



The structure of academic texts

Academic texts have a clearly defined structure. This is especially evident in (empirical) research articles. Sorting out the different parts of the text while reading such an article will help you internalise this structure for your own texts.

The following exercise is based on an overview by Otto Kruse (2018), Lesen und Schreiben, p. 113f.

Find a current research article published by one of your lecturers in an academic journal. Identify the following parts in the text and copy them into the pdf.

Bibliographical details on the text you are using:

| Part of the text | Content | This is what it looks like in your lecturer's text |
|---|---|--|
| Introduction | What is it about? | |
| | What is the topic of the article? | |
| | What is the problem? | |
| | What is unsolved, controversial, in need of clarification or unknown? | |
| | Which specialist discipline is the topic being discussed from? | |
| | Research question: What does this text provide an answer for? | |
| | Aim: Why is this useful, what is the purpose? | |
| | State of research: What knowledge / which research does this text tie on to? | |
| Research gap: What is still unknown? | | |



| | |
|---|--|
| Approach | <p>What exactly was the approach to arrive at a solution?</p> <p>Which data was collected, and how was it evaluated?</p> <p>Which material was studied, analysed, interpreted?</p> |
| Results | <p>Presentation of the main aspects, broken down by content</p> |
| Discussion of the results and conclusions | <p>Results as an answer to the research question</p> <p>Interpretation and discussion of the results</p> <p>What is particularly important?</p> <p>What remains unclear?</p> <p>What significance do the results have for future research?</p> <p>What is the next step?</p> <p>Which further research should be undertaken?</p> |

To follow on: Think about your own writing assignment. Should your text also follow this pattern or are there differences?

If you have already written a text: Ask someone to check the structure of your text based on this exercise. Are the different parts of the text clearly discernible or do they need to be made even clearer?