Part 1: Parsing Dense, Unfamiliar Texts

Purpose: Using these two techniques, the Two-Pass Approach and the Dudley-Evans "Moves" Analysis of the genre of the text, you will be able to quickly scan through multiple research articles in order to catalogue them for your thesis or dissertation. One of the biggest time-sinks that thesis and dissertation students encounter is the overwhelming amount of reading they feel that they must do, especially when not all sources will end up being useful to the writer.

Two-Pass Approach (Clark 116 and 117). Some sources can be skimmed, but others need to be read more than once. When you encounter a new source, try this approach to determine its use.

First-Pass: Obtain a quick overview of the text. Consider: context, controversy addressed, author's purpose. Skim the intro and conclusion. Determine if you can use it. If you can't use it, we recommend saving it and moving on. This will save you time so you don't entirely read everything you come across. Not all sources will be useful to you.

Second-Pass: Once you have determined that you want to use a source, think about its contents and relevance to you. Evaluate the credibility of the author. What theories or methods do they use? Based on context, can you examine the author's biases? What conclusions do they draw? Do you agree or disagree? How can you link this source with others you have collected already?

If you can use the source, move on to mapping it out or go back to Activity 3, Part 2 to begin organizing.

Using the Dudley-Evans "Moves" Analysis to Outline a Source (Clark 67). After reading a text, examine the core "moves" of establishing a research area. Generally the six moves appear in the beginning sections of texts. In other words, you are considering what the text says *and* the order and method in which it says it. Your thesis will, eventually, resemble something like this in the end, as well. Make a note to yourself in your notes on the source where each move is, roughly.

1. Introduce the field
2. Introduce the general topic within the field
3. Introduce the particular topic
4. Define the scope of the particular topic
    - Introducing research parameters or theoretical frameworks
    - Summarizing Previous Research or theories
5. Research model or Theoretical framework – What has previous research and historical context yielded?
    - Indicating a gap in previous research or approaches
    - Indicating possible extension of previous research or approaches
6. Present research – What is this study's research based on?
    - Stating the goal of the contained research or analysis
    - Describing briefly the work carried out by justifying the research

In later sections of research-heavy writing, the texts usually examine follow a design of **Scientific Method** (Experiment, Data, Results, Discussion, Conclusion) or **Content Analysis** (Examination of the

Works Cited: Clark, Irene. *Writing the Successful Thesis and Dissertation: Entering the Conversation.* Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, 2007.

"text", Argument synthesis, Analysis, Application, Data, Results, Discussion, Conclusion). Try to identify all the moves that your text makes as you get a sense of how to make these moves in your own writing.

Part 2: Organizing Your Research/Annotated Bibliographies

Purpose: Now that you've determined the amount of research your manuscript will require, it is time to start collecting the research that will become the bulk of your literature review. Not all of the research that you find during this initial search period will be useful, but it is often worth categorizing in the event that you end up discovering a use for it later in your writing process.

Description: The process for finding research for your thesis should be similar or outright the same as finding research for other academic writing projects. Where do you normally look for sources? The major difference is the amount of research that you will be collecting. Consider your writing process for a standard academic project. Do you normally conduct your research all at once? Do you begin writing immediately after reading your articles? In your field, are your sources most primary or secondary? For this big endeavor, we recommend spreading your research out over the course of several weeks *before* attempting to write about it in one gigantic literature review block.

However, in this stage, you will be writing *about* the resource texts you collect. Much of the annotated writing that you collect at this stage will be reusable when you go to finalize your Literature review. As you collect your research, create annotated bibliographies or dedicated research notes based on what you believe is most relevant about your research. Use the form on the next page to help you with this process.

- It is recommended that you keep a file filled with a copy of the form with a notation on each of the sources that you collect. For digital sources, you might also be able to print a physical copy and staple your notations to the front of them. A digital collection of these forms may also prove useful for your organization.

The form asks you to choose between the categories of "**Keep,"** "**Maybe**," and "**No, But…"** For texts that you keep, note how and why and where you intend to use the source.

- For sources you choose "Keep", note the features about the source that you find relevant as well as *questions* that you have about the source and its uses for you.
- For source where you select "Maybe", note the features that it has that might make the source more worthy of inclusion as well as any links it may have to your literature. What would improve it?
- If you choose "No, But…" there should be something about the source that draws you in; these kinds of sources can often act as a springboard for future sources or authors in the same vein as the source you are rejecting.
- If No, is it related to your topic? Does it give you a direction of other research you may want to look into based on some aspect of the article?

The best way to keep your research organized is to decide early how you want to present this research in your manuscript. If you're going to be discussing the bulk of your research in the Literature Review, will it be presented chronologically? Will some topics be presented before others? How many topics can you divide your research into?

Source # _____ of _____

Source Name_____

Author(s)_____

Year_____ Edition_____ Publisher_____

Other Reference Info _____

Highlight one: Keep Maybe No, But…

Why?_____

_____

What is this source about?

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Why is this source important to your overall research?

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Where and how will you use this source in your manuscript?

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Additional notes:

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