

Guidelines

**for Essays and Assignments,
Term papers and Take-home examinations,
Proseminar and Seminar papers,
Research papers, Pro Gradu theses...**

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University of Helsinki, Department of English

Compiled by Andrew Chesterman et al.

Revised September 2001 by Laurel Bush, Arja Nurmi and Nely Keinänen

Updated October 2001 by Arja Nurmi

To the reader: These Guidelines are not a complete guide to academic writing and documentation, but they do outline some of the most important aspects of this style. For more detailed information, e.g. on special kinds of bibliographical entries, see the references in section 6, especially the Chicago Manual of Style and the MLA Handbook.

In these Guidelines, note particularly the ways in which Anglo-American writing norms differ from those which are customary in Finnish, Swedish or other languages you may use in your university studies.

1. Academic integrity

As a university student you will find yourself having to process more information than ever before in your life. Many students do not, however, appreciate that much of the information they work with is the result of work which has already been done by others, and is, as such, intellectual property. Students who would regard walking away with another person's coat as theft are often surprised to discover that copying sentences or entire paragraphs and submitting them as part of their own work without acknowledging the source is also stealing. The name for this offence is plagiarism.

Since plagiarism is universally regarded as a serious offence, the traditions of academic writing have developed various strategies for acknowledging the use of information derived from another source. The easiest way is to use quotation marks, reproduce the exact words which were used in the original, and indicate the source from which the passage has been taken.

More elegant than quoting is paraphrasing. When you paraphrase you restate the basic argument or facts in the original using your own words. A paraphrase is about the same length as the original. The best way to do this is to take notes based on the original, think about what you have written, and then produce the paraphrase looking at neither the original nor the notes. This should ensure that the wording will differ from that of the original, and that you have understood what you have read. Since a paraphrase is something you yourself have created, it is not going to be enclosed in quotation marks. On the other hand, you must indicate that the argument or fact you are discussing is based on someone else's work by using a phrase such as: "As argued by Cohen ...", "Lass has claimed that ...". If you include information derived from other sources in your work without quotation marks or acknowledgement, you have made yourself guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism is often committed inadvertently. Everyone knows that English is spoken in Great Britain, so acknowledging a source when including such a fact in a paper would be absurd. On the other hand, not everyone knows, nor does

everyone agree, that the English phonemes /r l j w/ can be classed together as liquids, as argued by Roger Lass in *The Shape of English* on page 92. Since this view is neither a general truth nor a non-controversial analysis, a student including such a statement in a paper has the obligation to acknowledge the source from which it derives. As you progress in your studies you will develop a feeling for the type of information which requires acknowledgement.

Let us look at some examples of work submitted by students and see the degree to which they have been academically honest. One of the questions on a take-home examination asked the students to discuss the contribution made by Amerindian languages to the American English vocabulary. Most of the students turned to A.H. Marckwardt's *American English*. On page 31 Marckwardt states:

“Without exception all the Amerindian loan words are nouns, indicating in a sense the most superficial type of borrowing and reflecting a casual rather than an intimate mingling of the two cultures. However, just as native English words do from time to time change their grammatical functions, so may the borrowed terms, once they have become a part of the language.”

Now let us look at three ways in which students used the information given there.

1. *An honest paraphrase*

The Amerindian loans are all nouns without exception, which implies that in fact the borrowing has not been very extensive and that it has not had any far-reaching effects on the English language. [The student has obviously taken some effort to express the idea in her own words, and she has succeeded in reducing the argument to its essentials. The book, but not the page reference, was acknowledged.]

2. *A deceptive paraphrase*

According to Marckwardt, all the Amerindian loan words are, without exception, nouns. However, just as native English words change their grammatical functions, so may the borrowed terms, once they have become part of the language. [The student has basically just restated Marckwardt's words; she cited the book and the page reference in a footnote. While this student could not be accused of academic dishonesty, her work clearly indicates intellectual sloth. Dishonest paraphrases are definitely not recommended.]

3. *Clear plagiarism*

All the Amerindian loan words are nouns. This indicates, in a sense, the most superficial type of borrowing and reflects a casual rather than an

intimate mingling of the two cultures. However, just as native English words sometimes change their grammatical functions, so may the borrowed terms, once they have become part of the language. [Neither the book nor the page reference were cited, although the passage is reproduced almost verbatim. This is a clear case of plagiarism for which a student should obviously be penalized.]

A third method of handling sources is summary. As the name suggests, summaries are shorter than paraphrases. You still need to acknowledge your source, however, and include the appropriate page numbers in an internal citation.

Learning how to process information properly requires considerable practice. Attention will be focused on various aspects of academic writing, taking notes, and conventions for acknowledging your sources in tutorials, written English classes, proseminars and seminars. (See also section 6. below.)

2. Documentation standards

There are several standard formats for documentation and bibliographies. Anglo-American ones tend to differ from Finnish ones in several respects. Two common formats are introduced below: one commonly used in linguistic publications and one in literary publications. Journals and publishing houses usually have their own house styles, as you can see if you have a look at the bibliography of any book or journal, and you should obviously check these if you are submitting a manuscript for publication. For non-published works (essays, seminar papers, Masters' Theses) the most important thing is to include all the necessary information in a consistent manner. If you prefer another Anglo-American standard to the two presented here, you may of course follow it.

Whatever system you use, note the following points. (For examples, see sections 2.1. and 2.2.)

(a) References in the text should contain enough information to enable the reader to locate the right entry in the bibliography or list of references, where full details are given.

(b) If you call your list *References* or *Works Cited*, it must contain all and only the works you have actually referred to in the text itself. If you call your list *Bibliography*, on the other hand, it may also contain other works you have consulted and found useful, but not actually mentioned in the text. You can also split your list into *References* and *Other*

Works Consulted if you wish. Your choice of name for the list will depend partly on what standard format you are using.

(c) Bibliographical entries must include, for books: author(s) or editor(s), first names or initials, year of publication, place of publication (the town, not the country), publisher (not printer). Also state the series name plus number, if the book is in a series. For journal entries, give name of journal, volume and/or part number, page numbers. For an article in a collection, include editor's name plus page numbers of the article. Dictionaries are listed by title; dictionary editors are not mentioned. (For further details, e.g. on the correct format for less common kinds of entry such as dissertations, unpublished manuscripts and the like, see the books listed at the end of this handout, especially the *MLA Handbook* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*.)

(d) Do not use hyphens to link two authors — readers may assume a single author with a double-barrelled surname.

(e) If you refer in the text to an article in an edited collection of papers, list the work alphabetically under the name of the actual writer of the article, not the editor of the collection.

(f) If you need to refer at second hand, because you do not have access to the primary source but only know of it through a secondary source, you can show this e.g. thus: Jones 1874, as cited in Smith 1990. Both Jones and Smith then get full entries in the Bibliography.

(g) Page numbers in text references are only for the passage to which specific reference is actually made, not to the whole paper or book. They are of course obligatory for quotations, paraphrases and summaries.

(h) It is not an Anglo-American convention to cluster references at the end of every paragraph to show where the ideas came from. References in an English text tend to come earlier in the paragraph, as the ideas are introduced.

(i) Unlike Finnish, references are usually given inside a sentence, before the full stop, regardless of whether they refer to a single sentence or a longer passage. References given outside the full stop of the text-sentence typically form a sentence in their own right — see the examples below.

2.1. Harvard style

Documentation in the text. The Harvard style, which has many variants, is commonly used for English-language publications in linguistics, and also the social and natural sciences. One variant is presented here, but please note that in the electronic guides listed in section 6 many of the details vary.

References in the text are based on the author-plus-date system, plus page number if necessary (i.e. when the reference is so specific that it can be pinned down to a particular page, or if it is a quotation). These documentary

references should be given in the text itself, built into your own sentence, not in footnotes or endnotes. If you refer in the course of the paper to two or more publications by the same author in the same year, the form is e.g. Jones 1983a, Jones 1983b. Page numbers are preceded by a colon and a space e.g. Jones 1999: 123.

You can vary the ways in which you indicate the reference. Placing the source early in the sentence, as a person, focuses on the source itself and relates the idea to it; placing the source at the end, as a work, focuses more on the idea.

Examples showing reference to the author as a person, within the sentence:

Lyons (1988: 254) describes this as ...

Brown and Gilman (1972) argue that ...

Examples citing a work itself, within the sentence (NOTE PUNCTUATION!):

Such styles are typically labelled 'clear', 'elegant' or 'refined' (Crystal and Davy 1969: 10).

Studies in quantitative stylistics have operated with various stylistic features: word length (Winter 1969), sentence length (Yule 1938) ...

... which is favoured in formal language (Quirk et al. 1972: 869-871).

Examples with reference outside the sentence (NOTE PUNCTUATION!):

Nominal clauses have been subject to a similar analysis, yet there remain a number of problems with this approach. (See e.g. Binns 1986, Wallace 1989.)

... with this approach. (Cf. Binns 1986, 1990; Wallace 1989.)

In documentation, 'see' indicates a direct reference, while 'cf.' (meaning 'compare') indicates a more indirect one.

Bibliographical references. These are listed alphabetically under the heading References (or Bibliography). Examples (NOTE PUNCTUATION!):

Bloomfield, L. (1933) *Language*. New York: Holt.

Brugmann, K. (1906) *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der indogermanischen Sprachen*. 2nd edition, vol. 2, part 1. Strassburg: Trübner.

Chomsky, N. (1957) *Syntactic structures*. *Janua linguarum*, 4. The Hague: Mouton.

- Collins Dictionary of the English Language*. 1985 edition. London and Glasgow: Collins.
- Dorian, N. C. (1984) Review of *Minority languages today*, ed. by Einar Haugen et al. *Language*, 60, 165-9.
- Hockett, C. F. (1964) The Proto Central Algonquian kinship system. In Goodenough, W. ed. *Explorations in cultural anthropology*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 239-58.
- Taavitsainen, I. and S. Nevanlinna (1999) 'Pills to purge melancholy' – Nonstandard elements in A *dialogue against fever pestilence*. In Taavitsainen, I., G. Melchers and P. Pahta eds. *Writing in Nonstandard English*. Pragmatics and Beyond, New Series, 67. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 151-169.
- Zwicky, A. M. (1985) Clitics and particles. *Language*, 61, 283-305.

A bibliographical entry for an article in a collection may either appear as a full entry in its own right, as illustrated in the entry for Hockett (1964) above; or else the article entry can give a short reference to the book and the book itself is then given a full entry in its own place. This latter alternative is useful when you are including entries for several articles in a single collection. Hockett's article could be listed thus, with a separate entry for the book itself:

- Goodenough, W. (ed.) (1964) *Explorations in cultural anthropology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Hockett, C. F. (1964) The Proto Central Algonquian kinship system. In Goodenough, W. ed., 239-58.

2.2. MLA standard

Documentation in the text. This style, standardized by the Modern Language Association of America, is traditionally associated with literature and humanities publications. (See the MLA Handbook for full details.) The latest version of the standard follows the Harvard one in placing short documentary references in parentheses in the text itself, rather than footnotes. The main difference from the Harvard style is that the MLA does not refer by author plus year but by author plus (underlined or italic) short title (and of course page where necessary). However, a title is not necessary if only one work by the author in question is cited. The documentation is normally given within the sentence:

The elaborate scenic devices in Richelieu's theater constituted what Stephen Orgel calls "a prime instance of royal liberality" (*Illusion* 37). [The author of the work cited is mentioned within the text itself and thus there is no need to repeat the author's name in the parenthetical documentation. A shortened version of the title was given because another work by Orgel was cited elsewhere in the same article. See the bibliographical entries below.]

Daughters "were often unwanted and might be regarded as no more than a tiresome drain on the economic resources of the family" (Stone, *Family* 112). [Since there is more than one work by Stone cited in the article, both author's name and short title (plus page) are given in parenthesis.]

As Ronald Paulson correctly asserts, Pope requires an "other," something to which he can respond and that his response will supersede or correct (88, 99-102). [Since the name of the author cited is included in the running text, and only one work by him is cited in the article, all that is necessary here are the relevant page numbers.]

References. The MLA standard includes the same information as the LSA, but in a slightly different format, with the year of publication at the end. The bibliographical references for the above text references are included in the following examples (note the use of italics, and the quotation marks round journal articles or papers in a collection):

- Orgel, Stephen. *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.
- . "The Poetics of Spectacle." *New Literary History* 2 (1971): 367-89.
- Oxford English Dictionary, The*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933.
- Paulson, Ronald. "Satire, and Poetry, and Pope." In *English Satire*. Ed. James Sutherland. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Clark Memorial Library, 1972. 57-102.
- Shackleton, Mark. "Native Myth Meets Western Culture: The Plays of Tomson Highway." In *Migration, Preservation, and Change: Papers from the Seventh Maple Leaf and Eagle Conference on North American Studies at the*

- University of Helsinki, May 14-17, 1998*. Ed. Jeffrey Kaplan, Mark Shackleton and Maarika Toivonen. Helsinki: Renvall Institute, University of Helsinki, 1999. 47-58.
- Stone, Lawrence. *The Crisis of the Aristocracy: 1558-1660*. Abridged edition. London: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- . *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England: 1500-1800*. New York: Harper, 1977.

You can also divide your references into Primary Sources (e.g. data sources, literary texts studied) and Secondary Sources (e.g. critical works).

2.3. MHRA style

Documentation in the text. The MHRA style is a British English counterpart of the MLA. Detailed instructions on the style can be found in the *MHRA style book*.

References. The MHRA style includes the same elements as Harvard and MLA, but again in slightly different order and form. Book and journal titles (as well as the titles of films, videos, radio and television programmes, computer programmes and internet references) should be in italics. Titles of articles and parts of publications (e.g. short stories or poems) should be between single quotation marks. Single quotation marks are also used for unpublished items.

- Orgel, Stephen, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975)
- Orgel, Stephen, 'The Poetics of Spectacle', *New Literary History*, 2 (1971), 367-89
- Oxford English Dictionary, The* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933)
- Paulson, Ronald, 'Satire, and Poetry, and Pope', in *English Satire*, ed. by James Sutherland (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Clark Memorial Library, 1972), 57-102
- Shackleton, Mark, 'Native Myth Meets Western Culture: The Plays of Tomson Highway', in *Migration, Preservation, and Change: Papers from the Seventh Maple Leaf and Eagle Conference on North American Studies at the University of Helsinki, May 14-17, 1998*, ed. by

Jeffrey Kaplan, Mark Shackleton and Maarika Toivonen (Helsinki: Renvall Institute, University of Helsinki, 1999), 47-58

Stone, Lawrence, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy: 1558-1660*, abr. edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1971)

Stone, Lawrence, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England: 1500-1800* (New York: Harper, 1977)

Punctuation and quotations. Always begin quotations with single quotation marks. Use double quotation marks for quotations within quotations only (called ‘nested quotations’.) Avoid the use of quotation marks to indicate ironic, jocular, or coterie language. Ending commas and ending full-stops should appear outside quotation marks unless the quotation forms a complete and independent sentence. Shorter quotations (less than fifty words) should be set in the body, with single quotation marks. For quotations within quotations, use double inside single. Avoid using quotation marks to signal irony, humour, or doubt. Long quotations should be indented and separated from the main body by a line space at the beginning and the end. Ellipsis should be indicated by three spaced points placed within brackets [. . .].

First lines of paragraphs should be indented, except for the first paragraph of the paper. The first line of notes should be indented. The second line (and subsequent lines) of bibliographical items should be indented; this is called ‘reverse indentation’ (or ‘hanging indent’ in word processing software).

Dates should have the following format: 28 September 2001; October 1999; 1650s; 1875-77 (except in headings: 1771-1773); seventeenth century (but seventeenth-century author). Except in dates, figures should be spelled from one to ninety-nine in the body of the paper. Abbreviations like Mr, Dr, UN are written without points.

2.4. Citation forms for CD-ROMs and Internet sources

The MLA Handbook (5th edition) recommends that bibliographical citations for electronic sources should include, in addition to the normal applicable requirements for printed sources, the following (where relevant):

- the medium of publication (e.g. CD-ROM, Diskette, Magnetic tape);
- the vendor's name (e.g. in the case of information databases);
- the electronic publication date;
- the name of the repository of an electronic text (e.g. Oxford Text Archive);
- the date of your access to the information.
- for online publications the uniform resource locator (URL), including the accessmode identifier (http, ftp, etc). If it is necessary to break the URL, only break it after a slash.

Some examples (in the MLA format):

Angier, Natalie. "Chemists Learn Why Vegetables Are Good for You." *New York Times* 13. Apr. 1993: C1. *New York Times Ondisc*. CD-ROM. UNI-Proquest. Oct. 1993.

Coffey, Neil. "Re: yorkshire dialect." Online posting. 11 Aug. 2001. 31 Aug. 2001. <news:sci.lang>.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. "Dejection: An Ode." *The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge. Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon, 1912. 362-68. *English Poetry Full-Text Database*. Rel. 2. CD-ROM. Cambridge: Chadwyck, 1993.

"Ellison, Ralph." *Disclit: American Authors*. Diskette. Boston: Hall, 1991.

Everett, Dan. "On Nonobjects of Syntactic Study." Online posting. 10 July 2001. LINGUIST list. 31 Aug. 2001 <<http://www.linguistlist.org/issues/12/12-1785.html#1>>.

Garton, Laura, Caroline Haythornthwaite, and Barry Wellman. "Studying Online Social Networks." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 3.1 (1997). 17 Aug. 2001. <<http://jcmc.huji.ac.il/vol3/issue1/garton.html>>.

Hardy, Thomas. *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Ed. Ronald Blythe. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978. Oxford Text Archive. 24 Jan. 1994. <<http://ota.ahds.ac.uk/>>.

Lancashire, Ian. Home page. 31 Aug. 2001
 <<http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~ian/>>
Octovian. Ed. Frances McSparran. Early English Text
 Soc. 289. London: Oxford UP, 1986. 6 Apr. 1994.
 <<ftp://etext.virginia.edu>>.
 "Renaissance." *Britannica Online*. Encyclopaedia
 Britannica. 31 Aug. 2001
 <<http://www.britannica.com/>>
Victorian Women Writers Project. Ed. Perry Willett.
 June 1998. Indiana U. 31 Aug. 2001
 <<http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/vwwp/>>.

For further details, see the MLA Handbook.

2.5. Footnotes and endnotes

Both standards introduced above prefer authors not to use footnotes for documentary references, nor indeed endnotes (but see section 5.6. of the MLA Handbook). If you do need to use notes for secondary details, place a superscript number in the text, usually after a punctuation mark, with no parentheses.

3. Layout

Use double spacing or equivalent, to leave room for comments and corrections. Leave a good left-hand margin (4–5 cm), a right-hand margin of 1–3 cm, and top and bottom margins of 2–3 cm. Choose a suitable typeface, such as Courier or Times 12-point.

Page numbers are normally put at the top right corner of the page, after the cover-page. The cover-page must show the title, then further down in the right-hand corner the name of the syllabus requirement in question (e.g. Proseminar Paper). Then the place (Department of English, University of Helsinki), date, and your own name. Please add your student number, and the course code-number for which you expect to get credit. Do not underline the title of your own paper; in the title, use capitals only for the first letter of an important word.

For linguistic essays, this is followed by a CONTENTS page. (Literary essays of less than 30 pages generally do not have a contents page.) If you have used many abbreviations (e.g. for corpus sources) these can be listed next on a separate page.

Indent paragraphs about one cm. In some styles the first paragraph after a blank line (such as the first paragraph of a section or chapter) is not indented — see the usage in this handout, for instance. Be consistent about this, throughout your paper.

Do not use `w i d e s p a c i n g` to show emphasis (or indeed to show anything else). If you must use some typographical means for emphasis, underline or use italics. Capitals are also occasionally found in this usage.

Try to avoid breaking (hyphenating) words at the end of a line: hyphenation rules for English are different from Finnish ones, and unwanted hyphens often remain in the text after you have done some editing.

Do not use complicated subsections: a hierarchy of three levels is often the absolute maximum, so that sections are numbered e.g. 2., 2.1., 2.2., 2.2.1., 2.2.2. and so on. (The numbering of sections is less common in literary papers.)

The paper ends with an unnumbered section headed References (or Bibliography, or Works Cited).

The Pro Gradu also requires an abstract on a separate form.

4. Structure

We distinguish here between scientific writing and literary essays; both have their own conventions. Literary papers tend to have a looser structure than linguistic ones, and their form is often more that of an argument — see 4.2.

4.1. Scientific writing

The basic structure of an empirical research report or scientific essay is: Introduction, Background (survey of the relevant literature), Material and methods, Results, Analysis, Discussion, Conclusion. Studies in the humanities rarely use all these actual headings, but the general outline of published research tends to follow this pattern. A typical simplified format might be: Introduction, Presentation and analysis of data, Discussion, and Conclusion.

Introduction. The introduction should arouse interest. Here you can remind your readers what they need to know in order to understand what you wish to tell them. Introduce the problem you are setting out to discuss, and delimit it appropriately — i.e. explain the scope of your study, perhaps even including what you are not going to do. You might give a brief justification of your choice of topic. Mention the basic theoretical framework you will be working in, the data you will study, the methods of analysis you will use. At some point you should survey other relevant research in the field, so that the

reader can see where your own contribution fits in. State the aim of the study. Outline the main structure of your study, the main research design and procedures, so that the reader can see what is coming. You can also give a brief advance mention of your main results or conclusions, so that the reader gets an idea of what is to be expected.

Introductions often start with a wider focus on a general area, and then gradually close in to pinpoint the particular topic of the research.

Presentation of data. Here you present your data and demonstrate your method of analysis in enough detail that anyone wanting to check your results could repeat your analysis if necessary. Then state your results clearly.

Discussion. At this point you explain and evaluate your results, consider their reliability and validity, admit their limitations, compare them with other similar studies, etc.

Conclusion. Conclusions typically have two parts. The first is a brief summary of the main points of your research. The second seeks to answer the question “so what?” In other words, it is a brief look at what you think the implications are, e.g. for future research, possible applications, major theoretical issues in the field or in related fields; such implications no doubt had something to do with your reasons for selecting the topic in the first place. In other words, a good conclusion ends by widening the focus again, thus mirroring the introduction.

4.2. Literary essay, argument

The overall structure of a literary essay or argument might take the following form:

Introduction: directing the reader’s attention to the issue in question, establishing bridges with the knowledge assumed to be shared between writer and reader.

Background: introducing the general nature of the problem, its history, causes, scope, relevance.

Statement of what is to be proved: so that the reader can see where the text is going, what the aim is, what the *thesis* of the essay or argument is. This thesis should be stated clearly, early rather than late in the text.

Arguments for and against: to defend the thesis, and to outline possible alternatives. The points you make must of course be supported by relevant evidence.

Refutation of opposing views.

Conclusion: a succinct restatement of the thesis, plus an outline of the wider implications of the argument.

The strength of an argument can be measured by its logic, the empirical evidence presented, and its rhetoric.

In deductive argument, the logical force has to do with the validity of the initial premises and the deductions made from them; it is often crucial here to build on maximally clear definitions, to be as explicit as possible. In inductive argument a hypothesis is set up that purports to explain certain empirical facts. The evidence on which the hypothesis is based therefore needs to be maximally explicit and maximally relevant. Furthermore, it needs to be demonstrated why the hypothesis in question is better than any opposing hypothesis; it might for instance be simpler, more general, or more natural.

5. Style

5.1. General readability

The general tone of academic writing in English is one of rational discussion, and tends to be less formal than in some other languages, although it avoids slang and colloquialisms. It often reads more like one side of a dialogue than a monologue: the writer shows an awareness of the reader, of the text as an offer of communication, in a number of ways. In other words, the text should have good readability.

One important aspect of readability for an academic audience is explicitness. Do not leave the reader merely to infer or guess what your main points and definitions are, or what the surprising result is: be explicit, leave nothing to chance.

Another aspect is good textual cohesion (see section 5.4. below). A text is easier to read if the information comes in a logical order and is clearly organized. For instance, readers will normally expect important information to be placed towards the end of the clause or sentence (END FOCUS). Also, structures with END WEIGHT are easier to process than those with heavy chunks at the beginning; for example, Table 3 shows the effects of A, B, C, D, and E is better than “The effects of A, B, C, D, and E are shown in Table 3”.

Another readability factor is sentence length. The average sentence length in English academic writing is around 22 words. Avoid sentences that are much longer than, say, 30 words. But also avoid a series of very short sentences. Unless you are aiming deliberately at a particular effect.

What one wants is variety of sentence length; variety, both syntactic and lexical, helps to maintain the reader’s attention. Avoid boring repetition! How else might you catch and keep your reader’s interest?

One particular area where variety is important is in your choice of reporting verbs. There are many others apart from *say* and *write*. Some imply that you yourself accept the reported idea as fact: *acknowledge*, *admit*, *demonstrate*, *indicate*, *point out*, *prove*, *report*, *show*. Others leave you the possibility of disagreeing: *allege*, *argue*, *assert*, *believe*, *claim*, *imply*, *propose*, *say*, *state*, *suggest*, *write*.

Beware verbosity. Prefer a shorter word or structure to a longer one, and active to passive. Not “It is plainly demonstrable from the data presented in Table 2 that ...” but : Table 2 indicates that... Feel free to use the first person: e.g. I think rather than “in the opinion of the present writer”. You do not have to ban yourself from your text: academic modesty is all very well, but don’t overdo it! (See section 5.5. below.) Prefer verbs to nouns, and steer clear of substantivitis. Not “after the identification of the structures had been completed” but : after the structures had been identified or after identifying the structures.

In short, aim at a style that is clear and concise, logical and orderly, and varied enough (even personal) to be interesting.

5.2. Quotation, paraphrase and summary

Failure to acknowledge the source of a quotation, paraphrase or summary is a serious matter, amounting to plagiarism (recall section 1.). Direct quotations must be verbatim. Anything added or omitted must be indicated by square brackets. (Omissions are marked by three dots inside brackets.) Square brackets also enclose the comment [sic], which reaffirms to the reader that the original really was like this, e.g. where the original has a spelling or grammatical error or perhaps some other surprising feature. If the original contains an emphasis, which of course should be retained in the quotation, you can indicate that the emphasis is original, as e.g. (Beardsley 1983: 11; emphasis original). If you have added emphasis, you must show this: (emphasis added).

If you are unable to cite from the primary source but only at second hand, say so: (Smith 1843, as cited in Jones 1990: 278).

Do not over-use direct quotation: use it only when the actual words of the original are so important that a paraphrase would not be enough.

Short quotes. Short quotations (less than four lines) should be introduced with a lead-in sentence or phrase so as to fit into the running text naturally, not to appear as abrupt additions simply pasted in at random but as part of your overall textual pattern. They are enclosed within double quotation marks. (But a translation of an original is not placed in quotation marks.) A quotation

within a quotation is given single quotes. Documentation is given within the sentence. If the source work is already obvious from the immediately preceding text, page number alone is enough. Depending on the format you are following, the page number can either be indicated with a colon (:), or alone in brackets.

Examples (Harvard style):

For instance, Binns (1985: 43) stated that "Jane Austen was ..."

It has even been suggested that "all swans are white" (Russell 1949: 75).

Examples (MLA style):

It may be true that "in the appreciation of medieval art the attitude of the observer is of primary importance..." (Robertson 136).

Ibsen, explains Brustein, was "completely indifferent to [the woman question] except as a metaphor for individual freedom" (105).

Quotations from plays should give act, scene and (if in verse) line, e.g. Hamlet 4.3.26-27. Quotations from poems use slashes to show line (/) and stanza (//) breaks, or follow the original layout. Quotations from the Bible should give book, chapter and verse: "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1.1).

Long quotes. Quotes of four lines or more are usually not placed in quotation marks but displayed: i.e. they are given a block indentation, often with a closer line spacing (Harvard style only). Documentation is given outside the sentence, and with no final full stop within the brackets.

It might be interesting to make a metaphorical list of modes of argument (or types of arguer)... There is the *Bulldozer*, whose argument moves steadily forward, knocking down objections as they come, whether serious or trivial. There is the *Fencer*, who makes a great show of graceful and rapid motions, full of wit and play, but seldom draws blood; and the *Spider*, who moves slowly and in a roundabout fashion... and the *Seagull*, who circles about in a preliminary way, and suddenly swoops down to seize and capture the one essential and decisive point at issue. (Beardsley 1967: 11; emphasis added)

Paraphrase. Direct quotation is only appropriate when there is something important or striking about the very wording of the original. Otherwise, a brief paraphrase in your own words may fit the text better. If the passage being paraphrased is a specific one, this too needs a page reference:

Beardsley (1967: 11) illustrates different modes of argumentation in terms of four metaphorical types: the Bulldozer, the Fencer, the Spider, and the Seagull. His own preference seems to be for the Seagull type, which focusses elegantly and incisively on the crucial point.

5.3. Presentation of linguistic data, examples, tables

Linguistic examples included in the running text are always underlined or put in italics, whether they are morphemes, words, or even sentences.

The -ing form of the verb to be
Garbidge argues that In came she is
unacceptable ...

If you have quite a number of linguistic examples it is useful to number and indent them, for ease of reference. They then need some kind of introductory lead-in phrase or sentence, as illustrated below.

Consider (1): / Consider example (1): /
Consider the following sentence (1):

(1) In came the cat.

This is quite grammatical. But there are restrictions on this inverted order, as can be seen from (2-3) below: / from the following sentences:

(2) ?In came he.

(3) *In came they.

Compare the following: / Compare (4-5):

(4) She came in.

(5) They came in.

Examples such as (6-7) illustrate the point further:

(6) Out went the dog.

(7) *Out went we.

Previously given examples can then be referred to by number alone. Where possible, avoid beginning a sentence with a number. Examples:

Example (4) / Sentence (4) shows that ...

But (2) seems to be better than (3) or (7).

Yet in (5) the situation is different.

The subject is a pronoun in (2-5) and (7).

You can also indent an example in mid-sentence, thus:

Chafe's sentence

(8) HE killed Cock Robin
contrasts with

(9) He KILLED Cock Robin
in that the shift of stress changes the meaning. On
the other hand, (10) -

(10) SHE killed Cock Robin
- involves a semantic change of a different
kind.

If you need to provide a translation gloss, single quotes are used: The
pronouns se 'it' and yksi 'one' are becoming
increasingly article-like.

If you are taking examples from a literary or computer corpus you should
indicate the source after the example, for instance by using abbreviations
(which should then be listed at the beginning of your paper) plus page or other
identification. They should be indented. Longer examples can take a closer
line-spacing, like a blocked quotation. You can underline the part of the
example that is relevant to your point. Three dots show an omission;
otherwise, punctuation must follow the original. So examples from *Tom Jones*
might look like this:

Oh, heavens, what a scene did I behold at my
first coming into the room. (TJ 611)

Had you suffered Mr. Blifil to have sent his
compliments ..., I should possibly have prevailed
on her to have seen him. (TJ 740)

"Yes, indeed, you must," answered she, laughing
... (TJ 627)

Tables and diagrams. Use tables and diagrams only when they are relevant
to your presentation: they are not a virtue in themselves. If you use tables,
diagrams, graphs, histograms or the like, give each one a number and a brief
but fully explicit caption in headline or note style, such as:

Figure 1. Stylistic and social stratification
of th in thing, thrice etc. in New York City.

Table 2. Degree of bilingualism observed in 4-
year-old children of mixed marriages, according to
country of residence and degree of parental
bilingualism.

Table 3. Distribution of article errors in the
school-leaving examination, by type of error, age

and native language of learner, and examination grade.

Table 4. Proportion of inverted iambic feet in the early, mid-period and late poetry of three poets.

Make sure that any columns, rows or axes etc. are explicitly labelled, so that the figure can be read and understood if necessary without reference to the text. Any abbreviations in the figure should be explained in the caption. All figures should also be discussed briefly in the text itself: indicate explicitly what the main point of the figure is, what the reader should focus on.

For further details and tips on the design of appropriate tables, see e.g. the book by Campbell and Ballou in section 6, below.

Titles of books etc. Titles of complete works, including the names of books, journals, magazines, films, TV programmes etc., must be italicized (or underlined) in your text. (An exception is sacred works such as the Bible — no italics.) Capitalize the first letter of important words. Titles of individual poems, short stories, articles, or parts of complete works are placed within double quotation marks. Examples:

The same idea is evident in *Romeo and Juliet*.

In Dickens' *Hard Times*, on the other hand, ...

A recent editorial in *Time* argued that...

Keats' poem "Ode to a Nightingale" has a similar theme...

5.4. Cohesion and transitions

State your main point early, to orientate your readers.

At the paragraph level, check that you have a clear topic sentence which covers all and only the content of the paragraph: this serves to unite the portion of text as a coherent unit in itself.

Between paragraphs it is often useful to create explicit links. Paragraph P might end with a signpost forward to the topic of the following paragraph Q; or paragraph Q might start with a link back to the preceding one, for instance by using the demonstrative *this* or *these*.

Cohesive links between whole sections are also helpful to the reader: it is good to be reminded where one has just come from and what one can expect next. A major section might thus end with a brief summing-up of the main points raised. Or another might start by first outlining a bird's-eye view of the next stage of the discussion. English academic discourse makes much more use than Finnish of such "metatext".

Cohesive links are particularly important when the text proceeds in a direction which the reader could not easily predict, for instance when a digression is introduced: this should be clearly signposted. (See the last few examples under *Linking forwards*, below.)

Internal reference can also be made to other sections, above or below, perhaps with a mention of the number of the section in question.

Following are some examples of such transitions (signposts).

Linking back

This classification thus divides nouns according to ...

Data of this sort suggest that ...

These arguments are all based on one assumption: ...

The evidence shows, then, that ...

The above/preceding survey/account/analysis makes it clear that ...

As noted/discussed earlier, ...

As we/I noted above, ...

As we have seen, ...

It has already been pointed out above (5.3.) that...

Recall such examples as ...

Linking forward

I begin with a well-known example of X: ...

I now turn in more detail to X.

Let us look first at X.

In what follows an analysis is proposed for X.

X and Y will be taken up in the following section.

We shall return to this question/issue/topic below / in a later section.

Three points need to be made here. First, / Firstly, / In the first place, ...

Two points must be borne in mind. ...

A number of interesting exceptions deserve to be mentioned at this point; X, Y, and Z.

I shall focus on / discuss X first, and take up Y later (4.2. below).

Consider first the following example / a passage such as the following.

We can now proceed to examine Y.

An alternative approach is proposed in the next chapter.

Before going on to consider Y, one final observation needs to be made here: X.

Before discussing Y I take a brief look here at X.

A related issue that needs a comment here is Z. Let us now turn to a different matter: Z.

At this point I digress slightly, and take up a somewhat different topic: Z.

Linking both ways

This leads to a further point/issue/question. [... X.] This [i.e. X] will be the topic of the next section/chapter.

In the second place / Secondly, Y.

A second related problem is Y.

The third kind of construction is illustrated by examples such as the following / by the examples given below.

I now return to X. Notice first that Y.

Some examples were mentioned above in which X. But Y.

So far we/I have assumed that X. However, Y.

It follows from what has been said so far that Y.

Finally, mention should be made of Y.

A final point: Z.

Summing up

In short, / All in all, / In conclusion, / To conclude, / In sum, / To sum up, X.

The conclusion to be drawn here is therefore Z.

A number of conclusions may be drawn here.

Firstly, X...

At this point it may be useful to review the major points that have so far emerged. They can be summarized as follows.

The main conclusions are thus as follows.

5.5. Hedges and academic modesty

There are a number of ways of avoiding a bald, absolute statement such as “X is Y”. You can use such “hedges” to protect yourself against possible counter-claims, to leave your options open just in case. They also manifest a becoming academic modesty, preventing you from claiming more than you are in fact entitled to: what are you actually justified in saying? BUT beware of overdoing it and lapsing into verbosity!

Some common hedges are given below.

Downtoners: somewhat, slightly, in part, in some respects, to some extent, to some degree

Hedging the sentence itself — by using an introductory frame:

Observe / Note / Notice / Recall that X.

It has been suggested / claimed that X.

It would generally be agreed that X.

It may well be that X.

From this point of view, X.

To my knowledge, X has not been done / proposed before At first sight it might appear that X. But
...

Hedging the verb phrase — use of modal verbs (can, may, might, would), verbs weaker than be (seem, appear, tend). Use of adverbs like perhaps, probably, possibly, presumably, no doubt. Use of frequency adverbs like commonly, often, frequently, sometimes. Use of impersonal passive, concealing the agent. Examples:

X could perhaps be said to be Y.

X can be seen to be / considered to be Y.

X may presumably be regarded as Y.

English seems to recognize three types of clause.

X may be illustrated with reference to Y.

X is commonly discussed in terms of Y.

X tends to occur more frequently in the context of Y.

X typically occurs before Y.

At this point mention may be made of Z.

This approach seems / appears to have one clear advantage.

Smith (1987) seeks to argue that X is Y.
However, ...

Hedging the noun phrase — use of quantitative or qualitative modification to restrict the set to which reference is made:

Such structures / Structures of this type [as opposed to "these structures"]

In some contexts of this kind X is Y.

In some cases this can be accounted for in terms of X.

The data presented above suggest that X.

This kind of evidence tends to support the hypothesis.

Understatement — especially for polite disagreement or criticism:

This approach is not without its problems.

X appears to be somewhat inconsistent on this point.

This analysis does not seem to be entirely correct.

Smith's argument nevertheless lays itself open to a number of counter-claims.

TOO MUCH: It may be noted that such research results as are generally available at the present time would perhaps typically seem to refute, at least to some extent, the kinds of conclusions drawn by Blatherby et al. (1990).

[*Terrible!*]

5.6. Words and expressions to avoid

Many style guides warn authors specifically to try and avoid sexist language: plurals or an impersonal *they*, for instance, are better than a generic *he*. Some journals suggest the use of *s/he*, *him/her*, *him/herself*.

You should also avoid a style that is too verbose, longwinded, with too many vague abstract nouns and unnecessary passives. The following list of words and expressions to avoid comes mostly from O'Connor and Woodford (1976) and Day (1983) — see section 6. It is not a dictionary of equivalents, but does give an idea of the sorts of things to use less often.

AVOID

accounted for by the fact that
along the lines of
are of the same opinion
as a consequence of

PREFER

because
like
agree
because

as a matter of fact	in fact (or OMIT)
as already stated	OMIT
as can be seen from Fig. 1, ...	Fig. 1 shows that ... / ... (Fig. 1)
as far as this feature is concerned, it is	this feature is
at an earlier date	previously
at the present moment	now
author, the (present)	I / we
based on the fact that	because
be in a position to	can / may
colourless past participles: accomplished, achieved, carried out, given, implemented, obtained, performed etc.	OMIT or use finite verb
comparatively	OMIT unless you are making a genuine comparison
considerable amount of	much
considerable number of	many / most
created the possibility	made possible / enabled / allowed
data is	data are
decreased amount of	less
decreased number of	fewer
despite the fact that	although
demonstrate	show
due to the fact that	because
during the course of	during
during the time that	while
elucidate	explain
employ	use
fewer in number	fewer
for the purpose of	for
for the reason that	because / since
give rise to	cause
greater number of	more
having regard to	about
if conditions are such that	if
in a considerable number of cases	often
in all cases	always
in case	if
in close proximity	close to / near
in connection with	about / concerning
increased relative to	more than
in excess of	more than / above
in few cases	sometimes / rarely

in many cases	often
in my opinion it is not an unjustified assumption that	I think
in the event that	if
in this connection it may be said that X	X
in view of the fact that	since / because
it is apparent, therefore, that	hence / therefore
it is of interest to note that X	X
it is often the case that	often
it is worth pointing out in this context that	note that
it seems to the present writer	I think
it will be seen upon examination of Table 2 that	Table 2 shows that
it would thus appear that	apparently / evidently
large proportion of	much / most
literature: it is reported in the literature that	others have argued / suggested / shown that
majority of	most
needless to say	don't say it!
of significant theoretical and practical importance	useful
of such strength that	so strong that
on the basis of	from / by / because
on the grounds that	because
owing to the fact that	because
pertaining to	on / about
possibility	may / perhaps / possibly / possible
prior to	before
proportion of	some
question: the test in question	this test
quite unique	unique
rather interesting	interesting
relatively	OMIT
reveal	show
serves the function of being	is
significantly	much / appreciably / definitely
(unless used in the strict statistical sense)	
similar in every detail	the same
small numbers of	few
sufficient number of	enough
subsequent to	after

take into consideration	consider
terminate	end
the question as to whether	whether
there can be little doubt that this is	this is probably
there is reason to believe	I think
utilize	use
with a view to	to
with reference / regard to	about / to / in
with the possible exception of	except
with the result that	so that

6. Useful reading

Many of the following guides to research writing are available either in Britannica (Porthania) under [Bgw] or Varia under [Vm]. Most of them contain detailed examples of documentation and references of various kinds, as well as practical advice on research methodology and academic style.

Barrass, R. (1982) *Students must write*. London: Methuen.

Barzun, J. and H.F. Graff. (1985) *The modern researcher*. 4th edition. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

Beardsley, M.C. (1967) *Modes of argument*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

Campbell, W.G. and S.V. Ballou. (1978) *Form and style*. Theses, reports, term papers. 5th edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Chicago Manual of Style, The. (1982) 13th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Council of Biology Editors Style Manual. (1983) 5th edition. Bethesda: Council of Biology Editors.

Cuba, L. (1993) *A short guide to writing about social science*. 2nd edition. New York: HarperCollins.

Cummins, M.H. and C. Slade. (1979) *Writing the research paper*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Day, R.A. (1983) *How to write and publish a scientific paper*. 2nd edition. Philadelphia: ISI Press.

Doubleday, N.F. (1969) *Writing the research paper*. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath.

Eco, U. (1989) *Oppineisuuden osoittaminen eli miten tutkielma tehdään*. Tampere: Vastapaino; Helsinki: Yliopilastalo.

Hodges, J.C., M.E. Whitten and S.S. Webb. (1986) *Harbrace College Handbook*. 10th edition. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

- Johannesson, N.L. (1986) *English language essays. Investigation method and writing strategies*. Stockholm: Stockholm University English Department.
- Lindsay, D. (1984) *A guide to scientific writing*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- Lyerly, R.H. (1966) *Essential requirements for the college research paper*. Cleveland: World Publishing.
- Manheimer, M.L. (1973) *Style manual. A guide for the preparation of reports and dissertations*. New York: Marcel Dekker.
- MHRA style book: Notes for authors, editors and writers of thesis*. (1991) Edited by Derek Brown et al. London: Modern Humanities Research Association. [Or later edition.]
- MLA Handbook for writers of research papers*. (1999) 5th edition. Edited by J. Gibaldi and W.S. Achtert. New York: Modern Language Association of America. [Or later edition.]
- O'Connor, M. and F.P. Woodford. (1975) *Writing scientific papers in English*. Amsterdam: Associated Scientific Publishers.
- Taylor, G. (1989) *The student's writing guide for the arts and social sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Leunen, M.-C. (1979) *A handbook for scholars*. New York: Knopf.
- Winkler, A.C. and J.R. McCuen. (1979) *Writing the research paper: a handbook*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Young, R.E., A.L. Becker and K.L. Pike. (1970) *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

7. On-line Resources for Guides to Research Writing

There are a number of writing guides available on the Internet. Those listed below are only a few. Please note that Internet addresses frequently change, and that if these no longer work, you can find other sources by searching for "MLA style", "Harvard style", "MHRA style", "LSA style", "Chicago style" or "APA style".

Academic Writers' Net Source.

<<http://www.people.memphis.edu/~prpalmer/>>

A Guide for Writing Research Papers based on Modern Language Association (MLA) Documentation. Humanities Department. Capital Community College. Hartford, Connecticut.

<<http://webster.commnet.edu/mla.htm>>.

Citing Bibliographical References — The Harvard System.

<<http://www.busmgt.ulst.ac.uk/eru/harvard.html>>

Citing Electronic Information in History Papers.

<<http://www.people.memphis.edu/~mcrouse/elcite.html>>

Harvard Citation and Referencing Guide.

<<http://www.lmu.ac.uk/lss/lis/docs/harvfron.htm>>

Harvard System. <http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/using_the_library/html/harvard_system.html>

LSA Stylesheet. <<http://www.cla.sc.edu/LING/resources/lstyle.htm>>.

MHRA Style Book Home Page. <<http://www.mhra.org.uk/StyleGuide/>>

MHRA Style Sheet. <<http://www.wkac.ac.uk/cul/cmolv/website/ResearchMethods060.html>>

MLA Online. <<http://www.mla.org>>. Access “MLA Style” > “Frequently Asked Questions about MLA Style” > “How do I document sources from the World Wide Web in my works-cited list”.

Modern Language Association Formatting.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html>

World Wide Web Research Tools. <<http://www.virtualsalt.com/search.htm>>.

Writer’s Handbook: Academic Writing. University of Wisconsin-Madison.

<<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/AcademicWriting.html>>.

Writer’s Workshop. University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.

<<http://www.english.vivc.edu/cws/wworkshop/techniquesmenu.html>>