

**THESIS WRITING CONVENTIONS: BACHELOR'S DEGREE  
STUDY PROGRAMMES  
ENGLISH PHILOLOGY BSP  
MODERN LANGUAGES AND BUSINESS STUDIES BSP**

**PROCESS OF WRITING**

The bachelor's thesis (BA thesis) is written in English, with a theme falling within one of the following fields:

- ❖ English Language (Phonetics, Morphology, Grammar, Syntax, etc.)
- ❖ English Language Acquisition
- ❖ English Language Use in Communication
- ❖ Literature in the English Language (only for students in English Language and English-Scandinavian Languages sub-programmes)
- ❖ Cultural Studies
- ❖ Translation and Interpreting

The list of themes is available at the programme coordinator's at the beginning of September, but you may propose your own theme. The proposed theme must be discussed with a potential advisor and approved by the end of June.

The process of writing the BA thesis comprises several stages, namely:

1. Submitting a typed application (see Appendix 1), addressed to the Head of the Department of English Studies and signed by the advisor. In the application you propose a theme for the BA thesis.
2. Submitting a research proposal to the advisor, in which you formulate the research problem, briefly describe the theoretical background and the methodology of the planned research as well as add the outline of the BA thesis.
3. Submitting the draft of the theoretical part of the BA thesis to the advisor.
4. Submitting the first draft to the advisor. It includes a review of literature, a detailed description of the research methods, research results and a discussion of these results.
5. Submitting the final draft to the advisor.
6. Registering the final version of the thesis, in which all the suggestions and changes noted by the advisor have been implemented.

The file of the BA thesis is converted into the PDF format and uploaded in the University of Latvia informational system (LUIS). The abstract is also pasted in the provided slot in LUIS. The electronic copy is saved under the name formed from the student's full name without diacritic marks and ID, e.g., Berzins\_Janis\_BJ93010. The size of the file being uploaded must not exceed 50 MB. Five copies of the theses, with your name and surname and the title of the BA thesis, are printed and submitted.

#### 7. Defending the BA thesis.

Each stage has to meet the deadline specified at <https://www.hzf.lu.lv/en/studies/research-papers/>, and it is your responsibility to plan the work, search for relevant literature, organise and edit the BA thesis according to these Conventions. We advise that you keep a copy of every submitted draft of your BA thesis.

### **ORIGINALITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM**

The BA thesis aims at demonstrating the knowledge, skills and competence acquired during the academic studies and in the process of your independent research, and, as such, the BA thesis should be an original synthesis based on the interpretation of the collected data.

To avoid plagiarism, any theories, ideas and data used in your research have to be duly acknowledged with references (see the section on references below). Unacknowledged sources amount to plagiarism, and detected plagiarism severely affects the assessment of the BA thesis and may even lead to the requirement to start a new BA thesis.

### **LENGTH OF THE BACHELOR'S THESIS**

The volume of the BA thesis is **from 17,000 to 19,000 words**, with the word count indicated at the end of the list of references. The limits of length **include** the introduction, chapters, conclusions and theses, but **exclude** the acknowledgements, *anotācija*, abstract, list of abbreviations and acronyms, list of references and appendices.

### **STRUCTURE OF THE BACHELOR'S THESIS**

1. COVER (see Appendix 2)
2. TITLE PAGE (see Appendix 3)
3. ANOTĀCIJA

It is a precise translation of the abstract. The key words (Atslēgvārdi) are also translated.

#### 4. ABSTRACT

The length of the abstract does not exceed 850 characters with spaces.

The one-paragraph abstract comprises

- ❖ background of the research or its topicality
- ❖ research goal
- ❖ research methods
- ❖ main results and conclusions

The abstract is followed by 4-8 keywords, which are words or phrases representing the main concepts of your research. For example,

**Key words:** essay writing, argumentative essays, coherence, organisational patterns

#### 5. CONTENTS

The table of contents is designed automatically (see Appendix 4).

#### 6. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS (optional)

#### 7. INTRODUCTION

The introduction states concisely:

- ❖ the background of the study
- ❖ the significance of the problem
- ❖ the research goal (specific, not general)
- ❖ research questions or the hypothesis derived from the goal

**Note:** The proposed hypothesis should not be axiomatic, i.e., self-evident and in no need of proof or explanation.

- ❖ enabling objectives to achieve the research goal that comprise but are not limited to:

1. to read and analyse theories / theoretical literature on ... (*name them*)
  2. to apply the developed theoretical framework to ... (*state the research goal*)
  3. to implement ... (*state the necessary research activities to achieve the goal, e.g., to analyse metaphors in the chosen articles, to design a test, etc.*)
  4. to draw conclusions
- ❖ research methods

- theoretical research method(s), e.g., analysis of theories
- empirical research method(s), e.g., discourse analysis, genre analysis, stylistic analysis, etc.
- ❖ theoretical framework
- ❖ data collection technique(s) or tool(s) (if used), for example, tests, interviews
- ❖ research subjects/participants/population (where applicable)
- ❖ a corpus of the analysed texts (where applicable)
- ❖ a short summary (1-2 sentences) of each chapter

## 8. CHAPTERS

The body of the paper presents a literature review and empirical research, and it is organised in chapters and subchapters, each provided a heading. Each chapter starts with a paragraph long introduction and concludes with a paragraph that briefly summarises the findings of the chapters and draws conclusions. To create a strong link to the next chapter, a transitional paragraph can be added.

The chapters include:

**Literature review**, the aim of which is to demonstrate your knowledge of the previous research on the theme and to provide theoretical background for addressing the problem under research.

**Empirical research**, which provides the empirical data used to validate the proposed hypothesis or answer the research questions. The empirical part comprises

- **the methodology section**, including the description of the selected research method(s), description of participants (if applicable), data collection tools and/or collected data (corpus), research procedure
- **results of the study**, comprising a presentation of the results, organized in terms of the hypothesis/research questions.
- 

## 9. CONCLUSIONS

The chapters are followed by relevant conclusions drawn on the basis of the data. This section restates the goal, briefly summarizes and generalizes the main findings of the research, both theoretical and empirical, and may describe practical implications. The section outlines limitations of the study and sets directions for future research.

## 10. THESES

Theses are the most significant theoretical and empirical findings presented in brief and general statements. Ten to twelve theses would be sufficient.

## 11. REFERENCES

**The list of references** lists all the sources – books, scientific papers, journal articles, etc. – used and referred to in the BA thesis. The entries on the list are numbered and arranged in alphabetical order, first listing references in Latin characters, followed by titles in Cyrillic characters.

Unauthorised websites as well as websites that can be altered by anyone and not protected by copyright are put on a separately numbered list of **Online sources**.

See examples of references by type below.

### ❖ **Book by one author**

Name of author    Year of publication    Title    Place of publication    Publisher

Cook, G. (1989) *Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Porte, G. K. (2010) *Appraising Research in Second Language Learning: a practical approach to critical analysis of quantitative research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamin Publishing Company.

### ❖ **Book by several authors**

**Note:** The names are given in the same order as they are on the title page.

Swales, J. M. and Feak, C. B. (1994) *Academic Writing for Graduate Students. A Course for Nonnative Speakers of English*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

### ❖ **Book with an editor**

Celce-Murcia, M. (ed.), (2001) *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

### ❖ **Chapter or article in an edited collection**

Coady, J. (1979) A psycholinguistic model of the ESL reader. In R. Mackay, B. Barkman and R. R. Jordan (eds.) *Teaching Reading Skills* (pp. 219-223). London: Longman.

### ❖ **Dictionaries and encyclopaedias**

*Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture* (1992) Essex: Longman.

### ❖ **Doctoral dissertations**

Thompson, P. (2001) *A Pedagogically-Motivated Corpus-Based Examination of PhD Theses: Macrostructure, Citation Practices and Uses of Modal Verbs*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Reading: University of Reading.

❖ **Government and legal documents**

Department of the Environment (2013) *Clean Air*. Available from <http://www.environment.gov.au/cleaner-environment/clean-air.html> [Accessed on 5 November 2021].

*Child Safety Legislation Amendment Act 2005* (Qld).

❖ **Journal or magazine article**

Name of author	Year of publication	Title	Journal	Volume	Number/issue	Page numbers
Brown, B.	(1994)	Reading for research.	<i>Journal of Education</i> ,	1	(1)	21-24.

**Note:** References to different items by the same author in the same year have letters a, b, etc. added to the year, for example,

Monaghan, J. and Ellis, A. W. (2002a) What, exactly, interacts with spelling-sound consistency in word naming? *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory & Cognition*, 28: 183-206.

Monaghan, J. and Ellis, A. W. (2002b) Age of acquisition and the completeness of phonological representations. *Reading and Writing*, 15: 759-788.

❖ **Online sources (1)**

Online sources are referred in the same way as printed sources, but added their URL (Internet address) after *Available from*, and the date when they were viewed or downloaded after *Accessed on* in square brackets; for example,

Brown, B. (2003) *Research*. London: University of London. Available from <http://www.oup.com/elt/global/> [Accessed on 2 January 2021].

Kelly, P. (2010) Labor leadership change rewrites rulebook. *Australian*, 24 June. Available from <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/labor-leadership-change-rewrites-rulebook/story-e6frg74x-1225883864100> 7 [Accessed on 7 July 2021].

**Note:** If there is no publishing date, n.d. is written instead of the year, for example, Streefkerk, R. (n.d.) APA citation guidelines. *Scribbr*. Available from <https://www.scribbr.com/category/apa-style/> [Accessed on 7 October 2022].

❖ **Online sources (2)**

A separate list of **Online sources** is numbered anew in order of the source appearance in the text, for example,

1) [Online 1] Available from <http://www.oup.com/elt/global/> [Accessed on 2 January 2021].

❖ **Films**

*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) [Film] Directed by: Chris Columbus.  
USA: Warner Brothers.

Other relevant details can be added, for example,

*Pride and Prejudice* (1995) [Film] BBC/A&E mini-series, (300 min). Directed by  
Simon Langton; Screenplay by Andrew Davies.

❖ **DVD and video**

*Life of Campus* (2006) [DVD] London: Imperial College London.

Fragile Earth, 5 (1982) *South American Wetland: Pantanal*. [Video: VHS]. Henley:  
Watchword Video.

If the Video/DVD publication year is different from the film release year, then the year of publication is also indicated in the square brackets. If the producer (here the manufacturer of the disc) differs from the original producer, this information is mentioned as well; for example,

*Pride and Prejudice* (1995) BBC/A&E mini-series, 6 parts (300 min). [DVD 2002,  
AVG Videos]. Directed by Simon Langton; Screenplay by Andrew Davies.

❖ **TV recordings**

World in action (1995) *All Work and No Play*. [Video: VHS]. London, ITV, 21<sup>st</sup>  
January 1996.

❖ **CD-ROMs**

CD-ROM entries usually start with the author or editor or the title of a particular text:  
James, A. (2002) Heart attack. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. [CD-ROM]. London:  
Encyclopaedia Britannica.

❖ **Analysed texts**

For the analysed texts, the list of references has a separate heading **Analysed texts**, aligned left, 12 pt. Each item starts with the acronym chosen by you (e.g., T1, A1, etc.).

A sample of the list of references is provided below.

## References

- 1) Flower, R. (1991) *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- 2) Julian, P. M. (2011) Appraising through someone else's words: The evaluative power of quotations in news reports. *Discourse & Society*, 22 (6): 766–780. Available from

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0957926511411697> [Accessed on 12 February 2020].

3) ...

### **Online sources**

1) [Online 1] Available from <https://www.cambridge.org/core> [Accessed on 12 February 2020].

2) ...

### **Analysed texts**

1) [T 1] Elliot, L. (2019) George Soros: China is using tech advances to repress its people. *The Guardian*, 24 January. Available from <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/jan/24/george-soros-china-using-tech-advances-to-repress-its-people> [Accessed on 12 February 2020].

2) [T 2] Graham, R. (2017) Global press freedom plunges to worst level this century. *The Guardian*, 30 November. Available from <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2017/nov/30/press-freedom-at-all-time-low-journalist-safety-article-19-v-dem-study> [Accessed on 12 February 2020].

## 12. GLOSSARY (optional)

Glossary may contain definitions of the key terms. It is given only when the term is:

- ❖ often used ambiguously in the research area;
- ❖ too general and needs to be specified.

## 13. APPENDIX/APPENDICES (optional)

Appendices include materials relevant to the research but too voluminous to appear in the body of the BA thesis, such as, for example, text corpora, questionnaires, used or designed language acquisition materials, visual aids, less important tables and figures, and other kinds of illustrative materials. Appendices are provided with appropriate headings and numbered, for example,

### **Appendix 1: Lesson Plan**

14. ATTESTATION PAGE (Dokumentārā lapa) (see Appendix 5)



## FORMATTING

The text is formatted according to the following requirements:

- ❖ A4 paper, 2.0 cm top, bottom, and right margins, and 3.0 cm left margin
- ❖ main text: Times New Roman, 12 pt. regular, aligned left, indent 1.5 cm (except the first paragraph), 1.5 spaced, no extra space between paragraphs
- ❖ headings: Times New Roman, 14 pt. bold, centred, title case
- ❖ subheadings: Times New Roman, 12 pt. bold, aligned left, sentence case
- ❖ long quotations: Times New Roman, 12 pt. regular, single spaced, 1-cm indented
- ❖ captions and text of tables and figures: Times New Roman, 11 pt. regular, single spaced
- ❖ footnotes (better avoided): Times New Roman, 10 pt. regular
- ❖ page numbers: Times New Roman, 12 pt. regular, centred (see Appendix 4). The numbering starts with the list of abbreviations and acronyms (if any) or the introduction.
- ❖ if required, printed single sided

### Chapters and subchapters

Each chapter starts on a new page and contains at least two subchapters, if used. Headings are written in title case and subheadings in sentence case, both in bold and without a full stop at the end. Subchapters do not start on a new page, but an empty line is left before and after each subheading.

### Abbreviations and acronyms

The first time an abbreviation or an acronym is used, the term is spelt out in full, with the abbreviation/acronym shown in brackets immediately afterwards, e.g., English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Further on, only the abbreviation/acronym is used.

### Tables and figures

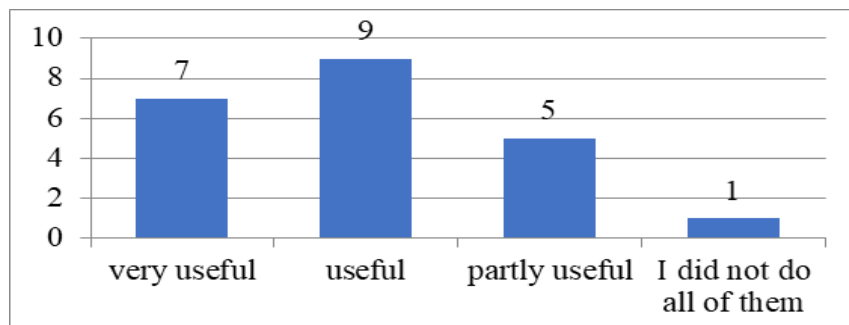
Tables are referred to as *Tables*, while anything pictorial (be it a graph or a photograph) is called a *Figure*. Tables and figures are similarly numbered by chapter and with no reference to subchapters. Thus, the first figure (even if it is the only one) in chapter two will be Figure 2.1, the first table in chapter two – Table 2.1, the second table – Table 2.2, and so on. If the fourth table/figure is inserted in subchapter 3.1.1, it will still be Table 3.4 / Figure 3.4.

**Note:** In captions, the words *Table* and *Figure* are written in italics whereas they are regular in the text (e.g., Table 1.1 presents the findings...). The caption itself is in bold, with table

captions written above and figure captions written below the representation (see the examples below).

*Table 1.1 Linking words and phrases* (Swales and Feak, 1994: 22)

Heading	Heading
Text	Text



*Figure 1.1 The students' opinion on the use of the tasks (N of students)*

### In-text citations

❖ **Quoting, paraphrasing and summarising** words or ideas, the author(s)'s surname(s), the year of publication and the page number(s) are credited, e.g.,

- 'The study of "speaker meaning" is called pragmatics' (Yule, 1996: 3).
- '[...] "All my books investigate the end of Eden and the possibility of its reconstruction"' (Doucornet, 1999: 3, quoted in Trendel, 2013: 106).
- 'The learners' results, rather than being limited to a numeric grade, provide meaningful feedback and promote learning' (Brown and Hudson, 1998, discussed in Czura, 2013: 22).

❖ If there are **more than three authors**, all their names appear when a reference to the source is made for the first time. Then, only the first author is mentioned followed by *et al.*, for example, (Ding et al., 2018)

❖ If a reference is made to **two different items by the same author in the same year**, *a* or *b* is added to the year, for example, (Ellis, 2002a, 2002b).

❖ If **more than one source** is cited, they are placed in chronological rather than alphabetical order.

A number of research studies have been conducted into the effect of motivation on language acquisition (Smith, 1995; Brown, 1997; Anderson, 2002).

If more than one work by the same author are cited, the name is followed by all years of their publications, for example, (Ellis, 1998, 2011).

❖ If a quotation is translated, the translator's name is mentioned in brackets (e.g., translated by Ozols). If the translation is done by you, write 'translated by the author' instead.

❖ If there is **no publishing date**, n. d. is written instead of the year, for example, (Brown, n. d.: 5).

❖ If reference is to **the whole work**, a page number is not necessary.

Stern (1983) argues that the language user knows the rules governing his native language.

❖ If a reference to a **course book is made** in the body of the text and its title is long, then the first three words are cited which are followed by three dots.

❖ When a **literary work** is first introduced in the text, the title and the author are mentioned, but the publication date may be omitted. Referring to the book under analysis, only page numbers are used.

❖ For a text produced by an **organisation**, the name of the organisation (the corporate author) is used instead of the author's surname, for example, (Ministry of Education and Science, 2021).

❖ If the author of a **video/audio recording** is not known, the title and the year of release are cited.

*World in Action* (2002) depicts ...

❖ The beginning of the **exact scene** is indicated by adding minutes and seconds.

'Mrs. Bennet: You should have seen how handsome and elegant he is!' (*Pride and Prejudice*, 1940: 5' 02").

❖ **Short quotations** are incorporated into the text.

According to Jordan, 'It is important to acknowledge the source of the quotations; otherwise, you may be accused of plagiarism' (Jordan, 2001: 98).

**Note:** When quoting, single quotation marks are used. When the quoted material contains yet another quotation, the second quotation is enclosed in double quotation marks, e.g.,

Bach and Harnish (1982: 188) argue that "“speak colloquially” is almost as empty as “speak idiomatically” is obscure if it has nothing to do with using idioms’.

❖ **Longer quotations** (more than three lines in length) are set out separately. They are single-spaced and indented from the left-hand margin by 1 cm and written without any quotation marks, e.g.,

Jordan considers that

the *main features* [italics added] of academic writing are as follows: it is formal in an impersonal [...] style (often using impersonal pronouns and phrases and passive verb forms); cautious language [may, might, would, can, could, seem, appear a. o.] is frequently used in reporting research and making claims. (Jordan, 2000: 88)

❖ To add words to an original quotation, square brackets are used. An ellipsis in square brackets, i.e. [...], is used to show that part of the quotation has been omitted.

❖ To refer to a **website without the author and the title**, the word Online and the source number in the order of its appearance in the text is used, for example,

A number of research studies have been conducted into the effect of motivation on language acquisition (Online 3).

❖ To refer to a website with an author, but no page numbers, Online is written instead of the page numbers, for example, (Brown, 2010: Online), (Brown, n.d.: Online).

❖ **ibid.** *is used* to avoid repeating the author's or source name if the same page of the same source is referred to several times in a row, for example,

Quotations are the exact words of the author, which are accurate, with the same punctuation and spelling (ibid.).

**Note:** If the page number is different, it is added as in, for example, (ibid.: 1-2).

❖ In order to cite the analysed texts, acronyms may be used after they are properly introduced; for example,

Thirty articles (henceforth As) were chosen for analysis. The volume of A1 and A2 was....

❖ Similarly, all sample sentences are introduced first, for example,

As shown in Example 1 (henceforth E1), the link verbs were used most frequently (15 instances out of 30) in the present simple tense:

[1] She's a very charming and pretty girl. [A1]

❖ To highlight key words in samples or terms in a text, *italics* is used.

# Appendix 1

## Application (typed)

Humanitāro zinātņu fakultāte

Anglistikas nodaļas vadītājam

\_\_\_\_\_  
(vārds, uzvārds)

\_\_\_\_\_ bakalaura studiju programmas

\_\_\_\_\_ semestra studenta/es

\_\_\_\_\_  
(vārds, uzvārds)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(studenta apliecības Nr.)

iesniegums.

Lūdzu apstiprināt bakalaura darba tematu (nosaukums jānorāda latviešu un angļu valodā):

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Darba vadītājs: \_\_\_\_\_  
(vārds, uzvārds)

Rīgā, \_\_\_\_\_  
(datums)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(studenta paraksts)

Saskaņots: \_\_\_\_\_  
(darba vadītāja paraksts)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(datums)

Apstiprinu: Nodaļas vadītāja \_\_\_\_\_  
(paraksts)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(datums)

**Appendix 2**  
**Cover of the Bachelor's Thesis**

LATVIJAS UNIVERSITĀTE

**BAKALaura DARBS**

RĪGA 2021

**Appendix 3**

**Title Page**

UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES

[16 pt., centred]

**TITLE IN ENGLISH**

[18 pt., bold, centred]

**TITLE IN LATVIAN**

[16 pt., bold, centred]

**BACHELOR'S THESIS**

[16 pt., centred]

**Name, Surname**

[14 pt., bold]

Matriculation card No. ....

Adviser: prof./assoc. prof./assist. prof./ lect. Inta Liepa

[14 pt., align right]

**RĪGA 2023**

[16 pt., centred]

**Appendix 4**  
**Contents Page (created automatically)**

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## Appendix 5

### Dokumentārā lapa

Bakalaura darbs „Nosaukums angļu valodā” (Nosaukums latviešu valodā) izstrādāts LU Humanitāro zinātņu fakultātē.

Ar savu parakstu apliecinu, ka pētījums veikts patstāvīgi, izmantoti tikai tajā norādītie informācijas avoti un iesniegtā darba elektroniskā kopija atbilst izdrukai.

Autors: Ieva Kalna *I.Kalna* 15. 05. 2023.

Rekomendēju/nerekomendēju darbu aizstāvēšanai

Vadītāja: profesore Dr. Philol. Inta Kalniņa *I.Kalnina* 15. 05. 2023.

Recenzents: docents Dr. Philol. Jānis Bērziņš

Studiju metodiķe: Ineta Bērziņa *I.Berzina* 20. 05. 2023.

Darbs iesniegts Anglistikas nodaļā 20. 05. 2023.

Darbu pieņēma:

Darbs aizstāvēts bakalaura gala pārbaudījuma komisijas sēdē

2023. gada..... jūnijā, prot. Nr. ...., vērtējums .....

Komisijas sekretāre: lektore Anda Kociņa *A.Kociņa*

**Approved by:**

Department of English Studies

**31 August 2022**