

OBJECTIVE OF THE HANDOUT

This handout will help you:

1. Identify what verb tenses you need to have in reports.
2. Use verb tenses accurately in your reports.

TECHNICAL EXPLANATION OF VERB TENSES IN REPORTS

What are verb tenses?

Verbs in your reports tell readers when the action took place, whether in the past, present, or future. In your report, you can use all three tenses, depending on the meaning and context that you want to communicate about.

When can you use each tense in reports?

- **Past:** Use the past tense to describe actions that already happened, or what already took place in an experiment.
*e.g., We **conducted** a field experiment between 2005 and 2012.*
- **Present:** Use the present tense for the following purposes:
 - 1) to describe facts or statements of the general knowledge accepted in your field.
 - 2) to describe findings.
 - 3) to describe observations about current operating conditions or a final product.
 - 4) to refer to figures and tables in the report.*e.g., Our study **demonstrates** the importance of obtaining regionally appropriate carbon storage estimates.*
- **Future:** Use the future tense to discuss operations or experiments that are yet to be conducted.
*e.g., Conserving forests **will be** a key environmental challenge as society strives to adapt to climate change.*

EXAMPLE TO EXPLAIN EFFECTIVE USE OF VERB TENSES IN REPORTS

Consider the tenses used in the report abstract below:

Venturi meter **are** widely **used** in the production industry as flow measuring instruments. In this report, we **investigated** the applicability of Bernoulli equation all throughout the venturi-meter.

Here, the present is used to state facts and the past tense is used to report experiments that took place.

Using the modified generalized autoregressive conditional heteroskedasticity mixed data sampling (GARCH-MIDAS) and dynamic conditional correlation missed data sampling (DCC-MIDAS) specifications, we **find** that GEPU **is** positively related to the long-run volatility of Financials and Consumer Discretionary industries; however, it **is** negatively related to Information Technology, Materials, Telecommunications Services, and Energy.

Here, the present tense is used to describe findings.

Our results **will help** policy makers and investors make better decisions.

Here, the future tense is used to describe possible uses.

TAKEAWAYS

- ☐ Verb tenses vary depending on the meaning that you are trying to communicate.
- ☐ When in doubt about the appropriate tense to use, try to consult sample papers in your specific engineering discipline.