Writing with Integrity: Citing Like an Insider

The most recent pedagogical approach to writing with integrity positions writers as emerging scholars grappling with the *intertextual structure* (why and how one text relates to others) of academic and professional writing—writing that positions emerging scholars as part of a dynamic research community with something to say. This means we move beyond the mechanics and ethics of citation to consider some generative questions about the *functions* of citations in scholarly and professional writing.

Here, we introduce 10 functions of citations that advanced academic writers use. In the examples below, **bolded** text in each excerpt indicates the function.

For a review of the basic functions of citation practices, see Citation Practices in Academic and Professional Writing.

10 Functions of Citations Used by Advanced Academic Writers

1) Continuing a Research Tradition
   Presenting the research as a useful extension of existing research.
   Example:

   > **Extending earlier studies** that reveal the strong influence of local micro- and macroclimate on the mean and variance in body temperature (Huey & Preston Webster, 1976; Navas et al., 2013), we find that NEON pitfall arrays across North America demonstrate a clear linear relationship between a community's T_{ADmax} and its locality's T_{max}, accounting for 87% of the geographic variation. Although constraint traits like population CT_{max}s are frequently assumed to be fixed by deep time and phylogeny (Searcy & Bradley Shaffer, 2016; Sibly et al., 2012), the emergent properties of ecosystems like T_{ADmax} appear highly malleable, tracking local temperature.
   >
   > (Kaspari et al., 2023, p. 5; *Ecology*)

2) Aligning with an Intellectual Camp
   Indicating agreement with a specific school/line of thought over debates on specific issues in the discipline.
   Example:

   > Our modeling assumes that high pore pressures are maintained in the altered zone. We highlight that both volcano deformation and high pore fluid pressures can result in fracturing, which can decrease pore pressure. **We envisage a scenario, similar to that described in** Kennedy et al. (2020), in which fractures are eventually sealed by hydrothermal minerals within the alteration zone, allowing pore pressure to increase again (i.e., long-term high pore pressure is punctuated by transient pore pressure reductions).
   >
   > (Heap et al., 2021, p. 1351; *Geology*)

3) Justifying the Method
   Aligning with others' works, in terms of the methodology being adopted, allows writers to justify their choice of methodology, and address possible questions or objections from the readers.
   Example:

   > Among the many prevalent nonnarrative text types in school discourses, **we selected only** the argumentative text to assess knowledge of global discourse structure. Given the argumentative nature of academic language (Rex, Thomas, & Engel, 2010; Toulmin, 1958),[4] skills in structuring argumentative texts (i.e., thesis, arguments, examples, and conclusion) were hypothesized to be associated to school literacy during the middle school years.
   >
   > (Uccelli et al., 2015, p. 1085; *Applied Psycholinguistics*)

4) Positionality
In academic writing, authors take a position—express their viewpoint—to represent how they stand in relation to their own propositions and arguments and to those of others.
Example:

> **Previous studies** have integrated data from both of these data sets to evaluate cell lines as models of specific tumor types. For example, Domcke et al. focused primarily on copy number alterations and mutation data to evaluate cell lines as models of high-grade serous ovarian carcinomas (HGSOC)[3]. […] Similarly, Chen et al. compared hepatocellular carcinoma primary tumor samples to cell lines using transcriptomic data and found that nearly half of the hepatocellular carcinoma cell lines in CCLE do not resemble their primary tumors[4]. In breast cancer, Jiang et al. compared gene expression, copy number alterations, mutations, and protein expression between cell lines and primary tumor samples[5]. […] **While these studies provide insight into** specific tumor types, **here we hope to** provide researchers with a pan-cancer resource that is, **to the best of our knowledge**, the most comprehensive to date.
>
> (Yu et al., 2019; p. 2; *Nature Communications;* Ellipses added)

5) Gaining Distance
At times writers make a distinction between their own approach/method and that of others, in order to position themselves differently to those they are citing.
Example:

> In the third step, we reviewed empirical evidence from developmental linguistics focused on adolescent language development (Bailey, 2007; Benelli, Belacchi, Gini, & Lucangeli, 2006; Berman, 2004; Berman & Ravid, 2009; Berman & Verhoeven, 2002; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Derewianka, 2003; Nippold, 2007; Ravid & Tolchinsky, 2002; Schleppegrell, 2001, 2004; Uccelli et al., 2013). […] **However, these studies** tend to focus on spontaneously generated texts usually produced by skilled language users from middle-class environments. **In our study, we do not** rely on the spontaneous display of these linguistic skills, **but instead we focus on** directly assessing them in an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse sample of students.
>
> (Uccelli et al., 2015, pp.1083-1084; *Applied Psycholinguistics*; Ellipsis added)

6) Establishing a Research Gap
Writers commonly cite other literature to identify a research/knowledge gap, thus creating a research space and justifying the current research topic.
Example:

> **While** a variety of fisheries IEEFMs, often referred to as bio-economic models, have been developed in the past, **only a small number of** reviews comparing their capabilities and implementation in practice have been published. For example, Conrad (1995) and Knowler (2002) review models in which environmental influences are interlinked with economic aspects. A general introduction and overview of bio-economic models can be found already in Seijo, Defeo, and Salas (1998), **but** applications to specific empirical cases **remain limited**.
>
> (Nielson et al., 2017, p. 3; *Fish and Fisheries*)

7) Self-Promotion
Writers make reference to their own work to demonstrate that they are building upon and extending the work they have done already, thus promoting their authority and credibility in a particular research area.
Example:

> **I have argued elsewhere (Kelly, 2014)** that *DSM-III* standardization perdures across editions. In a study of the *DSM-5* draft diagnostic criteria for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, I show how the

textual standardization of discursive practices contributes to the cultural visibility and portability of the diagnostic criteria post–*DSM-III*. The prescriptive imperative to develop a "common language" for American psychiatry coupled with the objective to adopt a scientific model based in what was *publicly visible* in patients resulted in *public visibility* for *DSM-III* and subsequent editions.

(Kelly, 2020, p. 227; *Rhetoric of Health & Medicine;* emphasis original)

8) Joining the Conversation

After summarizing the scholarly conversation and pointing out the knowledge gap or inconsistency in the literature, writers join the conversation by announcing their own study, indicating how they are going to address the gap identified earlier.

Example:

Studies show that bamboo has lower GWP values and superior environmental benefits compared with other materials (e.g., wood, metals and plastics) (Kavanagh et al., 2020; Gu et al., 2018; Salcido et al., 2016; van der Lugt et al., 2015; Zea Escamilla et al., 2018). However, the functional units, system boundaries and other model assumptions used in past studies vary significantly, leading to large uncertainty in interpreting and comparing the LCA results. **This study addresses** the necessity to understand and harmonize the key modeling assumptions by reviewing the existing bamboo LCA literature that investigated the GWP values of various bamboo products.

(Gan et al., 2022, p. 3; *Science of the Total Environment*)

9) Space Saving

At times, authors use strategies to save space (e.g., brief parenthetical asides). One of the benefits of these strategies is to keep readers focused on the text at hand, rather than having them distracted by tangential details (e.g., lengthy methodological explanations or definitions).

Example:

In PRIMIR we suggest that 14-month-old infants might weigh these paralinguistic cues as heavily as they do lexically contrastive information, and thus can only attend to them if they are highlighted and/or if the computational demands of the word learning situation are minimized **(see Werker & Fennell, 2004, for an earlier version of this as a "computational resources" explanation).**

(Werker, 2018, p. 714; *Applied Psycholinguistics*)

10) Disputation

Sometimes, authors must evaluate a study or a group of studies by pointing out problems or flaws, for example, in the study design, methodology, or theoretical framework.

Example:

Although it is true that more recently informants have been consulted about their citing behaviour (e.g. Bonzi and Snyder, 1991; Brooks, 1985, 1986; Cano, 1989; Case and Higgins, 2000; Liu, 1993; Shadish et al., 1995; Snyder and Bonzi, 1998; Vinkler, 1987), as White and Wang (1997) point out, **this body of research also suffers from obvious methodological weaknesses**. Once again, these studies presented informants with ready-made checklists which they were encouraged to equate with their own citation functions and motivations. While some of these studies take account of informants' ad lib explanations, **such input is minimal**. Consider, for instance, Shadish et al.'s (1995) research. Even though the researchers obtained some of the categories contained in their checklists by means of interviews with researchers, these same informants **were not included in their actual study.**

(Harwood, 2009, pp. 497-498; *Journal of Pragmatics*)