefferbaum, B., & Rosenholtz, C. E. (2012). Disaster news: Framing and frame changing in coverage of major U.S. natural disasters, 2000-2010. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *89*(4), 606-623.]

ACTIVITY 2

1. Search for academic journals that are commonly recognized in the research field that you know best or are most interested in. List at least two English journals and two Chinese journals below. You may need to check with your instructor about your choices.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. You have learned how to choose a research topic in Unit 2 and already spent some time thinking about your topic(s). Search for at least five journals and one book that are related to your topic(s). Note down at least ten of the papers/book titles and their sources on the following lines.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

☐ Organization of a Literature Review

A literature review can be organized in various ways. The most commonly used organizational formats are: the chronological format, the thematic format and the methodological format.

The chronological format is organized along the timeline, i.e., based on their publication dates. This approach is commonly used when the research has been going on for quite a long time, and when there are major changes in the process. Therefore, the changes, turning points, etc. in the research need to be highlighted. Sub-headings may be used to indicate important time periods or stages. This format can start from the definitions of the topic (or the beginning research), and then the major changes in the research, and finally the status quo of the research. This format is essentially a descriptive one.

As the most popular and commonly used format, thematic format revolves around specific concepts, topics or issues that are important to the research. This type of literature review starts from the general issues, and then narrows down to more specific issues, until finally reaches the issues that are closest to the research question. Therefore, more syntheses are involved in this format. Sub-headings can be used to indicate the sequence from the general to the specific. Timeline may still be an important factor in this format, since within each sub-heading the content can be organized following the time sequence.

Methodological format focuses on the methods used by previous researchers instead of the content. This format aims to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of different research methods and procedures, thus indicating why a certain design might be appropriate for this research.

Remember that the literature should not be presented one after another. That is, it should not be a list of summarized works. We need to indicate in the literature review that we have already read the needed literature, thought carefully about them, and synthesized them from our own perspective, thus proving that we are ready for the writing of the entire paper.

ACTIVITY 3

Read the following literature reviews and write a brief summary of their organizational structures.

Literature Review A

The Effects of Error Feedback in Second Language Writing

The debate has continued for over ten years on whether giving corrective feedback to L2 writers can improve their written accuracy. Truscott (1996, 1999, 2004, 2007) dismissed error correction as not only useless but also harmful to the accuracy

in students' writing. Truscott's claim is supported by earlier research which suggested that correction had little or no effects on student writing (Kepner, 1991; Sheppard, 1992). In Kepner's (1991) experiment, students were provided with two types of written feedback: message-related comments and surface error-corrections. It was found that the consistent use of L2 teachers' written error-corrections as a primary medium of written feedback was ineffective in L2 writing, whether for higher-proficiency or for lower-proficiency learners. In contrast, the consistent use of message-related comments was effective for promoting both overall quality and surface-level accuracy. But the study needs to be examined closely. As surface error-corrections addressed errors only at the sentence level, they naturally did not lead to improvement in the content of student writing. Also, students were not required to produce a new draft to incorporate the teachers' corrections. Thus, the effect of error correction was minimized. Instead, message-related comments addressed more of the high-level concerns, thus it helped students improve the content of the writing.

A number of studies on error correction in L2 writing classes have shown that students receiving error feedback from teachers improve in accuracy over time (Hyland, 2003; Chandler, 2003). Hyland (2003) observed six ESL writers on a full-time 14-week English proficiency program course at a university. It was found that feedback focusing on form was used by most of the students in their immediate revisions to their drafts and was highly valued by them. The case studies suggest that some language errors may be "treatable" through feedback. With experimental and control group data, Chandler (2003) showed that teachers' feedback on students' grammatical and lexical errors resulted in a significant improvement in both accuracy and fluency in subsequent writing of the same type over the same semester. This finding disproves Truscott's (1999) claim on the negative effect of error correction on fluency.

To further explore the issue of error correction in second language writing, recent research has focused on which types of error correction are effective in treating which types of errors (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Chandler, 2003; Bitchener et al. 2005; Bitchener, 2008). A distinction has been made between direct and indirect feedback. Ferris (2002) defined direct feedback as one "when an instructor provides the correct linguistic form for students (word, morpheme, phrase, rewritten sentence, deleted word[s] or morpheme[s]" (p.19). Indirect feedback, on the other hand, "occurs when the teacher indicates that an error has been made but leaves it to the student writer to solve the problem and correct the error" (Ferris, 2002, p.19). Indirect feedback takes the form of underlining and coding (or description) of the errors. Ferris and Roberts (2001) compared these two types of indirect feedback. They found that the group receiving feedback of both underlining and coding did slightly better in revising their grammatical errors than the one receiving only underlining as the feedback. Both groups were significantly more successful in revising errors than the control group receiving no feedback. The results were challenged by Chandler (2003), who compared

four types of feedback: direct correction, underlining with description, description only, and underlining only. In her study, Chandler found both direct correction and simple underlining to be more effective than describing the type of error in reducing long-term error. She also noted that direct correction worked best for producing accurate revision. There was no significant difference between direct correction and underlining of errors. The survey results indicated that students prefer direct correction because it is the fastest and easiest way to revise their grammatical errors. But students felt that they learned more from self-correction when the errors were only underlined. Although both studies made distinctions on different types of errors, neither addressed the effect of feedback on the specific types of errors.

Two recent studies comparing different strategies on specific types of errors have provided more evidence in support of written corrective feedback. Bitchener et al. (2005) compared two types of feedback groups (a combination of direct written feedback and oral conference feedback and direct written feedback only) with the control group (no corrective feedback) on three types of errors (prepositions, the past simple tense, and the definite article). The study found a significant effect of the combination of written and oral feedback in the use of the past simple tense and the definite article in new pieces of writing. However, no effect was found in the use of prepositions. The findings were confirmed by a recent study by Bitchener (2008) who compared three types of direct corrective feedback: a combination of direct feedback, written and oral meta-linguistic explanation; direct feedback and written meta-linguistic explanation; and direct feedback only. It was found that the accuracy of students who received feedback in the immediate post-test outperformed those in the control group who received no corrective feedback in the use of the referential indefinite "a" and referential definite "the". More importantly, this level of performance was retained 2 months later. Results of the two studies indicate positive effects of written corrective feedback on particular linguistic features in student writing. These two studies set good examples for investigating the effects of different feedback types on particular types of errors.

Given the conflicting results on the effects of different feedback types, we can hardly conclude that one feedback strategy would work for all grammatical errors in student writing. It is thus important to investigate various error categories that are targeted. The present study follows this line of research by examining direct correction and indirect feedback in second language writing, with an emphasis on how different types of grammatical errors can be treated. Three questions are addressed in this preliminary study:

1. How do ESL students respond to direct and indirect feedback provided on a previous draft when writing another draft of the same essay? Do students make fewer errors in drafting a new essay?

2. Do direct and indirect feedback have different effects on the three error types (morphological, semantic, and syntactic)?

3. What type of feedback do students prefer?

[Liu, Y. (2008). The effects of error feedback in second language writing. *Arizona Working Papers in SLA & Teaching*, *15*, 65-79.]

Organization:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Literature Review B

Ontologies of Interdependence, the Sacred, and Health Care:
Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead* and *Home*

Robinson's affection for older forms of American liberalism has brought her scrutiny from William Deresiewicz and Christopher Douglas. Her longing for an earlier America, diagnosed in 1996 by Thomas Schaub, can be seen in her decision to set all three of her books in rural portions of the 1950s Midwest. Given the postmodern dismissal of nostalgia—Fredric Jameson called it a "haunting"—Robinson's positive depiction of the American past might seem dangerously ahistorical or shortsightedly romantic. For Robinson, however, revisiting old orthodoxies represents a useful means of recovering interred notions of community and responsibility that effectively speak

back to the neoliberal logics dismantling the welfare state.

Neoliberal ideology's pervasiveness has been discussed *ad nauseam* since the financial collapse of 2008, whose effects were an obvious consequence of what has come to be known as "the Washington Consensus." Even in the aftermath of the collapse, the responses to debt crises in Europe have remained in line with neoliberal thinking— shrink government, deregulate industry, keep inflation low. When Democratic politicians follow the wagging tail, which has been the case over the last two decades (think of Bill Clinton declaring the end of the era of big government and his overseeing of welfare's disemboweling), left-leaning circles have reason to despair.

We can see this frustration in the recent writing of Walter Benn Michaels and Sean McCann and Mark Szalay. For each, the relativism that followed as a philosophic consequence of poststructuralist, postmodernist, and deconstructive critiques of humanism severely undermined the ability of the progressive left to organize resistance to the growing power of the neoliberal and neoconservative movements. Daniel Rodgers's outstanding intellectual history of post-Cold War America, *The Age of Fracture*, capably demonstrates the affinities between academic postmodernism and political libertarianism in the mainstream: though each does so for entirely different reasons, they both eradicate faith in the solidity and importance of collective identities. The success of both movements has made what would once look like extreme individualism the status quo.

One of Tony Judt's final contributions to the *New York Review of Books* gives voice to this point. His students, he found, were incapable of conceiving of the commitment it would take to join a collective: "a self-abnegating commitment to a secular faith was beyond their imaginative reach." For Judt, relativistic, liberal-secular individualism had swung too far in the opposite direction of the collective-minded mid-century. Neoliberal thinking, of course, has linked this intense individualism to an argument for the necessity of unfettered free enterprise: markets must be unregulated because individuals, who make up the market, must be allowed to achieve their fullest potential. Because of Western philosophical liberalism's long marriage to the power of the individual, those trained in that tradition have little to say back to any system that makes individual liberation sacrosanct. In addition, neoclassical economics, which relies on a version of the rational Enlightenment human, insists that an utterly free market is the only way of sustaining economic growth. This position dominates thinking about economic policy to such a degree that even Judt cannot think his way out of these confines: "[t]he thrall in which an ideology holds a people is best measured by their collective inability to imagine alternatives. We know perfectly well that untrammeled faith in unregulated markets kills. […] But in Margaret Thatcher's deathless phrase, 'There is no alternatives'" (9-10). Within the same issue of the *New York Review of Books*, Charles Baxter echoes Judt's defeatism in a review of Jonathan Franzen's *Freedom*, ruefully pronouncing that the book "attempts to come to terms with the Bush years and is

finally defeated by them. […] It cannot solve the problems it regards as crucial, which is our loss and probably our fate" (16). Such a position is symptomatic of the intellectual logjam neoliberalism causes, when even a high-powered liberal journal asserts that an "inability to imagine [plausible] alternatives" is "probably our fate."

Robinson responds to these conditions by proposing a set of ethics not rooted in the individual's importance. I argue that the intensification of neoliberalism's dominance helps us make sense of why Robinson's novels of the 2000s stray from the deconstructive mysticism of her first book; in *Gilead* and *Home*, Robinson's depiction of domestic spaces and relationships within small communities dramatizes the necessity of interdependence and the precariousness of human life. While neoliberalism depends on a definition of the human exclusively driven by economic incentives, Robinson offers an ontology based in mystery and insecurity, as she does in *Housekeeping*. But the later novels emphasize a set of responsibilities that follow from defining the human in this way, which I read as having political resonance aimed at undoing the binds I've described. For readers unfamiliar with *Housekeeping*, let me offer a brief summary of the text and its reception history, which I hope will demonstrate its emphasis on undecidability, before discussing how *Gilead* and *Home* aim for firmer conclusions.

[Gonzalez, J. (2014). Ontologies of interdependence, the sacred, and health care: Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead* and *Home*. *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, *55*(4), 373-388.]

Organization:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Presidential Debate Watching, Issue Knowledge, Character Evaluation, and Vote Choice

We divide this literature by topic: research on issue knowledge, or learning, and studies into influences on perceptions of candidate character.

Debate Issue Learning Studies

Research on learning from debates began in 1976 with studies of the Carter-Ford debates. Graber and Kim (1978) concluded that little learning occurred (see also Graber, 1978). However, other research found effects from the debates. Becker, Sobowale, Cobbey, and Eyal (1978) found that exposure to the 1976 debates increased issue knowledge, as did Bishop, Oldendick, and Tuchfarber (1978). Abramowitz (1978) showed that for one of the most important issues in the debate, unemployment, voters increased their level of awareness of both Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford. Mulder (1978) argued that the 1976 debates did not advantage either candidate, but influenced perceived knowledge of both candidates' issue stands. Summarizing findings of research on 1976 debates, Chaffee (1978) reported that voters do learn from debates.

Kennamer (1987) examined the 1984 debates and found that viewing the debates was not a significant predictor of issue knowledge. In his study of the 1988 debates, Lemert (1993) concluded the presidential debates increased issue knowledge. In another study of the 1988 debates Lanoue (1991) found that viewing the debates led to short-term increases in viewers' levels of candidate information. Similarly, Drew and Weaver (1991) indicated that exposure to the 1988 debates was a significant predictor of issue knowledge.

Pfau and Eveland (1994) found that the 1992 debates predicted issue knowledge for both candidates; however, they indicated that there was more learning for Bush than for Clinton. Jamieson and Adasiewicz (2000) analyzed the 1992 debates and concluded that learning occurred for issues discussed in the debate. Another study of the 1992 election indicated the debates resulted in significant knowledge gain for issues discussed in the debates (Zhu, Milavsky, & Biswas, 1994). On the other hand, debate viewing did not increase levels of issue knowledge in two other studies of the 1992 election (McLeod et al., 1996; Weaver & Drew, 1995).

Benoit, Webber, and Berman (1998) reported that debate viewers in 1996 had more issue knowledge and differing attitudes than non-viewers. Kaid, McKinney, and Tedesco (2000) found that debate viewers in 1996 reported learning from the debates. Once again Drew and Weaver (1998) indicated that debate viewing in the 1996 election did not lead to increased knowledge (see also Weaver, Drew, & Wu, 1998). Finally, Holbert et al. (2002) argued that, in 1996, viewing the first debate, but not the second debate, increased issue knowledge. Two studies of issue learning investigated the 2000 debates. Benoit et al. (2002) found that viewing the debates increased issue

knowledge. However, Weaver and Drew (2001) again failed to find a significant effect for debate viewing on knowledge.

Debate Character-perception Studies

Scholars studied character in the Richard M. Nixon-John F. Kennedy debates of 1960. Lang and Lang (1962) found that perceptions of Kennedy improved whereas perceptions of Nixon declined. Tannenbaum, Greenberg, and Silverman (1962) reported a decrease in character evaluation for Nixon but no change for Kennedy. Hagner and Rieselbach (1978) as well as Morrow (1977) compared character evaluations (e.g., honesty, personal appeal) for Ford and Carter in 1976 and found that both candidates experienced improvements from the debates. Simons and Leibowitz (1979) reported that character evaluations for neither Ford nor Carter improved after the debate.

For the 1988 election, Drew and Weaver (1991) reported that debate viewing did not predict character evaluations for either George H. W. Bush or Michael Dukakis; however, Holbrook (1996) found debate viewing did influence character evaluations. Pfau and Eveland (1994) found that watching the 1992 debates was a significant predictor of voters' perception of candidates' character (e.g., friendly, honest, sincere). McKinnon, Tedesco, and Kaid (1993) reported increased changes on character evaluations for Bush but not for Clinton (see also McLeod et al. ,1996). Zhu et al. (1994) found no changes in character perceptions for either candidate.

After the 1996 debates, Yawn and Beatty (2000) found that character evaluations changed for Dole but not for Clinton. Benoit et al. (1998) reported that several measures of character (e.g., honesty, fairness) for both candidates were significantly different for viewers and non-viewers. In addition, they indicated that Dole was helped more than Clinton, probably because many people had less well-developed impressions of Dole.

Summary of Literature Review

Studies of how debates affect voters' perceptions of candidates have produced mixed results. These inconsistencies could occur because, as Jamieson and Adasiewicz (2000) suggested, the amount of learning from debates varies from year to year. It is certainly possible that some debates are more informative than other debates (e.g., better questions, less obfuscation, clearer distinctions between candidates). We observe that some of the results reported above were mixed within years. For example, in 1976, Graber and Kim (1978) concluded that little learning occurred from the 1976 debates, whereas Abramowitz (1978), Becker et al. (1978), Bishop et al. (1978), and Mulder (1978) reported increases in knowledge from the Carter-Ford encounters. Thus, this explanation cannot account for all of the discrepancies in results.

Closer examination of this body of literature reveals that most of this research uses samples that are limited in potentially important ways. For example, many studies on debates use students as subjects (e.g., Benoit et al., 2001; Benoit et al., 1998; Lanoue & Schrott, 1989; Patterson, Churchill, Burger, & Powell, 1992). Another substantial group of

studies use local samples of subjects, respondents who live in a particular geographical area (e.g., Drew & Weaver, 1991, 1998; Weaver & Drew, 1995, 2001).

We could identify only nine published studies of the effects of presidential debates that use national samples of voters (Hagner & Rieselbach, 1978; Holbrook, 1996, 1999; Lanoue, 1992; Miller & MacKuen, 1979; Rose, 1976; Shelley & Hwang, 1991; Sigelman & Sigelman, 1984; Steeper, 1978). With the exception of Holbrook's studies, these investigations are limited to a single year (1976: Hagner & Riselbach, 1978; Miller & MacKuen, 1979; Rose, 1976; Steeper, 1978; 1980: Lanoue, 1992; Sigelman & Sigelman, 1984; 1988: Shelley & Hwang, 1991). Only one of these studies focused on issue learning (Rose, 1976; see below for a discussion of Holbrook, 1999, which purports to study issue learning). Only two of these studies examine effects of debates on character perceptions (Hagner & Rieselbach, 1978; Miller & MacKuen, 1979). This means that, if one accepts the notion that the two basic topics which can be addressed in campaign messages are policy and character, these variables have rarely been studied with national samples of voters. Accordingly, we will employ national samples of voters collected by the National Election Studies (NES) project to study the effects of presidential debates in five campaigns (all years with appropriate data) on issue learning and character perceptions. Using data from five elections functions essentially as a series of replications investigating these effects.

[Benoit, W. L., & Hansen, G. J. (2004). Presidential debate watching, issue knowledge, character evaluation, and vote choice. *Human Communication Research, 30*(1), 121-144.]

Organization:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

□ How to Conduct a Literature Review?

Before starting to write the literature review, we need to ask ourselves a few questions:

1. What is the title of my paper?
2. What are the keywords for my paper?
3. Have I collected enough literature? If not, how would I expand it? What other forms of literature would I consider?
4. Which works in my literature are more important and why? Are they important because of the authors, findings, methodology or anything else?
5. What will be the focus of my paper?
6. What is the goal of my paper?
7. What is my perspective on the literature?
8. How extensive is the coverage of my literature review? What literature will I include? What will I exclude? What is the criterion of my inclusion and exclusion?
9. How will I organize my literature review?
10. Who will be the audience of my literature review?

When we have thought carefully about the above-mentioned questions, we will have a clear plan as to how we are going to write our literature review. Otherwise, we may run the risk of revising many times, which will result in a waste of time and efforts.

1. Steps of Writing a Literature Review

The writing of a literature review often involves the following steps:

1. Problem formulation. Now we have already had a topic and a tentative title, read a few journal papers on our topic, and thought about the organization format of our literature review. Then, get ready to think about the specific issue we are going to deal with in the literature review. We may find that the search is a process of trial and error, because at first the keyword(s) we used in the search engine may not get many results. We need to try different ones until we find the most appropriate. And finally, we need to construct a working thesis statement for the literature review.

2. Analysis and interpretation. Here are some suggestions for reading, analyzing and interpreting literature—

1) Read through the references quickly to get a general idea. We can focus on the title, abstract, introduction and conclusion. When we find the most useful ones, read them carefully.

2) Categorize the references. Classify the references into topics and, if needed, sub-topics, and arrange the references chronologically.

3) Keep files and take notes. When we need to read a large amount of literature on a particular topic or issue, we may feel overwhelmed sometimes. We may run

the risk of rereading the literature, which may greatly lower the efficiency of our writing. To avoid this, first, we need to store the literature in different files, either in our computer or on our bookshelf. Keep them organized, so that we can locate them whenever we want. Second, take notes. We cannot just read on and on without any note-taking. In fact, a summary table may help us keep track of what we have covered. We need to take notes when reading through the references. We can make use of such software as NoteExpress, EndNote or RefWorks. We can also use an Excel spreadsheet, or simply use note cards to organize our notes. At the same time, a summary table should be used.

Tips

What to Take Down in the Notes?

◇ Publication infomation. Record the name of the author(s), the publication year, the title of the paper/book, the name of the publisher and other infomation that can help us trace the original source.

◇ Definition of key terms. Pay attention to the different definitions of the key terms.

◇ Research method. We can be inspired by sorting out what research methods other scholars are using.

◇ Conclusion. Summarize the conclusion of the author(s) and be ready to compare and contrast the conclusions. Whenever we find a conflict or sharp change in the conclusion, indicate it accordingly.

◇ Strengths and weaknesses. This category in the summary table prompts us to consciously and critically evaluate the literature.

◇ Relevance to my research. This category amounts to a higher level of evaluation. This is a comprehensive evaluation of the literature and a reflection of what we can learn from this specific literature.

◇ Important statistics. Record them carefully, so that there is no need for us to go back when we are in need of them.

◇ Useful quotes. Remember to note down the page number(s) of the quotes, since this is often required in in-text citations.

4) Notice the sub-headings. They will help us better follow the authors' train of thought.

ACTIVITY 4

Read through the literature you have collected and fill in the summary table on the next page.

Summary Table

Author(s)	Publication year and publisher	Title of the paper/book	Research method	Findings/ Conclusion	Strengths	Weaknesses	Relevance to my research

ACTIVITY 5

Think about the following questions and directions and write down your responses.

1) What is the specific issue/topic of your intended research? What literature have you found?

   _____

   _____

2) How would you organize the literature for your literature review? What organizational format(s) will you use? Why?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3) Write down the topics and sub-topics of your literature review to create a rough outline for it.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. The Format/Layout of a Literature Review

Quite similar to a piece of argumentative writing, a literature review also needs to follow the format of "introduction-body-conclusion."

In the **introduction**, a reviewer needs to:
1. clearly identify the topic of the literature review, state the thesis statement (which demonstrates the point of view from which the author reviewed), establish

the reason for writing the literature, state the structure of the literature review (sequence) which serves as a guide or overview of the literature review (especially when it is long) explain what will and will not be covered (scope);

2. point out the overall trend in the current literature, and the conflicts in theory, methodology and findings.

In the **body**, a reviewer needs to:
1. organize the literature based on certain foci;
2. bear in mind that length indicates significance. For example, a classic work deserves the discussion of an entire paragraph, but the gist of those pieces that are not so important can be summarized by using only one or a few sentences.

In the **conclusion**, a reviewer needs to:
1. summarize the major literature, referring back to the introduction. This summary will serve as a closure;
2. point out the major strengths and weaknesses of the current literature. For example, the major flaws or gaps in theory, methods or findings;
3. conclude by providing the relationship between the reviewed literature and the reviewer's own study, thus establishing the significance of the present study;
4. lead to the research questions or hypotheses to deal with in the present study.

ACTIVITY 6

Write down the outlines of the literature reviews in ACTIVITY 3. Discuss in groups of 4-5 how the reviewers develop their ideas to justify the validity and value of the research questions.

Outline of Literature Review A:

_____

_____

_____

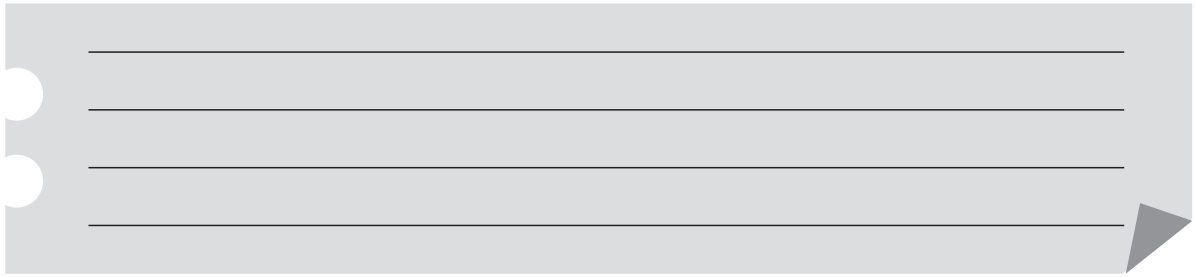_____

_____

_____

_____

Outline of Literature Review B:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Outline of Literature Review C:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

☐ Common Problems in Writing a Literature Review

Beginners often encounter problems in writing a literature review. The common ones include the following:

1. Read too much or too little literature. Reading too much is a waste of time and

energy; reading too little prevents us from providing the reader with a complete picture. Therefore, incorporate only the literature with high quality. For example, we can start with the classic works in the field or the papers from peer-reviewed journals.

2. **Cannot find enough literature.** Students often complain that there is little or simply no literature. This could be due to two reasons. First, they may use the wrong keywords to search in the database, or their search scope is too narrow and they need to broaden their search and widen their sources. Second, it may indicate that there is a major gap in the field to fill if their topic is already well-chosen.

3. **The literature review is a totally separate set of references from the paper itself.** One of the purposes of the literature review is to prove the significance of the paper, thus the review should indicate that there is something to improve, a gap to fill, a mistake to correct, etc., and that is why we need to write this paper. We must relate our literature review with our paper or research, especially the research questions or hypotheses.

4. **It is written as a summary or annotated summary at best.** Many students merely summarize the content of the literature without any focus or critical comment, which amounts to a litany of what others have said, involving not much critical thinking, but only passive acceptance of what others have said.

5. **Read too much secondary sources instead of primary sources.** When one first steps into a research field, he/she often feels overwhelmed by the sea of literature in front of him/her. So it becomes a convenient strategy to resort to the secondary sources. But this is totally wrong. We should go to the original research and provide our comments on them. Do not use ideas from other literature reviews. In addition, avoid using textbooks as the source.

6. **Quote too much.** In fact, in a literature review, we are not supposed to use many long direct quotes. We need to use our own words most of the time.

7. **The sources are not correctly interpreted or are quoted out of context.** As a result, sources are probably used in a biased way.

8. **Some students like to use such excuses as "Due to the limitation of time and energy/lack of access to XX library, this literature is not up to standard."** In fact, one of the functions of the literature review is to show readers that we are capable of doing such research. If the time and energy is not enough, our topic may have been too broad for us to handle, or we haven't devoted enough time and energy to the project. If there is limited access to libraries, that means we lack the necessary tools for research.

ACTIVITY 7

Check the common problems listed above and see whether there are similar problems you may face when preparing for your literature review. List the problems below and suggest the possible solutions.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part II: Language Study

Language Characteristics in a Literature Review

There are some typical language characteristics for the reviewer to pay attention to:

1. Do not use too much passive voice.
2. Use the present tense when:
   a. describing other literature

      e.g., *This research establishes a link between XX and XX.*
   b. explaining concepts, theories, methods, etc.

      e.g., *Pragmatic competence is roughly divided into two components.*

      e.g., *Cultivation analysis argues that long-term exposure to television content leads to a distorted perception of reality.*
3. Use the past tense when describing past events and findings.

      e.g., *However, as Baron (2000) and Murray (1995) pointed out …*
4. Use transitions to help readers follow the arguments. At the beginning of each paragraph, there should be a topic sentence of this paragraph. There should be transitional words or phrases throughout the entire review.
5. Avoid repetition of language. For example, authors could be expressed first by their names, and then by pronouns or such words as "investigators," "researchers" and "scholars."

6. Use verbs to refer to others' works. Note that different verbs can help achieve different effects.

> e.g., *Bent and Bradlow (2003) stated that non-native listeners might …*
> e.g., *However, some research found the advantages of …*
> e.g., *Smith and Bisazza (1982) showed that …*
> e.g., *Van Wijngaarden et al. (2002) claimed that …*

7. Use words or phrases to indicate consensus (or agreement), divergence (or disagreement, controversy), and summary.

Consensus:

> e.g., *Other research supports the view of …*

Divergence:

> e.g., *However, other researchers (e.g., Kubota, 1999; Stapleton, 2002) vehemently argue against this stereotype, insisting that …*
> e.g., *The arguments of both Atkinson (2003) and Davidson (1995) directly contradict Stapleton's (2001) study in which he …*

Summary:

> e.g., *The debate on Japanese students' critical thinking is difficult to conclude.*
> e.g., *As discussed above, previous research on the effect of accents on listening comprehension is still inconclusive and listeners' attitudes vary widely.*

ACTIVITY 8

Read the following literature reviews and underline the transitional words. Discuss with your partner the functions of the transitional words.

Literature Review A

Polite Requestive Strategies in Emails:
An Investigation of Pragmatic Competence of Chinese EFL Learners

The studies reviewed above have revealed the pragmatic problems (i.e., insufficient pragmatic competence) in the email requests made by Chinese learners of English. The problems first involve pragmalinguistic types such as external modification of requests (supportive moves) and internal (polite) modification. In other words, the Chinese learners could not follow the norm of rhetorical structure by native speakers of English who prefer to put supportive moves after the head act of request. In contrast, the Chinese learners in these studies preferred to put supportive moves before the head act of request, following the norm of Chinese rhetorical structure. Moreover, the Chinese learners' English used fewer lexico-syntactic mitigation devices, such as *I wonder if I could*, in their head acts of requests than those by native speakers of English.

On the other hand, the Chinese learners of English had sociopragmatic problems because they could not vary strategies of politeness and lexico-syntactic mitigation devices in congruence with the social variables such as power, distance, imposition of requests and the weightiness (Chen, 2006).

[Zhu, W. (2012). Polite requestive strategies in emails: An investigation of pragmatic competence of Chinese EFL learners. *RELC Journal*, *43*(2), 217-238.]

Literature Review B

Against a Besieged Literature:
Fictions, Obsessions and Globalisations of Chinese Literature

In *Witness Against History*, Yomi Braester (2003) has shown that the approach to Chinese literature by Area Studies does not take into account the literariness of literary works, nor the contradictions and complexities inherent in them. Literature is fiction and must be read as such. Braester's contribution to the field of modern Chinese literature comes at a moment in which, as of a relatively short time ago, scholars such as Leo Lee, Ted Huters, David Wang or Shu-mei Shih have been attempting to place in doubt, by means of different strategies, the premises that have governed the comprehension, assessment and circulation of modern Chinese literature both in China and the West. Huters (2005) and Wang (1997) have chosen to do so by questioning the date of the beginning of Chinese literary modernity. Instead of adopting the dates that have been considered canonical (around the May Fourth Movement of 1919), they date this beginning in the last decades of the 19th century. This exercise does not involve a simple chronological precision, rather it is transcendent because it recovers works and authors from a period of great cultural and literary effervescence that the previous historiography—dominated by the socialist theses that situated the genesis of modernity in the authors of May Fourth—had thought little of and condemned to obscurity. In turn, Lee (1999) and Shih (2001) have opted to question the form and content of Chinese literary modernity. Following the path opened up by Chinese academics like Yan Jiayan, they have brought to light and given literary significance to modernist texts and authors from cosmopolitan Shanghai of the twenties and thirties, symbolised by the journal *Les contemporains* that—also owing to the dominance of socialist theses—have not enjoyed critical consideration until now. Braester, on the other hand, introduces a new method, questioning that which had always been considered Chinese literary modernity "from the inside": by means of critical re-readings of modern works, he deconstructs the meanings that they were traditionally given and shows the complex relation between history, testimony and representation, which have dominated Chinese literary modernity. Beyond the specific value of Braester's contribution to the discipline, his work is of interest because it demands a critical,

sophisticated and open-minded interpretation, which avoids pre-existing paradigms and that, fundamentally, lays the problematic relationship between fiction and reality on the table.

[Prado-Fonts, C. (2008). Against a besieged literature: Fictions, obsessions and globalisations of Chinese literature, "Orientalism" <online dossier>, *Digithum*, Iss. 10. UOC. <Retrieved on: 01/10/2016>. http://www.uoc.edu/digithum/10/dt/eng/prado.pdf]

ACTIVITY 9

1. Note down the sentences in the literature reviews in this unit that indicate consensus, divergence, and summary.

Consensus:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Divergence:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Summary:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Note down the sentences in the literature reviews in this unit that refer to others' works. Underline the verbs in them and observe the different effects the different verbs achieve.

_____

_____

_____

_____

ASSIGNMENTS

Now that you have solved the possible problems you will face in writing your literature review in ACTIVITY 7, draft the introduction, body and conclusion of your literature review based on the outline you've developed in ACTIVITY 5.

Checklist

Mark the question with a check (√) if your answer is yes.

☐ Have I understood what a good literature review is?

☐ Am I clear about the organization of a literature review?

☐ Am I able to follow the steps of writing a literature review?

☐ Am I cautious enough against the possible problems in writing a literature review?

☐ Am I able to use appropriate academic language in writing a literature review?