

# Half-way seminar DAI50X

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**Group A**

**Tuesday 29 March 13-17**



# Today's programme – a suggestion

- **13:15** Welcome!
- **13:30-13:45** **Skim your own text and make notes**
- **13:45-14:30** Read each other's texts, prepare comments and plan the peer review
- **14:30-15** Peer review on **overall structure**
- **15-15:30** **BREAK**

## Second half

- 15:30-15:50 What makes *a good paragraph*
- 15:50-16:30 Peer review on *paragraphs and academic style*
- 16:40-17 Question time and rounding off

# Reviewing a research paper



# Peer review

1. Authors read and consider their text: Weaknesses? Is there anything you really need feedback on?
2. Read, make notes
3. **Plan** your feedback:
  - Start at page 1?
  - Most important point first?
4. Appoint a time keeper
5. Let the authors speak as well.
6. Help each other!

# Being a helpful reviewer

- Skim the document first, then read carefully
- Be specific
- Point out strengths as well as weaknesses
- Be constructive if you can (give suggestions)
- Pointing out **unclear passages** is very valuable
- Ask questions (What does this term mean?)
- Be respectful
- Written comments are best, explained orally



Studying how someone else has dealt with *the same task* as you gives you new perspectives!

# Peer review, round 1: Introduction

- Read for overall structure and logic

- 1. Does the Introduction catch the reader's attention?**
- 2. Is there a clear link between the *problem* and *why* this study is carried out?**
- 3. Are the research questions clearly stated?**



# *Common problems in Introductions*

1. There is **too much background** or **too much theory** before the research questions are specified.
2. The **aim and purpose** are not fully clear.

# Introductions: mention the *problem* before you mention the *purpose*

1

- General **introduction** to the topic

2

- What's the **problem**?
- Have other researchers attempted to solve this problem, but without success?

3

- What is the **purpose** of your study (i.e. how are you going to try to solve the problem)?
- Useful phrases: *In order to...* and *therefore, this study aims to...*

4

- What specific **research question(s)** are you asking yourselves?

# Background/Theory sections

- Here you put the details!
- Purpose: to show that you *know the field*
- Clear structure is important: sub-headings
- Be super-clear about *who said what*  
(referencing)

# Peer review: Structure of Introductions and Background

- 13:45      *Skim your own text and make notes*
- 13:45-14:15      Read through each other's texts, prepare comments and plan the peer review
- 14:15-14.45      Peer review
- 14.45-15      Work on your own texts
- 15-15:20      **BREAK**

Input

# **PARAGRAPH-LEVEL COMPOSITION**

# Organize your paragraphs

- A group of sentences on the same topic

No one-sentence paragraphs!

- Clearly marked graphically
- Must be organized to **help the reader understand your message**
- Logical connections between sentences!

# The beginning is the power position

## Use a **topic sentence** for overview

- “X has been increasing rapidly over the past decade”
- “Phenomenon A has been explained through mainly two theories”
- “Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are emitted from a variety of manmade and natural sources.”
- Says what the paragraph is about
- Begins with old information and moves to new

# Arrange the details in the remaining sentences

- The middle of the paragraph develops the ideas of the topic sentence
- Examples, statistics, justifications, analysis...
  - *For instance, ...*
  - *As an example...*
  - *First / secondly / moreover...*
- Sometimes there is a concluding sentence at the end
  - *This means that many of the... are...*

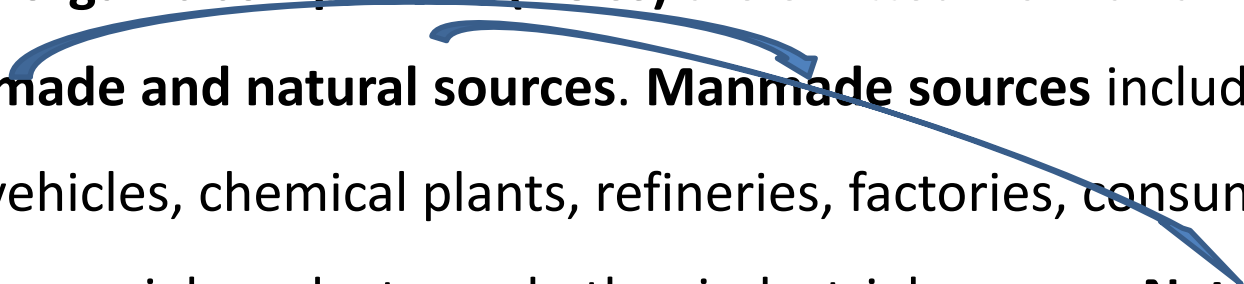


# How is this paragraph organised?

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are emitted from a variety of manmade and natural sources. Manmade sources include motor vehicles, chemical plants, refineries, factories, consumer and commercial products, and other industrial sources. Natural sources responsible for biogenic VOC emissions include oak, citrus, eucalyptus, pine, spruce, maple, hickory, fir, and cottonwood. The overall relative contributions of manmade versus natural sources of VOCs have not been clearly established, but the relative contributions of these source groups vary depending on geography.

# Well-organized paragraph

**Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)** are emitted from a variety of **manmade and natural sources**. **Manmade sources** include motor vehicles, chemical plants, refineries, factories, consumer and commercial products, and other industrial sources. **Natural sources** responsible for biogenic VOC emissions include oak, citrus, eucalyptus, pine, spruce, maple, hickory, fir, and cottonwood. **The overall relative contributions of manmade versus natural sources of VOCs** have not been clearly established, but the relative contributions of these source groups vary depending on geography.



# What is missing?



Salmon use geomagnetic imprinting to return to their freshwater birthplace to spawn. As described by Stabell et al. [15], olfactory cues also play a role in guiding salmon back to the stream of their birth. It is unclear whether salmon also use cues other than geomagnetic and chemical imprinting to orient themselves.

# What is missing?

**A topic sentence!**



Salmon use **different methods** to find their way to their freshwater birthplace to spawn.

One method is known as geomagnetic imprinting.

As described by Stabell et al. [15], adult salmon also use olfactory cues to find the stream of their birth.

back to the stream of their birth. It is unclear whether salmon also use cues other than geomagnetic and chemical imprinting to orient themselves.

# Make your sentences cohesive

- Move from given to new information
- Use a consistent order of information
- Use a consistent point of view
  - Relate the subjects of each sentence to the topic of the paragraph



Rhubarb is a frequently used Chinese herbal medicine. It is used to treat various ailments including constipation, inflammation, and cancer. As a drug, rhubarb is made up of the roots and rhizomes of three members of the *Polygonaceae* family, *Rheum officinale*, *R. palmatum*, and *R. tanguticum*. Different rhubarb species show substantial differences in purgative effects and chemical compositions. However, they are similar in physical appearance and thus difficult to distinguish.



**Rhubarb** is a frequently used Chinese herbal medicine. **It** is used to treat various ailments including constipation, inflammation, and cancer. As a drug, **rhubarb** is made up of the roots and rhizomes of three members of the *Polygonaceae* family, *Rheum officinale*, *R. palmatum*, and *R. tanguticum*. **Different rhubarb species** show substantial differences in purgative effects and chemical compositions. However, **they** are similar in physical appearance and thus difficult to distinguish.

# Use transitions to indicate logical relationships between sentences

To determine the effects of solid- solution ratio on KI<sub>2</sub> adsorption at fixed pH 7, KI<sub>2</sub> adsorption isotherm experiments were conducted. \_\_\_\_\_, aqueous carbonate concentrations were measured.





# Use transitions to indicate logical relationships between sentences

To determine the effects of solid- solution ratio on KI<sub>2</sub> adsorption at fixed pH 7, KI<sub>2</sub> adsorption isotherm experiments were conducted. \_\_\_\_\_, aqueous carbonate concentrations were measured.

**First,**

**Subsequently,**

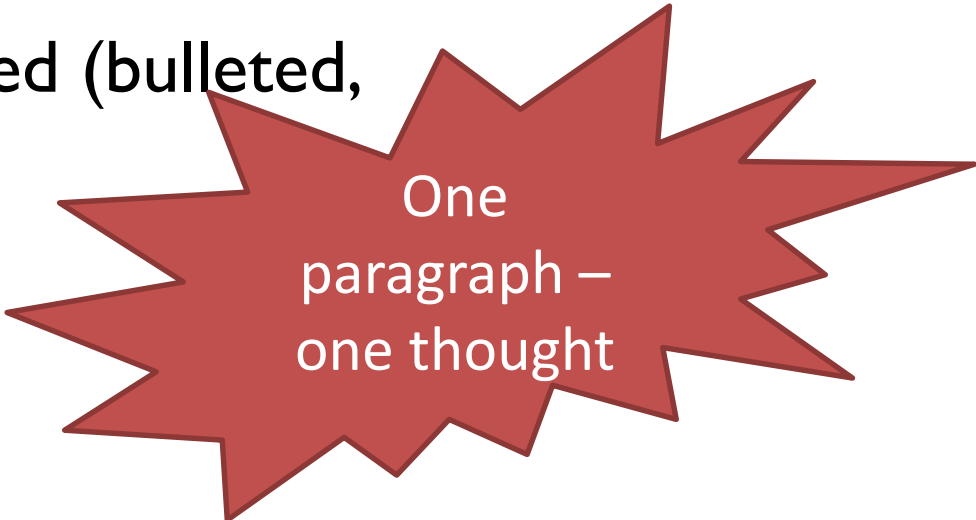
**For this purpose,**

**In addition,**



## Peer review stage two:

- Read for *structure, logic and readability*:
- Is there a clear train of thought in the paragraphs?
- Are **topic sentences** present?
- Are the paragraphs **graphically separated**?
- Are lists clearly formatted (bulleted, numbered?)



One  
paragraph –  
one thought

# An authentic well-organized paragraph

The amount of data in our world is rapidly increasing. According to a recent report [22], it is estimated that 20% of the world's data has been collected in the past couple of years. Facebook, the largest online social-network, collected 300 petabytes of personal data since its inception [1] – a hundred times the amount the Library of Congress has collected in over 200 years [13]. In the Big Data era, data is constantly being collected and analyzed, leading to innovation and economic growth. Companies and organizations use the data they collect to personalize services, optimize the corporate decision-making process, predict future trends and more. Today, data is a valuable asset in our economy [21].

# An authentic well-organized paragraph

While we all reap the benefits of a data-driven society, there is a growing public concern about user privacy. Centralized organizations – both public and private, amass large quantities of personal and sensitive information. Individuals have little or no control over the data that is stored about them and how it is used. In recent years, public media has repeatedly covered controversial incidents related to privacy. Among the better known examples is the story about government surveillance [2], and Facebook's large-scale scientific experiment that was apparently conducted without explicitly informing participants [10].

# How to deal with references:

*Relevant  
information?*

- According to a research [33] has been done in “Instituto Superior Técnico”, the largest and most reputed school of engineering, science, technology and architecture in Portugal; digital technologies provide easy access to information, social interactions, online markets, purchases, control of environment and more for people. **Many people around the world are surrounded by various type of digital technologies and sensors in public places, homes or even their bodies.** People’s

*Much more  
relevant  
information  
→ start here  
instead!*

# References: better information structure

- **Many people around the world are surrounded by various type of digital technologies and sensors in public places, homes or even their bodies. Such** technologies provide people with easy access to information, social interactions, online markets, purchases, control of environment and much more. **In fact**, people's everyday life has been **fundamentally** changed in a way that was **unimaginable** a decade ago [33].

# Use the *present tense* when describing your work:

- *This thesis will investigate...*

→ ***This thesis investigates***

- The dataset that will be used will have ratings with 10 options

→ *The dataset used in the present study consists of ratings with 10 options*

- → Consists of 10-option ratings?

# Remember: translation of Swedish *man*

- **Original:**
  - *One can identify how dense or sparse a dataset is*
- **Revised:**
  - *It can be identified how dense or sparse a dataset is*
- **Even better?**
  - *The density or sparsity of a dataset can be identified*



## ARC lunch seminar 12th April:

- *Tables, Figures and Text: how to incorporate visuals in your report*
- *12:15 – 13:00 in Sydöstra Galleriet*
- **[www.kth.se/arc](http://www.kth.se/arc)**