


Mechanics of Style in Academic Writing

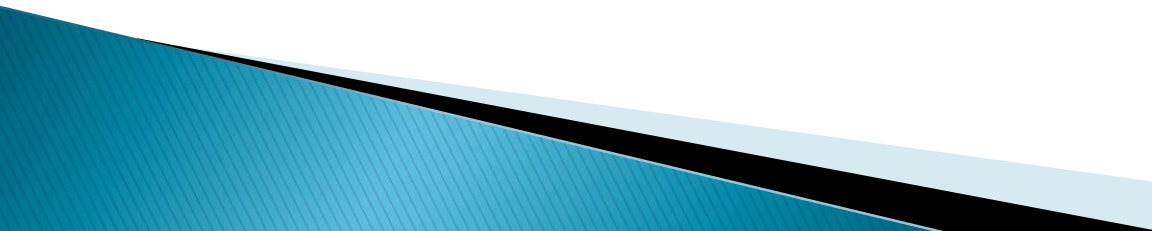
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Course: EC - II**

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Academic papers: term papers, research papers, dissertation, seminar papers, assignment – come under formal writing, therefore, we have to consider some important points:

- 1. Word choice and tone should be polite**
 - 2. No use of first and second person singular pronoun**
 - 3. Use of positive and literal language and academic vocabulary**
 - 4. Avoid repeating and over generalization**
 - 5. Use of proper spelling, grammar and punctuation**
 - 6. No use of contradiction, cliché, colloquial language and abbreviation**
 - 7. Sentences should be fully elaborated and concluded**
 - 8. Avoid use of jargons**
 - 9. No emotional language**
 - 10. No statistics without proper reference**
 - 11. Full objectivity, as proper evidence, should be mentioned to support your argument**
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The Mechanics of Style

- ▶ **Formal writing is often most difficult to write, but easiest to read due to the information being presented in a format that can stand alone without further clarification.**
 - ▶ **The Mechanics of Style refer to rules or guidelines for academic writing to make sure that it is consistent and clear. This can help avoid confusion particularly when there are multiple ways to represent meaning. Writing replete with error does not make a good impression.**
 - ▶ **American Psychological Association (APA) is the standard format of almost all social sciences research fields. It was designed to standardize writing.**
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Abbreviation: Acronyms, Initialisms, Short Words and Contraction

Abbreviation is a shortened version of words or phrase

E.g. MP

Dr.

NATO

App

They'd

Abbreviation usually falls into one of four categories:

- 1. Initialisms (Initial abbreviation) – formed from the first letters of a group of words and each letter is pronounced individually.**

E.g. CEO – Chief Executive Officer

CD – Compact Disc

- 2. Acronyms – formed from the first alphabet of a group of words and are pronounced as a word.**

E.g. ISRO – Indian Space Research Organization

PIN – Personal Identification Number

SIM – Subscriber Identification Module

3. Shortening – an abbreviation in which the beginning or end of the word has been omitted. They are of 2 types:

Type-1: shortening (treated as real word) – written and pronounced as one word

E.g. Ad – advertisement

App - application

Type-2: shortening (not treated as real word) – used only in writing but whole word is pronounced while speaking.

E.g. Feb. - February

etc. – Et cetera

4. Contraction –

Type-1: missing letters from one word

E.g. Dr. – Doctor

St. – Saint


Govt. – Government

Type-2: missing letters from more than one word and pronounced together

E.g. She's – she is

they'd – they would

I've – I have

- 1. By and large abbreviations are considered an informal form of writing**
 - 2. To maximize clarity, abbreviation should be used sparingly**
 - 3. Do not abbreviate words to save time and space in formal writing**
 - 4. If a term is used fewer than three times in an article, don't abbreviate**
 - 5. In academic writing, contractions should be avoided but acronyms are commonly used**
 - 6. Avoid the use of abbreviation at 3 places: title, research questions, start of a sentence**
 - 7. Avoid using ampersand (&) as a narrative substitute for the word 'and' in your text**
 - 8. If your document contains a lot of abbreviations, consider including a list of them and their meanings at the beginning or end of the document**
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Parentheses

Brackets are punctuation marks used within a sentence to include information that is not essential to the main part. The four main types of brackets are:

- 1). Curved bracket or Parentheses (...)**
- 2). Square bracket [...]**
- 3). Curly bracket {...}**
- 4). Angle bracket <...>**

Uses:

- To include extra information**
- To cite authors**
- To introduce abbreviation**
- To translate words or short phrases**
- To give examples**
- To define or restate a word**
- To introduce terms**

Do not use parentheses when

1. Enclosing materials within parenthesis. Use brackets instead

E.g. Smoking causes cancer (American Lung Association [ALA], 2004)

2. Constructing a sentence using back-to-back parentheses. Use a semicolon instead

E.g. Research has shown that students prefer a whiteboard to a chalkboard (Anju et al, 2004; Rajni, 1994)

3. Period (.):

i) If material in parenthesis is at the end of a sentence, the period goes after the parenthesis

E.g. He gave me a nice bonus (2nd time this year).

ii) Periods go inside parenthesis only if an entire sentence is inside the parenthesis

E.g. Please read the analysis. (You will be amazed.)

4. Commas – more likely to follow parenthesis than preceding them

E.g. When he got home,(it was already dark outside) he fixed dinner (incorrect)

When he got home (it was already dark outside), he fixed dinner (correct)

References

- ▶ <https://writingcommons.org/article/using-parentheses/>
- ▶ <https://aso-resources.une.edu.au/academic-writing/usage/shortened-form-of-words/>
- ▶ <https://www.grammarbook.com/punctuation/commas.asp>
- ▶ <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/comma/marly.com/blog/comma/>
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- ▶ <https://keydifferences.com/difference-between-formal-and-informal-writing.html>
- ▶ [Classroom.synonym.com/types-of-noise-in-communication-12079180.html](https://classroom.synonym.com/types-of-noise-in-communication-12079180.html)
- ▶ <https://writingcenter.ashford.edu/parentheses>

Some commonly used abbreviations

- 1). RSVP – Please reply**
- 2). ASAP – As soon as possible**
- 3). AM/PM – Before midday (morning) / After midday (afternoon)**
- 4). LMK – Let me know**
- 5). BRB – Be right back**
- 6). DOB – Date of birth**
- 7). CC/BCC – Carbon copy/Blind Carbon Copy**
- 8). TBA/TBC – To be announced/to be confirmed**
- 9). ETA – Estimated time of arrival**
- 10). EOD – End of Day**
- 11). FOMO – Fear of missing out**
- 12). IMO – In my opinion**
IMHO – In my humble opinion
- 13). N/A – not available, not applicable**
- 14). AKA – also known as**
- 15). DIY – Do it yourself**