

FAQ - FINAL PAPER LIN200

Q: When do we use page numbers in citations?

- In two cases:
 - (1) Quoting/including a direct quotation or giving a piece of data from a particular source; and
 - (2) When citing (a paraphrase or presentation of) a specific idea from the paper/article, rather than just a general statement/argument expressed in the article.
- **Tip:** Think about page numbers creating clarity for the reader: if he/she wants to read more about the idea you provided an in-text citation for, or wants to find the piece of data/quote you cite from a particular source, will he/she have to search through the entire article for it? Where it's possible to provide a specific reference by adding a page number, you should do so.

Q: If I use one source for multiple points in a paragraph/section, do I need to cite the same author for each point, or just once?

- Focus on clarity of attribution. Ask yourself, is it clear, from how you've set up the paragraph, where the idea for each sentence is coming from?
- Often it will not be enough to cite the author only at the end/beginning of the paragraph if you have paraphrased/represented his/her ideas throughout. If you have any doubt that a reader will mistake one of your source's points for your own, you should add an in-text citation.
- Other strategies for making it clear that an entire paragraph/chunk of text owes much to a particular source:
 - Start with a full in-text citation, and then for every subsequent point in the paragraph, introduce it just by referring to the author's name:
 - ***Smith (2010:34)** provides an argument in support of the typology discussed above. **His** main point of evidence are (a)....(b)... (c) ... **Smith** further provides a counter-example to **Johnson's (2009)** claim that.... However, **Smith** misinterprets **Johnson's** key example, and therefore his argument is not a convincing refutation of **Johnson's** claims.*
 - Notice that the underlined sentence is the paragraph-writer's claim, *not* Smith's or Johnson's (or, at least, that's how it will be interpreted by the reader!)
 - If you introduce a quote or something you think requires a page number within the above example paragraph, you can put a full citation or page number at the end:
 - *[...] Smith then claims that "[Insert Quotation...]" (**Smith 2010:36**).*
 - *[...] Smith then claims that "[Insert Quotation...]" (**p. 36**).*
 - Another strategy you can use is to write an introductory sentence to a paragraph or section that makes it clear you are about to provide a summary of Source X:
 - *Below, I briefly summarize Smith (2010)'s main points regarding...*
 - If you use this strategy, make sure that when you transition back to your own ideas/points, even if just for a sentence or two, you make it clear that you are no longer summarizing another source!

Q: What's the preferred method of citing? (e.g. MLA, APA, Chicago)

- Linguistics usually uses APA, or a variant of it (LSA) that is in accord with the style guide of a particular journal (e.g. *Language*).

Q: How do I cite an idea that is not in the actual work I've read but is *only cited by that work*?

- Say, for instance, that you want to cite Johnson (2009), but you don't have Johnson (2009) you have only read Johnson's ideas as expressed in Altman (2013). You can either...
 - (a) find the original source, Johnson (2009), read it (or the relevant portion) and cite that source; or,
 - (b) cite it as: *E.g., Johnson (2009), as cited in Altman (2013)*
 - Note that (a) is often a good idea because it is not uncommon for ideas to be accidentally misrepresented or data accidentally miscopied from one source to another. Checking the original source, if you have access to it, will ensure your own work accurately represents the original source.

Q: Can I use "I" in my paper?

- Sometimes. It's not uncommon for linguists to set up arguments, for example, by saying, "I argue/propose/claim that...." Papers with multiple authors may similarly write, "We argue that..."
- However, you should be careful to avoid an overly informal style, which can sometimes accompany the use of "I" in other contexts.
- Try skimming a few linguistics sources to see how the authors use first person pronouns if you're still confused!

FURTHER SOURCES TO HELP YOU WITH WRITING IN LINGUISTICS:

- <http://www.linguisticsociety.org/files/style-sheet.pdf>
 - A very detailed guide on finer points of style, following the style guideline of one of the major linguistics journals, *Language*.
- Macaulay, Monica. 2006. *Surviving Linguistics: A Guide for Graduate Students*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press. (Especially pages 32 – 38; 43 – 45; 50 – 63)
 - Even though this book is aimed at graduate students, most of the book deals with very important questions about the kinds of writing linguists do, and the mechanics of writing in linguistics, information that undergraduates might also find very useful.