Preparing for the Viva Voce (and nailing the reflection)

What is the Viva-Voce?
The Latin means, literally, “with living voice,” though it’s generally translated as “by word of mouth.”

For our purposes it is the opportunity for you to look back at your process and evaluate your successes…and lack of success! Specifically, it is a 15-20 minute conversation with your supervisor about your process, what you learned, and what you take away.

Good topics for discussion include:

- The effectiveness of your RQ
- Your research methodology
- Significant problems you encountered (and how you dealt with them)
- Strengths and weaknesses of your analysis
- What you learned about the nature of your discipline (Think TOK!)
- Questions you still have

How to Prepare

The Viva Voce will be more meaningful for you if you take the time to prepare some points for discussion.

1. Choose one or two parts of your EE of which you are proud or which were troublesome. Discuss why.
2. Did the focus of your RQ change? Why? What made that better?
3. Choose an especially relevant source. How did it add to or change your thinking?
4. Look back over your process. Where were the big stumbling blocks? What made them difficult? How did you deal with them?
5. Ask your supervisor for ideas on how s/he would like you to prepare.

Nutshell version

Meet! Have fun!

- What did I used to think?
- What do I think now?
- What changed my way of thinking?
- How did that impact my EE?

Writing the Reflection

The V-V asks you to step back and look at the broader meaning of your research and your journey. Your reflection should ANALYZE your process, not describe it. Of your three reflections, use 250-300 of your word limit here.

My approach worked well and I’m proud to have produced a final draft that looked at both film techniques and historical context. My final draft focused more heavily on the bicycle as a critical visual symbol, which better developed the bewilderment and frustration of the protagonists as they attempt to gain authority over their lives. Through the EE, I have realized and gained a renewed appreciation for film as social commentary and to better appreciate Chinese directors and films. Were I to continue, I would like to make better use of Chinese sources, especially Chinese ones, to see if they offer a different, more insightful examination of the films. This would have created a more balanced and well-substantiated essay.

Anatomy of the V-V Reflection

- Analyzes changes in approach and its impact on essay
- Evaluates areas for continued improvement
- Addresses changes in understanding of discipline conventions
- Evaluates areas for continued improvement
- Explains the impact of the above on the essay/process