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Lecture 04: In-text Citation in MLA Style

Lesson Description

Lecture four introduces students to an in-text citation with its codes and conventional format in MLA style to become familiar with its form. The lecture also provides three guiding activities to build up the skill of formatting in humanities.

Learning Objective

Students will be able to start using in-text citations effectively during their research or academic writing.

1-Definition

In-text citations are inserted quotes or paraphrased ideas that the student or the researcher relies on as they write an academic paper. Its function lies in connecting ideas with references in the works cited list. There are two types of in-text citations:

1.1 Parenthetical Citation

It includes the author's last name and the page number of the source in enclosed parentheses after the paraphrased or quoted information. For instance, the writer may finish their idea with this parenthetical citation: (Eliot 7).

1.2 Narrative Citation

The author's name should be introduced in the students' text via reporting sentences and followed only by the page number between parenthesis. As stated by T.S Eliot in his remarkable article "Tradition and individual talent": "It is not in his personal emotions, the emotions

provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting… The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them up into poetry, to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at al" (41-42). Students should notice how the narrative citation is introduced by **single phrases** that connect the text to the content of the quote. Single phrases contain reporting verbs such as: explain, point out, demonstrate, refer to, discuss, argue, etc.

So, in-text citations are crucial and should be used when paraphrasing or quoting from other sources.

2-Paraphrasing

When you paraphrase information or ideas from a source, include an in-text citation at the end of the paraphrased section. These are some examples of particular cases:

2.1 One Page Paraphrasing

In-text citation with the author's last name and page number (if there is one) should be included:

Mother-infant attachment became a leading topic of developmental research following the publication of John Bowlby's studies (Hunt 65).

1.2 Multiple Pages Paraphrasing

Compared to the previous one, the only difference is that pages should be presented and separated using a comma. For example:

Mother-infant attachment became a leading topic of developmental research following John Bowlby's studies (Hunt 50, 55, 65-71).

3-Quoting

There are three different types of quoting: short, direct quotation, indirect quotation and blockquotes.

3.1 Short Direct Quotation

In MLA 8ed. a short quote means a word-for-word form that is not longer than four lines. It requires a direct quote between quotation marks and a period after the parenthetical citation.

For instance,

"It is not in his personal emotions, the emotions provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting… The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them up into poetry, to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at all" (Eliot 41-42).

In prose, if the author is incorporated into the text, we use narrative citation. The quote should be enclosed in the text with a quotation mark and period to follow after the quote.

If the quote is four lines long (or less), it should be incorporated into the text and enclosed using quotation marks. You may include the author's name within your text or the in-text citation:

Chinua Achebe explores the inner of his protagonist in Things Fall Apart and writes: "Perhaps down in his heart Okonkwo was not a cruel man. But his whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and weakness. It was not external but lay deep within himself. It was the fear of himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father" (13).

In poetry, it is possible to quote the lines or collect them in the same line separated by a slash mark (/). In this example, we go for parenthetical citation where the author is not incorporated in the text:

The Wasteland is a poem that calls for the redemption of the human soul: "*To* "Carthage then I came/Burning burning burning burning/O Lord Thou pluckest me out/ O Lord Thou pluckest burning" (Eliot 307-11*)*

3.2 Indirect Quote:

It is a quote that is located in the secondary source. This means that the original source is quoted by another scholar. In this respect, students should mention the original source in a narrative citation and use (qtd. in + the family name of the secondary source) at the end of the quote. In other words, it says that the quoted idea is quoted in the aforementioned source. Students also should know that quoting indirect sources is only allowed when it is necessary and that the original source is not available for some reason.

In the following example, Homi K. Bhabha is the secondary or the indirect source, whereas Bakhtin is the original source:

In his book The Location of Culture, Bhabha discusses how Bakhtin refers to the idea of the visualization of time in the narrative of Goethe. For instance, in *Italian Journey,* Bakhtin describes how Goethe captures the Italian landscape influenced by time mobility: "In a country where everyone enjoys the day but the evening even more, sunset is an important moment. All work stops; those who were strolling about return to their homes; the father wants to see his daughter back in the house-the day has ended. We Cimmerians hardly know the real meaning of day" (qtd. in Bhabha 143).

2.4 Long Quotation (Blockquote)

If the quote goes more than four lines, it is called a long quote or a blockquote. It should follow these four rules

➢ The line before a long quotation, when introducing the quote, usually ends with a colon.

➢ The long quotation is indented half an inch from the rest of the text, so it looks like a block of text. It should be double-spaced.

➢ There are no quotation marks around the quotation.

➢ The period at the end of the quotation comes *before* your in-text citation.

For instance, at the end of *Lord of the Flies,* the boys are struck with the realization of their conduct and experience,

> The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. (Golding 186)

4- Multiple and Unknown Authors

To cite from a source that is produced by more than one author, students should include both family names if the authors are only **two,** as in this example: (Bhabha and Gilroy 110). In another case, if the work is produced by **more than two** authors, students should use the format "et al.". It means other authors. For instance, (Richard et al. 25). This implies a work written by Richard and at least two different authors have been cited.

If the cited work has no author or unknown author, students should use the first two or three main words in the title, usually counting after the article. If the source has no page number (the Web case), in this case, it is important only to put the family name of the author between parenthesis.

5- Key Notes to Remember:

MLA 8th Edition has witnessed a few changes compared to previous editions, such as the first and the second elements:

➢ **For time-based media like video,** times are now cited in the text.

   Example: Buffy's promise that "there's not going to be any incidents like at my old school" is obviously not one on which she can follow through ("Hush" 00:03:15-17).

➢ **Works Cited entry**: "Hush." Buffy the Vampire Slayer, created by Joss Whedon, performance by Sarah Michelle Geller, season 4, episode 10, Mutant Enemy, 1999.

➢ **Shorten long titles** (longer than a noun phrase) when needed to be included in a parenthetical citation.

➢ **Multiple sources** cited at once should be separated by a **semicolon**. For example: (Baron 194; Jacobs 55). Note: The sources within the in-text citation do not need to be in alphabetical order for MLA style.

➢ When citing different pages from the same source, **a comma** should be used to separate them (Baron 194, 200, 197-98).

➢ When a citation points not to a page number but instead to a paragraph or chapter range, use commas and periods: (Baron, ch. 2) or (Baron, para. 4).

References

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. Anchor Canada, 2009.

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 2004.

Eliot, T S, and Frank Kermode. "The Waste Land and Other Poems." Penguin Books, 1998.

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