

Notes on Proper Citation/Quotation in Academic Writing

This document provides a short survey on citing/quoting properly in academic writing. Since it cannot cover every aspect of the subject, it is recommended to read further and more extensive literature about it before writing a thesis/paper.

Information, facts and any kind of knowledge taken from other sources writing a thesis/paper have always to be marked in a way that the recipient can find them in the original source without much effort. Generally, different ways of citing/quoting can be used for this. But it is important to use only one way within one piece of work to ensure consistency.

Citations/Quotations

Direct Quotation

If a sentence (or part of a sentence) is taken literally from a source, it is called a direct quotation and has to be put into quotation marks. The source has to be named directly after the quotation. Omissions within the quoted sentence have to be indicated by square brackets. The original meaning of the sentence should not be biased by the omission. Spelling errors should not be corrected but indicated by [sic].

Example: „Although the top 0.1% is a small group [...] carefully measuring its wealth is important“ (Saez and Zucman 2016, 521).

Citation

If a statement is not taken literally from a source, but paraphrased, it is called a citation. It is not to be put into quotation marks. In this case the reference begins with “cf.” (for the Latin *confer*, which means *compare*).

Example: Within the US, a strong rise in income inequality can be observed since the 1970s (cf. Saez und Zucman 2016, 520).

Quoting from secondary sources

If a sentence already marked as a quotation in the source is copied, the source is called a secondary source. In this case, both the original source (source A) and the secondary source (source B) have to be named. This looks like the following: (Author A 2000, 50, cited by/in Author B 2010, 99). In the reference list only the secondary source has to be listed. Secondary sources should only be used if the original source is not available.

Ways of Citing/Quoting

American Style/In-Text-Citation/Quotation

The American style uses short references within the text. These references include the last name(s) of the author(s), the year of publication and the page number(s) (see examples above). The complete source is given in the reference list at the end of the thesis/paper (without detailed page numbers). If one source is used more than once, a new in-text-citation/quotation has to be provided. Within economics journals it is the most common way of citing/quoting.

German Style/Footnotes

The German style uses a footnote for each citation/quote. The complete source is given at the end of the page where the citation/quote is used. If one source is used more than once, a shortened reference instead of the complete source can be given at the end of the page the second time. All cited/quoted sources have to be listed within the reference list at the end of the thesis/paper as well (without detailed page numbers).

Special Case: American Style with Footnotes

If the American style is applied, footnotes can be used for explanatory notes and remarks the author does not want to include in the continuous text. In this case, footnotes cannot be used for references.

For the American as well as the German style there exist numerous versions regarding the exact design of the references (e.g. Harvard style, Chicago style or APA style for the American way of citing/quoting). It is important to choose one style at the beginning and not to switch within the thesis/paper.

Reference List

No matter which style is used, there has to be a detailed reference list at the end of the thesis/paper. Sources have to be listed alphabetically in regard to the last name of the authors. Sources from the same author have to be ranked by the year of publication. If several sources from the same author are published within the same year, a letter, starting with a, is added to the year within the American in-text-reference. This “ranking” has to be maintained within the reference list.

Example:

Goldsmith, Raymond W. 1962. *The National Wealth of the United States in the Postwar Period*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Goldsmith, Raymond W. 1985. *Comparative National Balance Sheets: A Study of Twenty Countries, 1688-1978*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hornstein, Andreas. 2009a. “Notes on Collateral Constraints in a Simple Model of Housing.” *FRB Richmond Working Paper* 09-3.

Hornstein, Andreas. 2009b. “Problems for a Fundamental Theory of House Prices.” *FRB Richmond Economic Quarterly* 95, 1-24.

For all examples the Chicago style was used. An overview how to use the Chicago style can be found at: www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. Use the “author-date” system.