الدراسات والبحوث الانجليزية

Practical Solutions to problems Encountered by Postgraduate Students in English Department at Libyan Academy for Higher Studies in Documenting References

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Introduction

A careful examination of the assignments and the dissertations written by some of the postgraduate students shows that they had problems in citing references. Problems such as mixing the systems and misusing of the rules of citing sources either in-text or in the list of references are apparent in their writing. In order to overcome theses problems, firstly, students should understand the importance of citing references. The question a student might raise here is, why bother with citing references? In fact, there is more than one reason for citing references. First, you must give credit to the author for the ideas you have chosen to use; second, to enable those who read your work to locate your sources easily; and third, to demonstrate the body of knowledge upon which your research is based.

The present paper discusses these problems and analyzes some examples of incorrectly cited sources. The paper also draws attention to other examples of inconsistent use of referencing systems. It also explains the variations among the different referencing systems and compares the three most used systems (Harvard System, APA (American Psychological Association) Style, and MLA (Modern Language Association) system. Finally, it draws some conclusions from the research analysis which might help postgraduate students in understanding how to cite their sources accurately and consistently.

Systems and Styles of Referencing and Citing

In order to overcome such problems, students need to recognize the differences among the referencing systems types, and to be aware of the

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variations within each. Students should check with their tutors or supervisors which system is used in their department and also ask if there are any guidelines available.

In fact, there are many citation/reference systems, such as, Harvard System, APA (American Psychological Association) Style, MLA (Modern Language Association) system, GB 7714, GOST - Name Sort, GOST - Title Sort, ISO 690 - First Element and Date, ISO 690 - First Numerical Reference, SIST02, and Turabian. Whichever system you choose, it is important to follow a format that is clear and consistent, i.e. do not mix the systems.

Citing and Referencing

The process of citing references consists of two interrelated parts:

a) Citing - the way a writer refers in the text to the sources used (i.e. the references)

b) Referencing - the process of creating a bibliographic description of each source. This means the provision of a consistent description of elements needed to identify a source: author, date, title, publisher, etc.

In this section, the three systems mentioned earlier, will be highlighted and explained since they are the most commonly used in language schools. These systems are Harvard System, APA (American Psychological Association) Style, and MLA (Modern Language Association) system. Before discussing these three systems it is worth mentioning that all statements, opinions, conclusions etc. taken from another writer's work should be cited, whether the work is directly quoted, paraphrased or summarised.

Because of the limitation of time and scope of the present research, only four types of sources will be highlighted which students use and need the most. These sources are *1.books, 2.articles, 3.dissertations or theses and 4.material from the Web.*

1- Harvard System

Harvard System is the most commonly used and preferred by the majority of universities and departments. The following are examples of how to cite references according to this system.

a. Citation in the Text (Author-date method)

In the Harvard System, cited publications are referred to in the text by giving *the author's surname* and *the year of publication* in one of the form shown below. If details of particular parts of a document are required, e.g. *page numbers*, they should be given after the year within the parenthesis.

- If the author's name occurs naturally in the sentence the year is given in the parenthesis:- e.g. In a popular study, Harvey (1992, P.556) argued that...

- If however, the name does not occur naturally in the sentence, both name and year are given in the parenthesis:- e.g. More recent studies (Barlett 1996; James 1998) show that...

- When an author has published more than one cited document in the same year, these are distinguished by adding lower case letters (a, b, c etc) after the year and within the parenthesis: - e.g. Johnson (1994a) discussed the subject ...

- If there are two authors, the surnames of both should be given: - e.g. Matthews and Jones (1993) have proposed that ...

- If there are more than two authors the surname of the first author only should be given, followed by et al:- e.g. Wilson et al. (1997) conclude that...

- If there is no originator then "Anon" should be used: - e.g. A recent article (Anon 1993) stated that...

- If you refer to a source quoted in another work you cite both in the text: - e.g. A study by Smith (1960 cited in Jones 1994 p.24) showed that ...

  (You need to list the work you have used, i.e. Jones, in the main bibliography)

- Page Numbers

  If you are referring to the overall argument of a book or article, do not use page numbers: e.g. "Nunan (1986) presents many different varieties of syllabus"

If, however, you are referring to a specific point within a book or article, mention the page number(s),

e.g. "Allwright (1982 p.56) provides an example of intervention in a lesson."

- Quotations:-

A short quotation of less than a line may be included in the body of the text in quotation marks, but if it is longer, a new line is started and indented. A page number must be included.

e.g.: .... therefore "good practice must be taught" (Smith 1996 P.15) and we should...

Or: "Theory rises out of practice, and once validated, returns to direct or explain the practice". (Stevens 1997, P.92)

b. The bibliography at the end of a piece of work (Reference list)

The term bibliography describes references to cited documents given in a list at the end of the text. In some departments, the bibliography is called a references list and there is a separate bibliography of works that have been read but not cited.

In the Harvard System, the references are listed in alphabetical order of authors' surnames. If more than one item have been cited by a specific author they should be listed chronologically (earliest first), and by letter (1993a, 1993b) if more than one item has been published during a specific year. Whenever possible, elements of a bibliographical reference should be taken from the title page of the publication.

The following are examples of citing different types of published works in the list of references. Observe citing the elements and punctuation carefully.

- **Reference to a book -** Elements to cite:

Author's Surname, Initials.,

Year of publication.

Title.

Edition. (if not the first)

Publisher.

e.g. Mercer, P. A. and Smith, G., 1993. <u>Private view data in the UK.</u> 2nd ed. London: Longman.

- **Reference to a contribution in a book -** Elements to cite:

Contributing author's Surname, Initials.,

Year of publication.

Title of contribution. Followed by *In*

Initials. Surname, of author or editor of publication by ed. Or eds. if relevant

<u>Title of book</u>

Place of publication:

Publisher,

Page number(s) of contribution

e,g. Bantz, C.R., 1995. Social dimensions of software development. *In.* J.A. Anderson, ed. <u>Annual review of software management and development</u>. Newbury Park, C: Sage, 502-510.

- ## Reference to an article in a journal

Elements to cite:

Author's Surname, Initials.,

Year of publication.

Title of the article

<u>Title of journal</u>

Volume number and (part number),

Page numbers of contribution.

e.g. Evans, W.A., 1994, Approaches to intelligent information retrieval. <u>Information processing and management,</u> 7 (2), 147-168

- **Reference to a thesis -** Elements to cite:

Author's Surname, Initials.,

Year of publication.

Title of thesis

Name of institution to which submitted.

e.g. Elmojahed, A. A., 2007. The impact of using Authentic Texts on Teaching Reading in an EFL setting in an English Department at a Libyan University. Thesis (PhD). Newcastle University. U.K.

For citing material from the Web, two additional pieces of information are usually needed:

1. The electronic address or URL of the site (e.g. http ://...)

2. the date you accessed the site or database

2- APA (American Psychological Association) Style

a - In-Text Citations (Author-date method)

According to the American Psychological Association (2000) APA style requires authors to use the past tense or present perfect tense when using signal phrases to describe earlier research, for example, Jones (1998) **found** or Jones (1998) **has found**...

When using APA format, follow the author-date method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the year of publication for the source should appear in the text, for example, (Jones, 1998), and a complete reference should appear in the reference list at the end of the paper.

If you are referring to an idea from another work but **NOT** directly quoting the material, or making reference to an entire book, article or other work, you only have to make reference to the author and year of publication and not the page number in your in-text reference.

In-Text Citation Capitalization, Quotes, and Italics/Underlining

As Zemach et al. (2011:71) indicate, "a citation is a very important sign that tells readers two things simultaneously: you are both an honest and careful researcher." Note how simple citing a source can be.

- Always capitalize proper nouns, including author names and initials: D. Jones.

- If you refer to the title of a source within your paper, capitalize all words that are four letters long or greater within the title of a source: *Permanence and Change*. Exceptions apply to short words that are verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs: *Writing New Media*, *There Is Nothing Left to Lose*.

In your References list, however, only the first word of a title will be capitalized: Writing new media.)

- When capitalizing titles, capitalize both words in a hyphenated compound word: *Natural-Born Cyborgs*.

- Capitalize the first word after a dash or colon: "Defining Film Rhetoric: The Case of Hitchcock's *Vertigo*."

- Italicize or underline the titles of longer works such as books, edited collections, movies, television series, documentaries, or albums: *The Closing of the American Mind*; *The Wizard of Oz*; *Friends*.

- Put quotation marks around the titles of shorter works such as journal articles, articles from edited collections, television series episodes, and song titles: "Multimedia Narration: Constructing Possible Worlds"; "The One Where Chandler Can't Cry."

Short Quotations

If a quoting is directly quoted from a work, the author, year of publication, and the page number for the reference (preceded by "p.") should be included. The quotation should be introduced with a signal phrase that includes the author's last name followed by the date of publication in parentheses; e.g. According to Jones (1998), "Students often had difficulty

using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 199).

If the author is not named in a signal phrase, the author's last name, the year of publication, and the page number should be placed in parentheses

after the quotation: She stated, "Students often had difficulty using APA style" (Jones, 1998, p. 199), but she did not offer an

explanation as to why.

Long Quotations

Direct quotations that are 40 words, or longer, should be placed in a free-standing block of typewritten lines, and quotation marks must be omitted. The quotation must be started in a new line, indented 1/2 inch from the left margin, i.e., in the same place you would begin a new paragraph. The entire quotation must be typed on the new margin, and the first line of any subsequent paragraph should be indented within the quotation 1/2 inch from the new margin. The indent block should be single-spaced. The parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark.

Jones's (1998) study found the following:

> Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time citing sources. This difficulty could be attributed to the fact that many students failed to purchase a style manual or to ask their teacher for help. (p. 199)

Summary or Paraphrase

If you are paraphrasing an idea from another work, you only have to make reference to the author and year of publication in your in-text reference, but APA guidelines encourage you to also provide the page number (although it is not required.)

According to Jones (1998), APA style is a difficult citation format for first-time   learners.
APA style is a difficult citation format for first-time learners (Jones, 1998:199).

Citing an Author or Authors

A Work by Two Authors: Name both authors in the signal phrase or in the parentheses each time you cite the work. Use the word "and" between the authors' names within the text and use the ampersand in the parentheses. Research by Wegener and Petty (1994) supports...

(Wegener & Petty, 1994)

A Work by Three to Five Authors: List all the authors in the signal phrase or in parentheses the first time you cite the source.   (Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1993)

In subsequent citations, only use the first author's last name followed by "et al." in the signal phrase or in parentheses.

(Kernis et al., 1993)   In *et al.*, *et* should not be followed by a period.

Six or More Authors: Use the first author's name followed by et al. in the signal phrase or in parentheses.   Harris et al. (2001) argued...   (Harris et al., 2001)

Unknown Author: If the work does not have an author, cite the source by its title in the signal phrase or use the first word or two in the parentheses. Titles of books and reports are italicized or underlined; titles of articles, chapters, and web pages are in quotation marks.

A similar study was done of students learning to format research papers ("Using APA," 2001). In the rare case the "Anonymous" is used for the author, treat it as the author's name (Anonymous, 2001). In the reference list, use the name Anonymous as the author.

Organization as an Author: If the author is an organization or a government agency, mention the organization in the signal phrase or in the parenthetical citation the first time you cite the source. According to the American Psychological Association (2000)

If the organization has a well-known abbreviation, include the abbreviation in brackets the first time the source is cited and then use only the abbreviation in later citations.

First citation: (Mothers Against Drunk Driving [MADD], 2000)

Second citation: (MADD, 2000)

Two or More Works in the Same Parentheses: When your parenthetical citation includes two or more works, order them the same way they appear in the reference list, separated by a semi-colon, e.g. (Berndt, 2002; Harlow, 1983)

Authors with the Same Last Name: To prevent confusion, use first initials with the last names. (E. Johnson, 2001; L. Johnson, 1998)

Two or More Works by the Same Author in the Same Year: If you have two sources by the same author in the same year, use lower-case letters (a, b, c) with the year to order the entries in the reference list. Use the lower-case letters with the year in the in-text citation.

Research by Berndt (1981a) illustrated that...

Citing Indirect Sources

If you use a source that was cited in another source, name the original source in your signal phrase. List the secondary source in your reference list and include the secondary source in the parentheses.   Johnson argued that... (as cited in Smith, 2003, p. 102).

Note: When citing material in parentheses, set off the citation with a comma, as above. Also, try to locate the original material and cite the original source.

Unknown Author and Unknown Date: If no author or date is given, use the title in your signal phrase or the first word or two of the title in the parentheses and use the abbreviation "n.d." (for "no date"), e.g. Another study of students and research decisions discovered that students succeeded with tutoring ("Tutoring and APA," n.d.).

b) Reference List: Basic Rules

Your references should begin on a new page separate from the text of the essay; label this page "References" centred at the top of the page (do NOT bold, underline, or use quotation marks for the title). All text should be double-spaced just like the rest of your essay.

Basic Rules

- All lines after the first line of each entry in your reference list should be indented one-half inch from the left margin. This is called hanging indentation.

- Authors' names are inverted (last name first); give the last name and initials for all authors of a particular work for up to seven authors. If the work has more than seven authors, list the first six authors and then use ellipses after the sixth author's name. After the ellipses, list the last author's name of the work.

- Reference list entries should be alphabetized by the last name of the first author of each work.

- For multiple articles by the same author, or authors listed in the same order, list the entries in chronological order, from earliest to most recent.

- Present the journal title in full.

- Maintain the punctuation and capitalization that is used by the journal in its title.

  o For example: *ReCALL* not *RECALL* or *Knowledge Management Research & Practice* not *Knowledge Management Research and Practice.*

- Capitalize all major words in journal titles.

- When referring to books, chapters, articles, or Web pages, capitalize only the first letter of the first word of a title and subtitle, the first word after a colon or a dash in the title, and proper nouns. Do not capitalize the first letter of the second word in a hyphenated compound word.

- Italicize titles of longer works such as books and journals.

- Do not italicize, underline, or put quotes around the titles of shorter works such as journal articles or essays in edited collections.

Reference List: Author/Authors

The following rules for handling works by a single author or multiple authors apply to all APA-style references in your reference list, regardless of the type of work (book, article, electronic resource, etc.)

Single Author Last name first, followed by author initials.

Berndt, T. J. (2002). Friendship quality and social development. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 7-10.

Two Authors List by their last names and initials. Use the ampersand instead of "and."

Wegener, D. T., & Petty, R. E. (1994). Mood management across affective states: The hedonic contingency hypothesis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 66*, 1034-1048.

Three to Seven Authors

List by last names and initials; commas separate author names, while the last author name is preceded again by ampersand.
Kernis, M. H., Cornell, D. P., Sun, C. R., Berry, A., Harlow, T., & Bach, J. S. (1993). There's more to self-esteem than whether it is high or low: The importance of stability of self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 65*, 1190-1204.

More Than Seven Authors

List by last names and initials; commas separate author names. After the sixth author's name, use an ellipsis in place of the author names. Then provide the final author name. There should be no more than seven names.

Miller, F. H., Choi, M. J., Angeli, L. L., Harland, A. A., Stamos, J. A., Thomas, S. T., . . . Rubin, L. H. (2009). Web site usability for the blind and low-vision user. *Technical Communication, 57*, 323-335.

Unknown Author

Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (10th ed.).(1993). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.

Two or More Works by the Same Author

Use the author's name for all entries and list the entries by the year (earliest comes first).

Berndt, T. J. (1981).   Berndt, T. J. (1999).

When an author appears both as a sole author and, in another citation, as the first author of a group, list the one-author entries first:

Berndt, T. J. (1999). Friends' influence on students' adjustment to school. *Educational Psychologist, 34*, 15-28.

Berndt, T. J., & Keefe, K. (1995). Friends' influence on adolescents' adjustment to school. *Child Development, 66*, 1312-1329.

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References that have the same first author and different second and/or third authors are arranged alphabetically by the last name of the second author or the last name of the third if the first and second authors are the same:

Wegener, D. T., Kerr, N. L., Fleming, M. A., & Petty, R. E. (2000). Flexible corrections of juror judgments: Implications for jury instructions. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 6*, 629-654.

Wegener, D. T., Petty, R. E., & Klein, D. J. (1994). Effects of mood on high elaboration attitude change: The mediating role of likelihood judgments. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 24*, 25-43.

Two or More Works by the Same Author in the Same Year

If you are using more than one reference by the same author (or the same group of authors listed in the same order) published in the same year, organize them in the reference list alphabetically by the title of the article or chapter; and assign letter suffixes to the year. Refer to these sources in your essay as they appear in your reference list, e.g.: "Berdnt (1981a) makes similar claims..."

Berndt, T. J. (1981a). Age changes and changes over time in prosocial intentions and behavior between friends. *Developmental Psychology, 17*, 408-416.

Berndt, T. J. (1981b). Effects of friendship on prosocial intentions and behavior. *Child Development, 52*, 636-643.

Reference List: Articles in Periodicals - Basic Form

APA style states that authors start with last name followed by initials; publication year goes between parentheses, followed by a period. The title of the article is in sentence-case, meaning only the first word and proper nouns in the title are capitalized. The periodical title is run in title case, and is followed by the volume number which, with the title, is also italicized. If a DOI has been assigned to the article that you are using, you should include this after the page numbers for the article. If no DOI has been assigned and you are accessing the periodical online, use the URL of the website from which you are retrieving the periodical.

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical, volume number* (issue number), pages. doi:http://dx.doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyyy

Reference List: Books - Basic Format for Books

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Location: Publisher. For "Location," you should always list the city and the state using the two letter postal abbreviation without periods (New York, NY). Calfee, R. C., & Valencia, R. R. (1991). *APA guide to preparing manuscripts for journal publication*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Edited Book, No Author

Duncan, G. J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (Eds.). (1997). *Consequences of growing up poor*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Edited Book with an Author or Authors

Plath, S. (2000). *The unabridged journals.* K. V. Kukil (Ed.). New York, NY: Anchor.

Edition Other Than the First

Helfer, M. E., Kempe, R. S., & Krugman, R. D. (1997). *The battered child* (5th ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Article or Chapter in an Edited Book

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year of publication). Title of chapter. In A. Editor & B. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pages of chapter). Location: Publisher.

According to the American Psychological Association (2000) when you list the pages of the chapter or essay in parentheses after the book title, use "pp." before the numbers: (pp. 1-21). This abbreviation, however, does not appear before the page numbers in periodical references, except for newspapers.

O'Neil, J. M., & Egan, J. (1992). Men's and women's gender role journeys: A metaphor for healing, transition, and transformation. In B. R. Wainrib (Ed.), *Gender issues across the life cycle* (pp. 107-123). New York, NY: Springer.

Dissertation, Published

Lastname, F. N. (Year). *Title of dissertation*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Name of database. (Accession or Order Number)

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Dissertation, Unpublished

Lastname, F. N. (Year). *Title of dissertation*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Name of Institution, Location.

Article from an Online Periodical

Online articles follow the same guidelines for printed articles. Include all information the online host makes available, including an issue number in parentheses.

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of article. *Title of Online Periodical, volume number*(issue number if available). Retrieved from
http://www.someaddress.com/full/url/

Bernstein, M. (2002). 10 tips on writing the living Web. *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites, 149*. Retrieved from
http://www.alistapart.com/articles/writeliving

3- Modern Language Association (MLA) Style of Referencing

a) In-text citation

Parenthetical Citations

The MLA style uses parenthetical citations to document a reference in the text of a paper. When you quote a source, you need to cite the author and give the page number(s) on which the material appears. You may do this in different ways.

If you mention the author's name in the text, you put *only* the page number in the parenthetical citation. The quotation mark to close quoted text is placed before the parenthetical citation, e.g. Willa Cather describes Paul as "tall for his age and very thin, with high cramped shoulders and a narrow chest" (144).

It should be noted that the abbreviation "p." is **not** used before the page number with MLA parenthetical citations. If the author's name is not used in a sentence, the name must be given in the parenthetical citation in the following format: Paul was "tall for his age and very thin, with high cramped shoulders and a narrow chest" (Cather 144).

The period follows the closing parenthesis. Note that there is **not** a comma between the author's name and page number.

Whether set off from the text or run into it, quoted material is usually preceded by a colon if the quotation is formally introduced and by a comma or no punctuation if the quotation is an integral part of the sentence structure: Percy Bysshe Shelley held a bold view: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World" (794). Percy Bysshe Shelley thought poets "the unacknowledged legislators of the World" (794).

If you are transcribing an **exclamation point or question mark** that appeared in the source you are quoting, those marks will appear inside the quotation marks. Note that a period still follows the parenthetical citation: The older waiter in Earnest Hemingway's "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" asks himself, "What did he fear?" (79).

Use of References' First Names and Middle Names or Initials:

The *author's full name* is given in the *text of the paper* the first time the author is mentioned. For subsequent references to the same person, just use the author's last name. However, *parenthetical citations* use only *last names*. See the two examples below. Also note that the ampersand sign (&) is not used in parenthetical citations between the two names.

> Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E Jacobs claim, "The skills needed for writing strong essays about literature cannot be separated from the skills involved in intelligent reading" (xiii).

> "The skills needed for writing strong essays about literature cannot be separated from the skills involve in the intelligent reading" (Roberts and Jacobs xiii).

Citing Electronic Sources in your Text:
As with print sources, information you access electronically is attributed in your text to its author. However, because page numbers are not used with Internet sources, the usual format for MLA parenthetical citations (author's last name page number) does not work very well. The *MLA Handbook* recommends citing all sources without pagination in your text rather than in parenthetical citations: e.g.: Stephen Hall Clark points out that while increased use of the railways in Britain promoted leisure travel for all classes, train cars, divided into first, second and third class, also were "steel barriers" between classes.
b) Works Cited Page (this is called References list in Harvard and APA Style)

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A list of works cited appears at the end of the paper. Begin the list on a new page and centre the title, Works Cited. Entries are double spaced and subsequent lines should employ a hanging indent. Sources not cited in your paper are not included on this list, even if you have read them to inform your discussion of the research topic.

A book written by one author
Each section – author, title, and publication essentials – is punctuated with a period. The publication information lists the city, followed by a colon, then the name of the publishing company, followed by a comma, and the date of publication. Give the most recent date listed. You can italicize or underline publication information; just be consistent in your choice: e.g. Cressy, David. Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England. New York: Oxford UP, 1997.

A book by two or more authors:
Jakobson's name comes first because it is listed first on the title page of the book.
Jakobson, Roman, and Linda R. Waugh. The Sound Shape of Language. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1979.

A book with an editor:

Lopate, Phillip, ed. The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present. New York: Anchor-Doubleday, 1994.

Article in a journal

Note that "67.2" signifies the volume number followed by the issue number.

Haswell, Janis, and Richard H. Haswell. "Gendership and the Miswriting of Students."

College Composition and Communication 67.2 (1995): 223-254.

Citing internet sources (MLA)

The rules for documenting Internet sources contained in the MLA manual should address most documentation situations that arise. Below are examples of commonly used types of Internet sources.

Because Internet sources change rapidly, the most important detail when documenting Internet sources is the date that you consulted the site. Be sure to give the source's exact address.

An online book:

Austen, Jane. Pride and Prejudice. Ed. Henry Churchyard. 1996. 6 Sept. 2002 <http://www.pemberley.com/janeinfo/pridprej.html>.

An online scholarly journal:

Chan, Evans. "Postmodernism and Hong Kong Cinema." Postmodern Culture 10.3 (2000). Project Muse. 20 May 2002 < http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/pmc/v010/10.3chan.html>.

Data from students' works

This section presents some actual examples of incorrectly cited sources in-text and in the list of references written by some Postgraduate Students in Applied Linguistics department at School of Languages – Libyan Academy. These examples were collected from assignments submitted for a research methodology course taught by the researcher and during examining some dissertations written by some postgraduate students for MAs degrees in applied linguistics.

- Analysis of some examples of incorrect citing of sources in-text

- Some students give more than the necessary details about a source *in-text* while they have to cite only the author's last name, year of publication and page number in case of citing a direct quotation and only the first two elements in case of citing indirect quotation. For example, they cite the title of the source and/or the publisher which should be cited at the list of references.

- When citing an author's name in-text, according to Harvard System or APA Style, some students write, incorrectly, the full name of the author instead of giving the last name only without the initials. E.g. Cock, M. and Ledford, P. Jones, D.

- When citing an author's name in-text, according to MLA system, some students give, incorrectly, the last name of the author only instead of giving the *author's full name* when the first time the author is mentioned.

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- When citing an author's name in-text, according to MLA system, some students give, the *author's full name* not only the first time the author is mentioned but also in the subsequent citations as well i.e. the continue doing that throughout the whole paper, while they have to do this the first time the author is mentioned only. Then, in subsequent citations, they only need to use the first author's last name followed by "et al." in the signal phrase or in parentheses.
- When citing a source in-text, written by more than one author, following Harvard System or APA Style, some students write, incorrectly, the names of all authors instead of giving the name of the first author only followed by et al. For example:
  Freeborn, French, and Langford concluded that ...   Instead of Freeborn, et al. concluded that ...
- When citing a direct quotation, some students provide the author's name but do not cite the page number.
- When citing a direct quotation, in-text, using MLA system, some students incorrectly use the abbreviation "p." before the page number with MLA parenthetical citations: e.g. Paul was "tall for his age and very thin, with high cramped shoulders and a narrow chest" (Cather. p. 144).

- Analysis of some examples of incorrectly documented references at the end of the

  research paper.

- When citing a source from a web site, students sometimes do not cite the name of the author or the year of publication and they only mention the URL of the website: e..g.

  (htt://esl.about.com/library/weeklyaa110997.htm: visited 20, 10, 2012).

- When citing an article in a journal, according to **Harvard System** or **APA Style** students sometimes *highlight* the title of the article instead of the title of the journal: e.g. Garrett, A., 1998. *On the origin of the auxiliary Do.* English language and linguistics. 2(2), 283-330.

  In the above reference, the title of the journal i.e. *English language and linguistics* should be highlighted NOT the title of article.

- When citing a reference to a contribution in a book, students sometimes *highlight* the title of the article or the chapter instead of the original source i.e. the book: e.g.

  Carter, R., 1996. Look both ways before crossing: *Developments in the language and literature classroom. In* C.N. Candlin, ed. Language, literature and learners. New York, Personal Education Inc, 1-15.

  In the above reference, the title of the book edited i.e. *Language, literature and learners* should be highlighted NOT the title of article.

- When citing authors' names, according to **Harvard System** or **APA Style,** some students write, incorrectly, the name of the author in the normal order (first names followed by the last name) instead of inverting them i.e. giving the last name first and the initials: e.g. R, Declerck. 1991. *Tense in English: its structure and use in discourse.* London: Routledge. Instead of: Declerck, R. 1991. *Tense in English: its structure and use in discourse.* London: Routledge.

- In case of citing more than two authors, some students write, mistakenly, the name of the first author followed by the abbreviation et al. instead of citing the other authors' names: e.g. Samovar, L. A., et al. (1998) *Communication between cultures.* Belmont: Wadsworth.

  Instead of: Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E., & Stefani, L. A. (1998) *Communication between cultures.* Belmont: Wadsworth.

  (It should be noted that the abbreviation et al is used **in-text** not in the list of references)

- When citing authors' names some students capitalize, incorrectly, the name of the author instead of capitalizing only the first letter of the last name and the initials. E.g.

  SMITH, C., 1980. Problems of information studies in history. In: S. STONE, ed. Humanities information research. Sheffield: CRUS, pp. 27-30. Instead of:

  Smith, C., 1980. Problems of information studies in history. In: S. Stone, ed. Humanities information research. Sheffield: CRUS, pp. 27-30.

Conclusion

The actual examples of inaccurately and inconsistently cited sources written by some postgraduate students show that they lack the knowledge

of the basic rules of referencing and citing. In fact, it is very important for the postgraduate students to be aware of the reasons of citing references and of its importance. More importantly, it is essential that they be familiar with the different types of referencing systems and with the differences among them or styles. They also have to be able to distinguish between documenting sources in-text and writing the list of references at the end of the research paper. Knowing how to document their sources correctly and consistently will save them time and effort and will greatly improve their work.

Notwithstanding that there are some differences among the different types of referencing systems there are also some common features among them. For instance, in all systems, only those sources that were cited in the paper should be listed in the list of references. Moreover, sources are listed alphabetically by author's last name. In all systems page number must be provided in case of direct quotation. Whichever system students choose, it is important that their referencing is complete, accurate and consistent. It is also fundamental to present sufficient information for a reader to identify and find the work or cited passage. Furthermore, it is imperative NOT to make up your own rules.

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