

chicago style for citing sources linguistics

Understanding Chicago Style for Citing Sources in Linguistics

chicago style for citing sources linguistics is a critical component for scholars and researchers in the field, ensuring academic integrity and clear attribution of ideas. Mastering this citation method, whether through notes-bibliography or author-date systems, is paramount for producing well-researched and credible linguistic work. This article will delve deeply into the intricacies of Chicago style as applied to linguistics, covering everything from basic principles to the specific formatting requirements for various source types commonly encountered in linguistic research, such as journal articles, books, dissertations, and even fieldwork data. We will explore the nuances of both the notes-bibliography and author-date systems, providing practical examples and guidance to help you navigate the complexities of academic citation in linguistics. Understanding these elements will not only improve the quality of your writing but also facilitate a smoother submission and publication process.

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Understanding Chicago Style for Citing Sources in Linguistics

Chicago style, formally known as The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), offers two primary systems for citation: the notes-bibliography system and the author-date system. Both systems aim to provide readers with the necessary information to locate the sources consulted by the author. In linguistics, where research often draws upon a wide array of theoretical texts, empirical studies, historical documents, and sometimes even unpublished fieldwork, a consistent and precise citation method is indispensable.

The choice between the notes-bibliography system and the author-date system is often dictated by the specific journal, publisher, or academic department. Linguistics, being a diverse field, sees usage of both. The notes-bibliography system relies on numbered footnotes or endnotes for in-text citations, accompanied by a comprehensive bibliography at the end of the work. Conversely, the author-date system uses parenthetical in-text citations that include the author's last name and the publication year, followed by a reference list containing full source details.

The Two Systems: Notes-Bibliography vs. Author-Date

The fundamental difference between the two Chicago style systems lies in how in-text references are presented and how the full source details are organized. The notes-bibliography system is often preferred in fields with a strong humanities tradition, including some areas of linguistics, particularly those engaging with historical linguistics or discourse analysis where extensive commentary might be required. It allows for detailed explanatory notes alongside the citation itself.

The author-date system, on the other hand, is more common in social sciences and natural sciences and is also widely adopted in many empirical and theoretical linguistics subfields. Its proponents argue that it is often more streamlined for readers who are primarily interested in tracking the lineage of ideas and evidence. Regardless of the system chosen, the goal remains the

same: to acknowledge sources accurately and enable readers to verify and explore the information presented.

Core Principles of Chicago Style Citation

Several core principles underpin Chicago style citation, regardless of which system is employed. Accuracy is paramount; every detail in a citation must be correct, from author names and publication dates to page numbers and journal titles. Consistency is also key; once a system is chosen, it must be applied uniformly throughout the entire document. Clarity ensures that readers can easily understand which source is being referenced and find its full details.

Chicago style emphasizes providing enough information for a reader to identify and locate a source. This includes essential elements such as author(s), title of the work, publication information (publisher, place, year for books; journal title, volume, issue, year, page numbers for articles), and, when applicable, specific page or range of pages cited. For online sources, URLs and access dates are crucial.

Notes-Bibliography System: In-Text Citations and Footnotes/Endnotes

In the notes-bibliography system, in-text citations are indicated by a superscript Arabic numeral placed at the end of a sentence or clause, after any punctuation. This numeral corresponds to a numbered note, either a footnote at the bottom of the page or an endnote at the end of the chapter or document. The first time a source is cited, the note includes full bibliographic information. Subsequent citations of the same source are typically shortened, often including the author's last name, a shortened title, and the page number.

For example, a first note might look like:

- 1. William Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), 15.

A subsequent note for the same source could be:

- 2. Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, 23.

When citing a direct quotation, the specific page number(s) are essential. For paraphrased ideas or summaries, page numbers are still highly recommended to help readers pinpoint the origin of the information.

Notes-Bibliography System: The Bibliography

The bibliography, which appears at the end of the paper in the notes-bibliography system, is an alphabetical list of all the sources cited in the text. Unlike the reference list in the author-date system, the bibliography entries are generally formatted slightly differently to facilitate easy reading and scanning. Author names are typically listed with the last name first, followed by the first name. Titles of books and journals are italicized. Publication details, including publisher, year, and page numbers for articles or chapters, are included.

A typical bibliography entry for a book in this system would be:

- Labov, William. *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

And for a journal article:

- Chomsky, Noam. "A Minimalist Program for Linguistic Theory." *The MIT Electronic Journal of Linguistics* 1 (1995): 1-52.

The bibliography serves as a comprehensive guide to the research that forms the foundation of the author's work.

Author-Date System: In-Text Citations

The author-date system uses parenthetical citations directly within the text. These citations typically include the author's last name and the year of publication, separated by a comma. If a specific page or range of pages is being referenced, it is included after the year, also preceded by a comma and often the letter "p." for a single page or "pp." for a range.

An example of an in-text citation would be:

- (Labov 1972, 15) for a direct quote or specific reference to page 15.
- (Chomsky 1995) for general reference to Chomsky's 1995 work.

If the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, only the year and page number (if applicable) are needed in the parentheses:

- Labov (1972) argued that variation is systematic.
- As Chomsky (1995, 3) suggests, the focus should be on minimalist principles.

This system is designed for quick identification of the source and its publication date, allowing readers to immediately gauge the currency of the

information.

Author-Date System: The Reference List

The reference list in the author-date system is an alphabetical list of all sources cited in the text. It is placed at the end of the document. The format for entries in the reference list is similar to that of the bibliography in the notes-bibliography system, but the primary organizing principle is author-date. Author names are listed last name first, followed by initials or full first names, and then the year of publication.

A typical reference list entry for a book would be:

- Labov, William. 1972. *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

And for a journal article:

- Chomsky, Noam. 1995. "A Minimalist Program for Linguistic Theory." *The MIT Electronic Journal of Linguistics* 1: 1-52.

The chronological order of publication can be easily discerned, which is a key advantage of this system for tracking the development of research ideas over time.

Citing Specific Linguistics Source Types

Linguistics research frequently involves a diverse range of source materials, each requiring specific formatting within Chicago style. This includes scholarly books that present theories or empirical findings, journal articles that disseminate cutting-edge research, dissertations and theses that represent original scholarly work, and sometimes even raw fieldwork data or transcribed interviews.

Understanding the precise conventions for each source type is crucial for accurate and professional citation. Deviations can lead to rejection by journals or publishers. The following sections will detail how to cite the most common source types encountered in linguistic scholarship.

Citing Journal Articles in Linguistics

Journal articles are a cornerstone of linguistic research. When citing them, it is important to include the author(s), the title of the article, the title of the journal, the volume and issue numbers, the publication year, and the page numbers. For the notes-bibliography system, the first note would include all details, while subsequent notes would be shortened. For the author-date

system, the reference list entry would be similarly structured.

Example for notes-bibliography (first note):

- 1. Johanna Nichols, "The Origins of Gender Diversity." *Language* 77, no. 2 (2001): 203.

Example for author-date reference list:

- Nichols, Johanna. 2001. "The Origins of Gender Diversity." *Language* 77, no. 2: 203–29.

Pay close attention to punctuation, especially the use of commas and periods, as these are critical for Chicago style. Online journal articles should also include the journal's DOI (Digital Object Identifier) if available, or the URL and access date.

Citing Books and Book Chapters in Linguistics

Books provide foundational theories and comprehensive overviews in linguistics. Citing a whole book requires author(s), title, place of publication, publisher, and year. Citing a chapter within an edited volume requires additional information: the author(s) of the chapter, the chapter title, the editor(s) of the volume, the title of the volume, and the page numbers of the chapter.

Example for a book (notes-bibliography):

- 2. David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Example for a book chapter (author-date reference list):

- Fromkin, Victoria, and Robert Rodman. 1998. "Phonetics." In *An Introduction to Language*, 6th ed., 61–84. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

Ensure that the edition number is included if you are citing a specific edition other than the first. For multi-volume works, specify the volume number.

Citing Dissertations and Theses

Dissertations and theses represent original research and are important sources in linguistics. When citing them, include the author, title, the degree for which the work was submitted (e.g., Ph.D. dissertation, Master's

thesis), the university, and the year of completion. If the work has been published, cite it as a published book.

Example for notes-bibliography:

- 3. Sarah J. Thompson, "Investigating Phonological Variation in Urban Dialects" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2018), 45.

Example for author-date reference list:

- Thompson, Sarah J. 2018. "Investigating Phonological Variation in Urban Dialects." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.

For unpublished dissertations that are accessible online through databases like ProQuest, include the database name and accession number or the URL.

Citing Linguistic Fieldwork Data

Linguistic fieldwork data, including audio recordings, transcribed interviews, elicited judgments, and grammatical elicited forms, often present unique citation challenges. The specific method of citation will depend on how the data is archived or made accessible. If the data is part of a published corpus or archive, cite it as such.

For unpublished raw data, it's crucial to provide sufficient detail for readers to understand its origin and nature. This might include the informant's name (if permission has been granted), the date of the recording or elicitation, the location, and a description of the material.

- In notes-bibliography: 4. Field notes from recording session with informant "Maria S.," dated October 15, 2021, Oaxaca, Mexico. Data held by the author.
- In author-date reference list: S., Maria. 2021. Field recording, Oaxaca, Mexico, October 15. Unpublished data.

Always ensure that ethical considerations and participant anonymity are respected when citing fieldwork data.

Citing Online Resources and Websites

The internet is a vast repository of linguistic resources, from online dictionaries and corpora to academic websites and digital archives. When citing online sources, it is vital to include the author (if known), the title of the specific page or document, the name of the website, the publication date or last update date, and the URL. Crucially, include the

date you accessed the material.

Example for notes-bibliography:

- 5. "The Atlas of North American English." Last modified October 20, 2019. <https://www.laits.utexas.edu/an/> (accessed November 10, 2023).

Example for author-date reference list:

- "The Atlas of North American English." 2019. Last modified October 20. <https://www.laits.utexas.edu/an/> (accessed November 10, 2023).

If a specific author is attributed to the webpage, include their name. For frequently updated sites, providing the most recent update date is preferable to an access date.

Common Challenges and Best Practices

Researchers often face challenges with Chicago style, particularly regarding the nuances of formatting for less common source types or when dealing with sources that have inconsistent publication information. A common pitfall is inconsistent application of style rules across a document. Another challenge is correctly formatting extensive bibliographies or complex notes.

Best practices include:

- Consulting the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for authoritative guidance.
- Utilizing citation management software, but always double-checking its output for accuracy.
- Keeping meticulous records of all sources consulted during the research process.
- Seeking clarification from professors, mentors, or journal editors if unsure about specific formatting requirements.
- Paying close attention to punctuation, capitalization, and italicization as prescribed by CMOS.

Proactive attention to detail and regular review of citation practices will significantly reduce errors and enhance the professionalism of your linguistic work.

Conclusion: Ensuring Accuracy and Clarity

Adhering to Chicago style for citing sources in linguistics is not merely a bureaucratic requirement; it is fundamental to the integrity and scholarly value of your research. By understanding and meticulously applying the rules of either the notes-bibliography or author-date system, you ensure that your work is credible, transparent, and easily verifiable by your readers. The consistent and accurate citation of linguistic literature, fieldwork, and online resources upholds the collective knowledge of the field and facilitates future scholarship.

Whether you are a graduate student embarking on your first major research paper or an established scholar preparing a manuscript for publication, a firm grasp of Chicago style will serve you well. It demonstrates respect for the work of others and contributes to a clearer, more robust academic discourse in linguistics. Invest the time to master these citation practices; your research will be all the stronger for it.

Q: What is the primary difference between the notes-bibliography and author-date systems in Chicago style for linguistics?

A: The primary difference lies in how in-text citations are presented. The notes-bibliography system uses numbered footnotes or endnotes, while the author-date system uses parenthetical citations in the text (e.g., (Author Year, page)). Both systems culminate in a comprehensive list of sources at the end of the document (a bibliography or a reference list, respectively).

Q: Should I use Chicago style for all my linguistics papers, even if my professor hasn't specified a citation style?

A: While Chicago style is widely used in linguistics, it's always best to confirm the preferred citation style with your professor or the specific journal/publisher you are submitting to. Some linguistics departments or journals may prefer styles like APA or MLA, or a discipline-specific variation.

Q: How do I cite an article from a linguistics journal in Chicago style?

A: For the notes-bibliography system, a full note would include the author(s), article title in quotation marks, journal title in italics, volume and issue number, publication year, and page numbers. Subsequent notes are shortened. For the author-date system, the reference list entry includes author(s), year, article title, journal title (italicized), volume and issue

number, and page numbers.

Q: What if I need to cite data from linguistic fieldwork?

A: Citing fieldwork data requires careful consideration of how the data is archived or made accessible. For unpublished data, include the informant's name (with permission), date, location, and a description of the material. If the data is part of a published corpus, cite it according to the corpus's citation guidelines.

Q: How do I cite a book chapter in Chicago style for linguistics?

A: For citing a book chapter, you'll need the author(s) of the chapter, the chapter title, the editor(s) of the volume, the title of the volume (*italicized*), and the page numbers of the chapter. This is followed by the publication information of the book.

Q: Is it necessary to include a DOI when citing online linguistics articles in Chicago style?

A: Yes, if a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) is available for an online journal article, it should be included. This provides a stable and direct link to the article, which is preferable to a URL that might change over time.

Q: How do I handle multiple authors in Chicago style for linguistics citations?

A: For the notes-bibliography system, the first note lists all authors up to a certain number (often three, with "et al." thereafter, depending on the edition of CMOS). For the author-date system, the reference list entry lists all authors. In-text citations for two authors typically list both names (e.g., (Author1 and Author2)), and for three or more, use the first author's name followed by "et al." (e.g., (Author1 et al.)).

Q: Can I use citation management software like Zotero or EndNote for Chicago style in linguistics?

A: Yes, citation management software can be very helpful. They often have built-in styles for Chicago Manual of Style. However, it is crucial to always review the generated citations to ensure they adhere to the specific requirements of Chicago style and the particular needs of your linguistics

research.

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