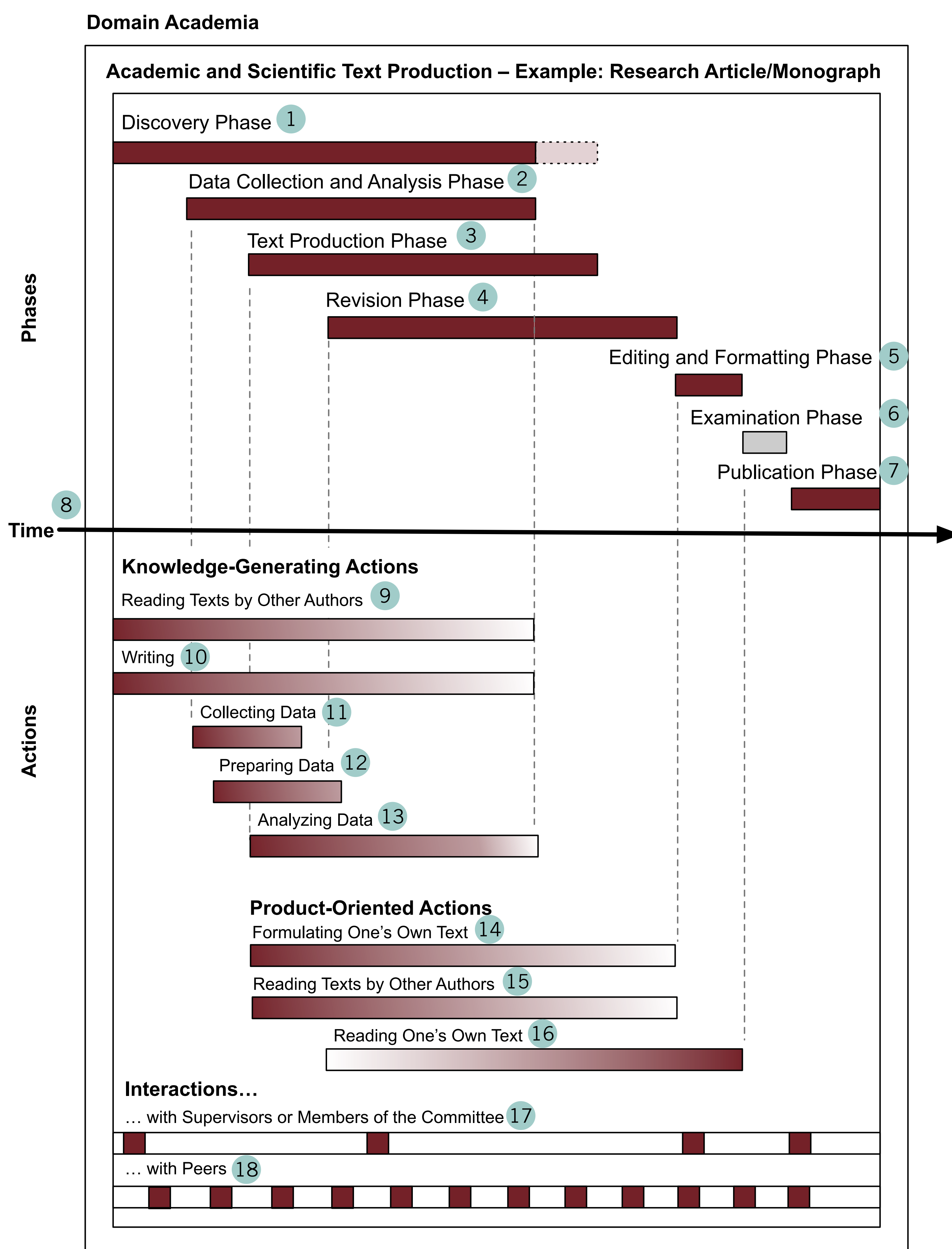


# The Cascade Model of Academic and Scientific Text Production

**Function** Writers can use this model to reflect on their ideas about and their approach to writing, specifically habits, practices, and actions at different stages in the process. Ideally, writers will then identify both specific actions they could take to move their project forward and alternatives if they do not make any progress.

**Premise** By pinpointing exactly where they are in the process (phase and point in time), writers can make an informed decision regarding the next steps in their writing project.

**Theory** The process of academic and scientific text production involves several overlapping phases. The time required to complete a phase may vary from person to person. For example, the first phase, the **Discovery Phase**, may, for some writers, continue almost until the end of the third phase (**Text Production Phase**) (but not longer). Reading, writing, and talking about writing are basic actions of academic text production, and each of these actions has several purposes. For instance, writing can be a means of generating new insights (**epistemic-heuristic writing**) or of communicating one's ideas with a specific audience in mind.



### Characteristics of Phases

- 1 Writers have to get an overview of a debate or field while also developing a specific research question for their texts. For some writers, this phase can be fairly long.
- 2 Decisions with regard to methodology must be made, although the aims of the project and/or the research question might still be somewhat vague.
- 3 Writers have to reconcile the need to write something down (thereby committing to a broad outline of a project) with the desire to keep their options open.
- 4 Some writers revise their work extensively whereas others reorganize and rewrite very little or not at all.
- 5 Preparing the document for printing (cover page, generating the table of contents, etc.). Do not underestimate the time needed.
- 6 The text is graded or evaluated by reviewers. In the case of a thesis or dissertation, writers also have to defend their project in front of a committee.
- 7 The publication phase is part of the doctoral thesis process (note the difference between monograph and cumulative thesis).

- 8 **Time**  
Always seems to pass more quickly before a deadline; anxiety and doubts increase as the deadline approaches.

### Purposes of Actions

- 9 ... to acquire knowledge; to gain an overview of the literature
- 10 ... to develop ideas and to clarify one's thinking; this is often referred to as epistemic-heuristic writing
- 11 ... to collect data
- 12 ... to prepare data for analysis
- 13 ... to gain new insights from data
- 14 ... to produce a text (that could be turned in)
- 15 ... to revisit knowledge that one intends to use
- 16 ... to compare where the text is at to where it needs to be
- 17 ... to discuss the expectations, goals, and the like; to make sure one is on the right track
- 18 ... to clarify one's thoughts, get emotional support, get feedback on parts of the text, etc.

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