

Integrating source material within your own work

There are many different ways in which to integrate other people's ideas within your own sentences. The choices you make will affect the way others respond to your argument.

1 Choosing the focus of an in-text citation

When we cite other academic sources in our own work, we do a lot more than simply give a reference. Take a look at the difference between the following three examples:

- **Murray (2000) argues that** development in Africa has been disastrous.

In this example, Murray is emphasised. This helps the reader focus on the fact that the argument was made by Murray, perhaps because the writer is going to dispute Murray's position. This type of citation helps us understand the different voices that have been important within the wider academic debate under discussion.

- **Development across the continent of Africa has not lived up to the expectations of the 1960s** (Murray, 2000).

In this example, the information given is very similar, but Murray is less prominent. Here, it is likely that the writer agrees with Murray's position, and is presenting the assessment of development in Africa as a reasonable one. This enables the writer to establish his/her own voice within the debate, whilst still attributing the original idea to Murray.

- The description of Africa as **"the hopeless continent"** (Murray, 2000, p.2) has been deeply criticised.

In this example, the reader focuses on the actual words used by Murray. Perhaps the writer wants to distance himself/herself from Murray's position, and make clear that this description of Africa as "hopeless" is at odds with the argument put forward in the essay. Quoting Murray's words directly is very effective here, because they tell the reader something about the type of opinion put forward within the wider debate, and yet it is clear that this is not what the writer feels.

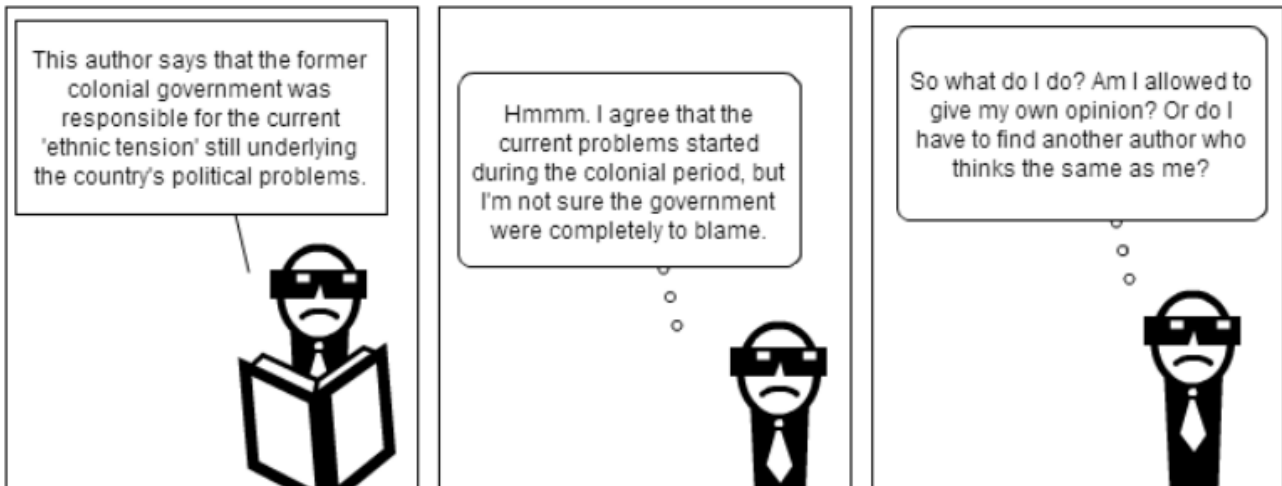
2 When and how to shift the focus of a citation

	Emphasising the source of the information	Emphasising the information itself	Direct quotation - emphasising the words themselves
When?	When you want the reader to focus on the idea of a particular author, or on a specific policy or law. It is useful when contrasting the opinions of different authors, or when showing the influence of writers or institutions on the debates.	When you want the reader to focus on the ideas or facts that support your own argument. You reference so that the reader knows where you found these ideas or facts.	When an author's exact words will add a particular effect to your writing. It is useful for definitions and for new terms that have been coined by authors.
How?	Make sure the author's name fits smoothly into the sentence, checking verb agreement etc. If you are using an Author-Date system, put the year of publication in brackets immediately after the author's surname.	If you are using an Author-Date system, put the citation immediately after the piece of information being cited. Do not put a comma or full stop between the information and the citation. Put the author and year of publication together in brackets.	Keep quotations as short as possible. Make sure the quotation fits smoothly into the sentence, checking verb agreement etc. Copy words exactly. Use quotation marks around the words you have copied. Include the page number, as well as the author's surname and year of publication.
E.g.	Robson (2003) suggests that companies should incorporate such policies into their management strategies. This is disputed by Carter (2001) , who argues that it is better for all members to be informed.	The first time the new system was tried, there were many difficulties (Obed, 2004) . It has since been re-evaluated using both user testing (Harold, 2006) , and questionnaires and interviews (Baker, 2008) .	Chick (1995, p.45) refers to this type of language as "safe-talk". Code-switching can be defined as the "alternate use of two or more languages, varieties of a language, or even speech styles" (Hymes, 1977, p.103) .

Remember to check the formatting guidelines for in-text citations for the style that your department requires. For example, check whether you should include a comma between the author's surname and the year of publication (Baker, 2008) or not (Baker 2008).

3 Integrating your own evaluation of the sources you cite

A typical question asked is 'how do I show my own opinion?'. We sometimes feel that there is a separation between 'our own ideas' and 'other people's ideas' and we worry about how much of each we need to include.



In reality, YOU decide how to integrate the material you take from other sources, and these choices reflect your own views about the material you are citing.

For example:

1. *Traditional frameworks have tended to overemphasise the role of the State. As Drummond (2000) notes, this approach is rather limiting.*
2. *Drummond (2000) criticises traditional frameworks for their overemphasis on the role of the State. However, his treatment of the State as just one of many actors could be said to be equally naive.*

In the first example, the writer clearly agrees with Drummond. In the second example, s/he clearly doesn't.

As you read academic texts, you should notice how other authors manage to USE references to construct their own argument. They rarely just refer to other sources without giving some indication of what they think of them.