



MA in Applied Linguistics

MAE800 Research Methodology in Applied Linguistics

Course Description

Introduction

This course focuses on research methodology in applied linguistics and covers a range of theoretical, practical, and ethical issues in applied linguistics research, with an emphasis on language teaching and learning. It examines principles for undertaking empirical research, introduces main quantitative and qualitative methods for conducting small-scale research in the language classroom, and provides hands-on experience with research designs, instruments for data collection, quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis, evaluation of published research, and research report writing.

Objectives

This course aims not only to provide you with the knowledge and skills that you will need to plan and conduct research in fulfillment of the requirement for an MA (Applied Linguistics) degree; it also aims to prepare you for educational research in future. Upon completion of this course, you will have developed

- ✓ an understanding of major research perspectives, important principles for research design, and commonly used research methodologies;
- ✓ the ability to select an appropriate research topic, formulate researchable questions, and write a research proposal;
- ✓ a working knowledge of essential research tools for investigating identified topics and questions;
- ✓ skills for collecting, compiling, and analyzing different types of research data;
- ✓ a heightened awareness of practical and ethical issues in doing second language research.

Teaching Format

There are twelve 3-hour sessions. In general, a session begins with a lecture that provides essential information about a selected topic. This is followed by individual or group work on tasks that enable you to examine relevant research in the field of applied linguistics, gain hands-on experience with a particular research method, and sharpen your understanding of the issues in question.

Assessment

You are assessed with two in-class quizzes and two written assignments. For detailed information, see Appendix A.

Topics and Schedule

<i>Session</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic & Required Reading</i>	<i>Lecturer</i>	<i>Venue</i>
1	14 Jan	Introduction to research Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 1 & 2	Dr Hu	NIE 3-01-TR307
2	21 Jan	Quantitative research: Experimental designs (I) Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 3 & 5 Macaro & Erler (2008)	Dr Hu	NIE 3-01-TR307
3	28 Jan	Quantitative research: Experimental designs (II) Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 3 & 5 Macaro & Erler (2008)	Dr Hu	NIE 3-01-TR307
4	4 Feb	Quantitative research: Survey designs (I) Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 4 & 5 Hu (2005)	Dr Hu	NIE 3-01-TR307
5	18 Feb	Quantitative research: Survey designs (II) Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 4 & 5 Hu (2005)	Dr Hu	NIE 3-01-TR307
6	25 Feb	Quantitative data analysis: Guidelines & Descriptive statistics Dörnyei (2007): Chapter 9 Hu & Lam (2010)	Dr Hu	NIE 3-B1-04
7	4 Mar	Quantitative data analysis: Inferential statistics (I) Dörnyei (2007): Chapter 9 Hu & Lam (2010)	Dr Hu	NIE 3-B1-04
8	11 Mar	Quantitative data analysis: Inferential statistics (II) Dörnyei (2007): Chapter 9 Hu & Lam (2010)	Dr Hu	NIE 3-B1-04
9	25 Mar e-learning	Qualitative research: Case studies Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 6 & 10 Leki (2007)	Dr Young	NIE 3-01-TR307
10	1 Apr	Qualitative research: Ethnography Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 6 & 10 Back (2011)	Dr Young	NIE 3-01-TR307
11	8 Apr	Qualitative research: Grounded theory Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 10 & 13 Garrett & Young (2009)	Dr Young	NIE 3-01-TR307
12	15 Apr	Qualitative research: Narrative inquiry Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 6, 11, & 13 Spilchuk (2009a, 2009b)	Dr Young	NIE 3-01-TR307
13	22 Apr	Presenting your research findings Dörnyei (2007): Chapters 12 & 13	Dr Young	NIE 3-01-TR307

Reading

Required Textbook and Articles

- Back, M. (2011). Legitimate peripheral participation and language learning: Two Quichua learners in a transnational community. *Language Learning*, 61, 1039-1057.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Garrett, P., & Young, R. F. (2009). Theorizing affect in foreign language learning: An analysis of one learner's responses to a communicative-based Portuguese course. *The Modern Language Journal*, 93, 209-226.
- Hu, G. W. (2005). Contextual influences on instructional practices: A Chinese case for an ecological approach to ELT. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39, 635-660.
- Hu, G. W., & Lam, S. T. E. (2010). Issues of cultural appropriateness and pedagogical efficacy: Exploring peer review in a second language writing class. *Instructional Science*, 38, 371-394.
- Leki, I. (2007). *Undergraduates in a second language: Challenges and complexities of academic literacy development*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Macaro, E., & Erler, L. (2008). Raising the achievement of young-beginner readers of French through strategy instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, 29, 90-119.
- Spilchuk, B. (2009a). Crossing borders and negotiating conflict: Lucian's story of teaching English from within the Singapore Primary Classroom. *Asia TEFL Journal*, 6(2), 53-73.
- Spilchuk, B. (2009). Shila's story of teaching English/ESL in a Singapore primary neighbourhood school *Asian EFL Journal*, 33, 37-55.

Suggested Reading

- American Psychological Association. (2009). *Mastering APA style: Student's workbook and training guide* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Bailey, K. M., & Nunan, D. (1996). *Voices from the language classroom*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, J. D. (2001). *Using surveys in language programs*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, J. D., & Rodgers, T. S. (2002). *Doing second language research*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching: A guide for practitioners*. New York: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.). London and New York: Routledge.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods approaches*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Duff, P. A. (2008). *Case study research in applied linguistics*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Ellis, R., & Barkhuizen, G. (2005). *Analysing learner language*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Gass, S. M., & Mackey, A. (2007). *Data elicitation for second and foreign language research*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Hatch, E., & Lazaraton, A. (1991). *The research manual: Design and statistics for applied linguistics*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Huck, S. W. (2008). *Reading statistics and research* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Larson-Hall, J. (2010). *A guide to doing statistics in second language research using SPSS*. New York: Routledge.
- Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- McDonough, J., & McDonough, S. (1997). *Research methods for English language teachers*. London: Arnold.
- McKay, S. L. (2006). *Researching second language classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Newby, P. (2010). *Research methods for education*. Harlow, England: Pearson Education.
- Paltridge, B., & Phakiti, A. (Eds.). (2010). *Continuum companion to research methods in applied linguistics*. London: Continuum.
- Wallace, M. J. (1998). *Action research for language teachers*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Young, R. F. (2009). *Discursive practice in language learning and teaching*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Instructors

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Phone: 6790-3394

Appendix A: Assessment

Components, Weights, and Due Dates

Assessment for MAE 800 consists of the following components with their weightage and due dates:

1. Class quiz on quantitative research	15%	11 Mar
2. Class quiz on qualitative research	15%	22 Apr
3. Quantitative research proposal	35%	18 Mar
4. Qualitative research proposal	35%	29 Apr

Class Quiz on Quantitative Research

This quiz takes 15 – 20 minutes to complete in class. It consists of true/false and multiple choice questions. These questions are based on the six lectures on quantitative research and analyses as well as the required readings for the lectures. They cover basic knowledge of quantitative research, including key concepts, research designs, sampling methods, instrumentation, statistical analysis, and common misperceptions.

Class Quiz on Qualitative Research

The quiz will test your familiarity with basic concepts, data collection, data analysis in qualitative research. Topics will include case studies, ethnography, grounded theory, and narrative inquiry. The quiz takes 15-20 minutes and consists of a combination of multiple choice questions and open-ended questions requiring brief answers.

Written Assignments

There are two written assignments. They require you to design a study that makes use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to address a research problem of practical interest and relevance.

There are numerous topics of practical interest and relevance to language teaching and learning in the classroom, and many of these topics lend themselves to both quantitative and qualitative research. Some potential research topics are listed below:

1. Effectiveness of an innovative instructional method, recently developed learning materials, a new curriculum, top-down promoted instructional activities, a recently introduced test format, a course or program currently run;
2. Influences on language learning outcomes of individual learner differences such as learning styles, learning strategies, language learning aptitude, motivation, autonomy, anxiety, self-esteem;
3. Students' and teachers' views of, attitudes towards, and experiences with particular teaching methods, learning materials, curricula, significant issues, perceived priorities, recommended solutions to identified problems;
4. Relationships of various teacher factors such as experience, personality, pedagogical knowledge, professional training, and attitudes to language learning outcomes;
5. Development and assessment of intercultural competence;
6. Identity and language learning;
7. Effects of different social, cultural, economic, educational contexts on language learning outcomes.

Assignment 1: Quantitative research proposal

This assignment requires you to plan a quantitative study and write a detailed research proposal.

Identify one research topic that interests you. Design a quantitative study that you would have the necessary resources to carry out, and write up a research proposal. Your proposal should contain and will be marked for the following information:

1. An informative title
2. Introduction
 - a) Clear statement of your research problem
 - b) Clear delineation of your research objectives
 - c) Clearly formulated research question(s) and a succinct rationale grounded in the research literature and/or your teaching context (It is optional to present the research questions after the literature review.)
3. Literature review (a minimum of 10 well chosen references for this section)
 - a) More detailed and critical review of the research referred to in the introductory section
 - b) Coherent and critical discussion of other relevant studies
 - c) Insightful identification of significant issues for further research that would be addressed in your proposed study (i.e., your research questions and hypotheses are intended to address these issues.)
4. Research design
 - a) Precisely formulated null and alternative hypotheses, clear operational definitions of the independent and dependent variables
 - b) Succinct rationale for the alternative hypotheses grounded in the research literature
 - c) Clear statement of the research methodology (i.e., experimental or survey-based) to be adopted in your proposed study
 - d) Succinct rationale for the methodological choice (i.e., why the chosen methodology is appropriate for addressing your research questions)
5. Research methods
 - a) Definition of the population to which you would generalise the findings of the proposed study
 - b) Clear description of the method of sampling, specification of the sample size, and explanation of the rationale for the sampling method proposed
 - c) Clear description of how data collection instruments are to be developed or what existing instruments are to be used; explicit discussion of validity and reliability issues concerning the data collection instruments
 - d) Clear description of the exact procedures for carrying out the study
6. Data analysis
 - a) Clear explanation of the method(s) of analysis to be used to answer each of your research questions and to test each of your hypotheses
 - b) Descriptive statistics to be reported
 - c) Inferential statistics to be reported

*Your research proposal should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words (excluding references). It should be submitted in **hard copy** to Dr Hu Guangwei by 5pm, 18 March, 2013. A **soft copy** should also be submitted to 'Safe Assignment' in Blackboard by the stated deadline. It should be noted that 'Safe Assignment' can detect plagiarism, an act of academic dishonesty that is subject to severe penalties at ELL.*

Assignment 2: Qualitative research proposal

This assignment builds on what you have done for Assignment 1, the quantitative research proposal. You are expected to address the same research topic using a qualitative research design. What issues have not been addressed in the quantitative research proposal? How can you address these issues through the collection of descriptive and qualitative data?

1. Summarize your research problem, objective and quantitative research methodology presented in Assignment 1 (maximum: 300 words).
2. Identify an issue or question in your research topic that the quantitative approach does not address. Explain clearly why this issue or question is significant (maximum: 300 words).
3. Formulate a research question for the study based on (Step 2).
4. Identify and describe the case/participants for your qualitative study.
5. State the method(s) and explain the rationale for your choice. Explain how you will address issues of validity and reliability.
6. Describe the exact procedures for carrying out the study.
7. Explain the method(s) of analysis and how you plan to present your data.

*Your assignment should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words (excluding references). It should be submitted in **hard copy** to Professor Young by 5pm, 29 April, 2013. A **soft copy** should also be submitted to 'Safe Assignment' in Blackboard by the deadline.*

Common Requirements for Assignments 1 and 2

Both assignments should meet the following requirements:

1. If your proposal replicates another study (published or unpublished), you must acknowledge this and cite the original study clearly. Should you fail to do this, you will be considered guilty of plagiarism.
2. The assignment should be submitted with ELL's assignment cover page indicating the course code and title, assignment title, your name and matriculation number, and the name of the lecturer to whom the work is submitted.
3. The assignment should be word-processed, double-spaced, and printed on one side of A-4 sized paper. All pages should be numbered consecutively.
4. The assignment should contain a list of references including **all and only the works cited in the assignment**. The references and citations should conform to APA (American Psychological Association) conventions (See Appendix B for more information).
5. A **word count** must be given at the end of each assignment. The word count should exclude the cover page and references but include tables and figures.

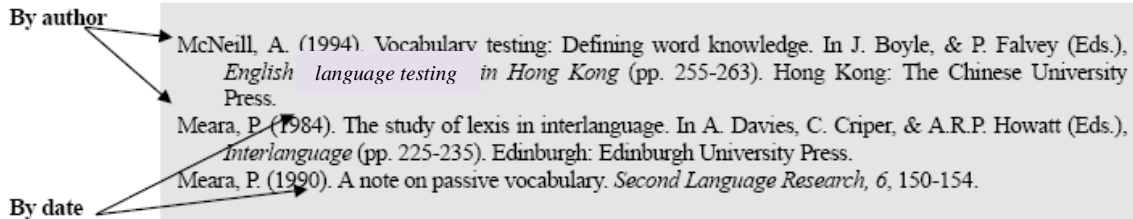
Appendix B: How to write APA citations and references

The following information on the APA style is retrieved from: www.cle.ied.edu.hk/aa/citation.pdf

The Reference List

ORGANISING A LIST

You should organise your references alphabetically by author. When there are multiple publications by the same author, you should order them by date of publication.



WRITING A REFERENCE FOR A PRINTED MATERIAL

There are four basic types of reference which are for : (1) a book; (2) an article in a journal; (3) an article in a collection; (4) a report, an academic paper, or a published/unpublished thesis. These four types of reference follow slightly different conventions of ordering, punctuation, and use of underlining or italics.

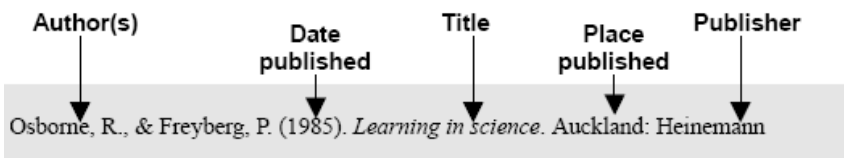
You should follow the conventions illustrated in the following examples when writing your references.

Italics and underlining

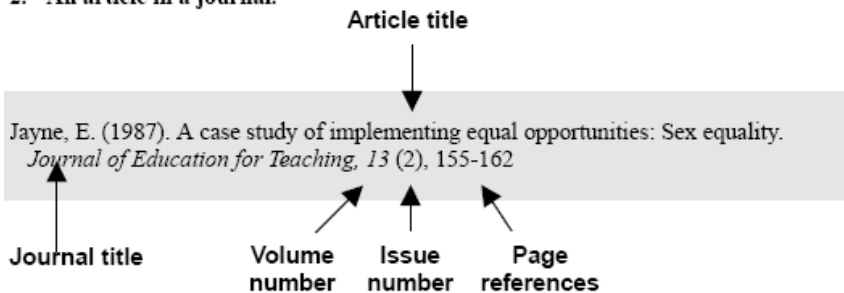
Use italics for word-processed papers.

Use underlining for typed and handwritten papers.

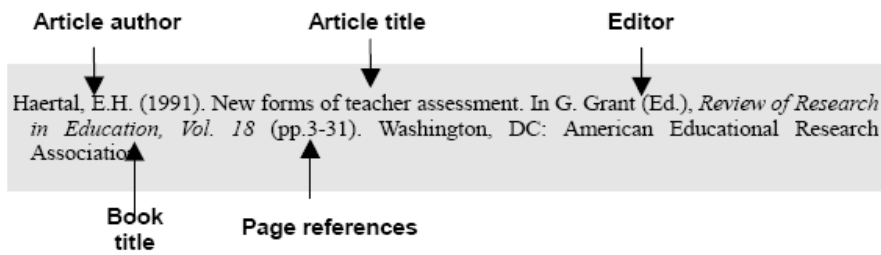
1. A book.



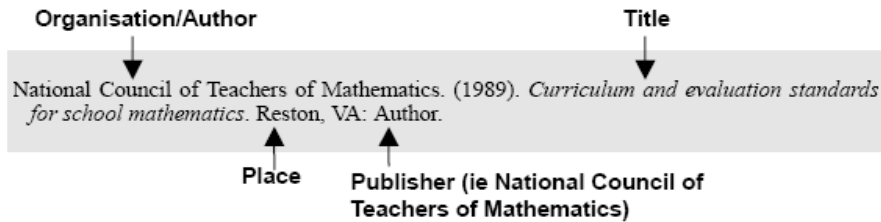
2. An article in a journal.



3. An article in a collection.



4. A report, academic paper, published/unpublished thesis.

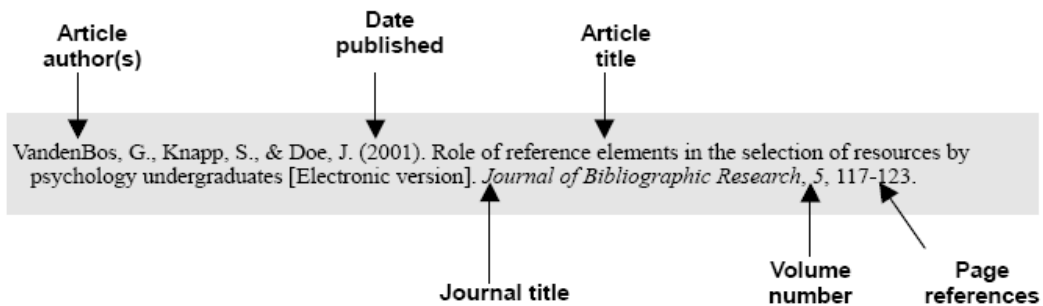


WRITING A REFERENCE FOR AN ELECTRONIC SOURCE

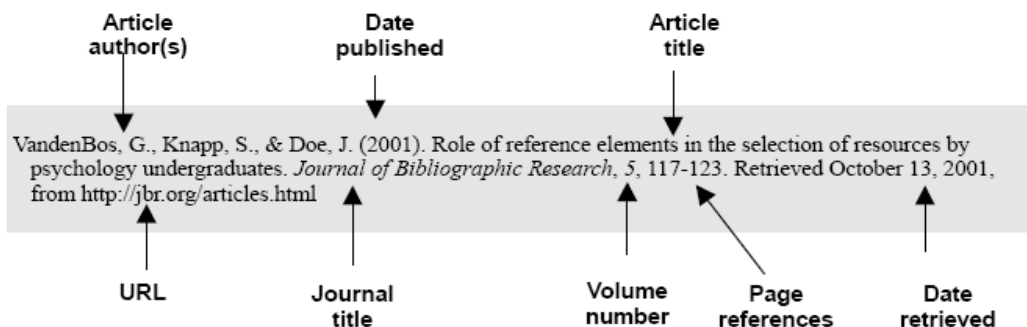
Basically, a reference for an online article includes the following components: authors (if available), document title or description, date of publication or retrieval, and address (URL).

1. Internet articles based on a print source

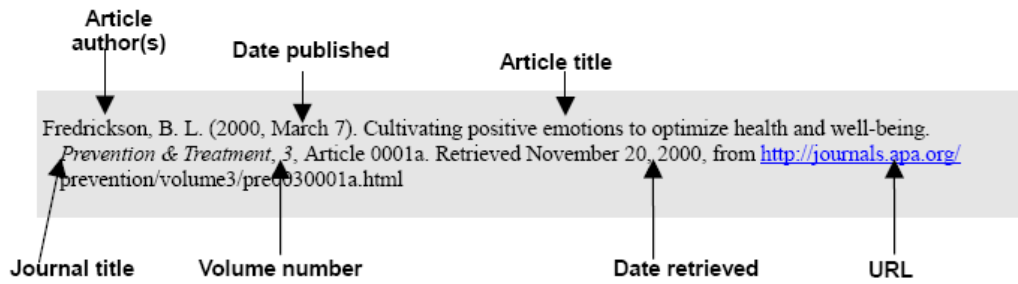
If the online version of an article is an exact duplicate of its printed version and is unlikely to have additional analyses and data attached, the reference should be as follows:



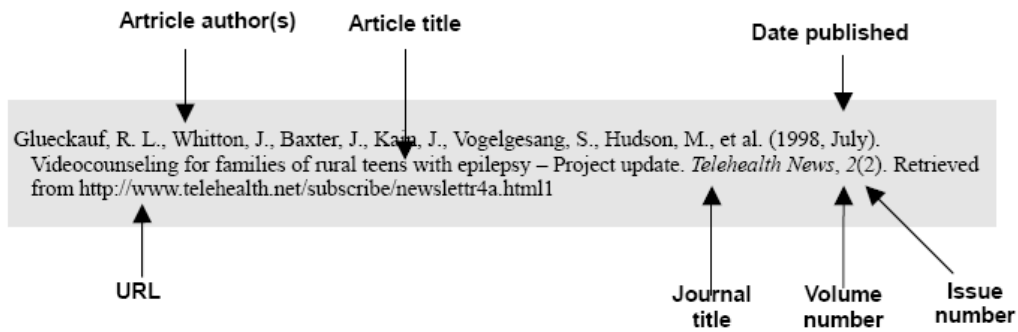
If you are referencing an online article that you have reason to believe has been changed (e.g., the format differs from the print version or page numbers are not indicated) or that includes additional data or commentaries, you need to add the date of retrieval and the URL of the article.



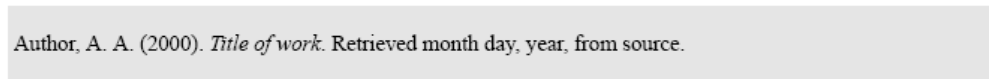
2. Article in an Internet-only journal



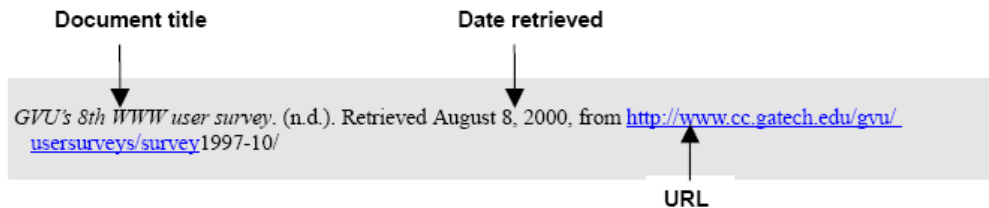
3. Article in an Internet-only newsletter



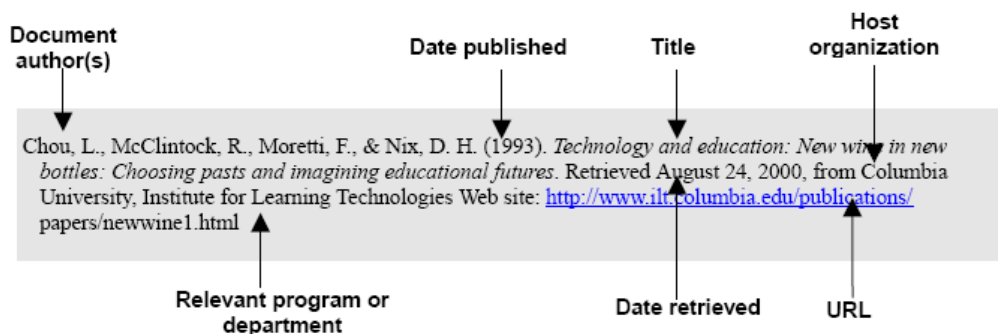
4. Online documents in general



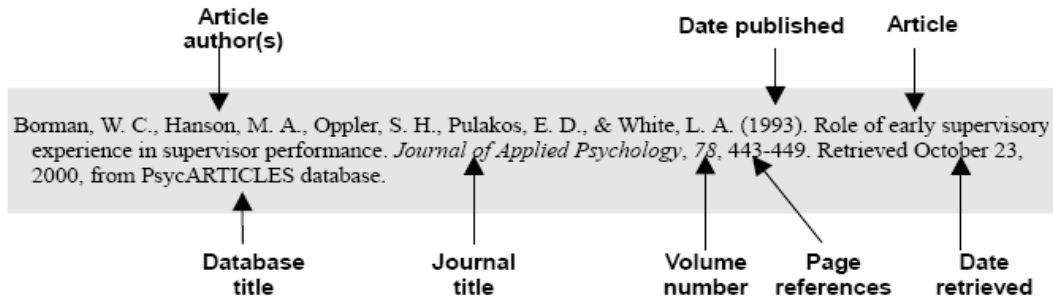
5. Stand-alone document, no author identified, no date



6. Document available on university program or department web site



7. Electronic copy of a journal article, three to five authors, retrieved from database



In-text Reference

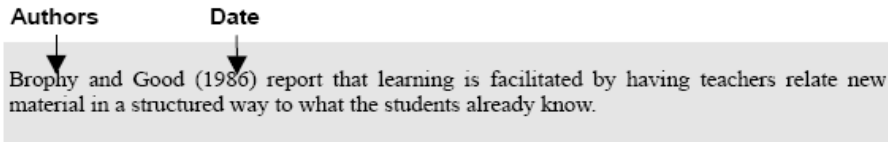
When you use other people’s works in your paper to provide, for example, evidence of background reading, to present a key idea, or to quote directly, these works must be listed in your Reference section. The examples below give basic guidelines as to how to make in-text references so that the works can be easily found in your Reference section.

REFERENCING WORKS

You must give the name of the author and the date of publication. Followings are examples of the commonest ways of doing this.

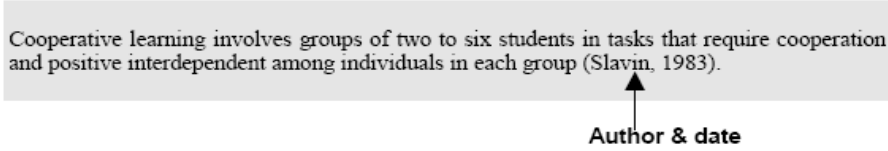
Within the main body of text

The date of the publication immediately follows the authors and is placed in brackets.



Outside the main body of text

The author’s name and date of publication are placed in brackets within or at the end of the main text.



Note how references that contain more than one work are made :

