Assignment: Annotated Bibliography

Due: 1 p.m. on Friday 9/20/19.

Please **email** to your (i) Faculty Advisor, (ii) Student Reader A, and (iii) Second Faculty Reader.

Expectations:

Read and write up 4-5 sources relevant to your thesis. If you did an annotated bibliography in Ling 90 on this same topic, please expand on that, adding 4-5 new sources. Your writeup should total roughly 3 pages. (See Moodle for some model bibliographies.)

What, Why, & How?

What?

An annotated bibliography is a selection of works relevant to your research, which you think you are likely to cite. Each book/article/chapter is listed with full bibliographic information, a summary of its arguments, any relevant quotes or data (with page numbers so you can easily find them later), and your response to it.

Why?

Annotated bibliographies are useful in several ways. First, the reading you'll do to complete this assignment will get you started on the research process for your thesis, and help you refine your topic. Annotating these sources in one place gives you a handy reference later when you're writing your lit review section, using or refuting their arguments, or citing their data. It also gives your advisor a sense of what you've been looking at so we can help guide you to more resources.

How?

1. Find a source. We recommend using Google Scholar as a place to start. Once you've found one relevant/useful paper, follow its trail forwards and back. Who does this paper cite? Who cites this paper? (In Google Scholar, click the Cited By [number] link below the article title in your results.) Wikipedia and most websites are not appropriate sources, though they may start you off on your search. Academic or government websites (Ticha, the Yale Grammatical Diversity Project, talkingdictionary.org, etc.) may be appropriate sources. If you're not sure, ask. (This is a good

moment to use your newfound skimming skills – you may need to look at a number of papers to find ones that are useful to you, no need to waste a lot of time reading them all in-depth before you know if they're useful.)

2. Read your source (at least) twice. The first time, be a friendly reader. What is the author's claim? How do they support it? What are the strengths of their argument? What other evidence have you found in your data/previous readings that tie in to/support this argument from another angle? Figure out what the author is trying to say. The second time, be a critical reader. Where does this argument fall short? What are its holes and contradictions? What counterevidence have you found in your data/previous reading? Try to argue with the author as you go, and note your objections. (I [EG] strongly recommend reading this very short primer on *Reading With and Against the Grain* at www.cpp.edu/~ramp/program-materials/reading-with-and-against.shtml.) You will find many of your sources challenging. Take the time to look things up, go back and re-read, and discuss things you don't understand with your peers, advisors, etc.

3. Write it up.

a) Start each bibliography entry with a full citation. (Talk to your advisor about appropriate citation formats; when in doubt use the Unified Stylesheet for Linguistics, available on Moodle and the LSA website.)

b) Give a short summary of the author's claim and arguments, based on your friendly read.

c) Give your evaluation of the argument, based on your critical read. What are its strengths? Weaknesses? How does it tie in with/comment on/contradict the other readings you've done and/or your own data?

d) Note any key quotations or data points you might want to use in your work, with page numbers so you can easily find them later.

4. Do it again. Repeat for each of your sources, going back and revising your evaluations as necessary as you read more about the topic. The more sources you annotate now the better off you'll be later, but if your sources are particularly long (e.g. books) or particularly dense you may fall on the lower end of the range.

Postscript: Bibliography Managers

Automatic bibliographic managers can be **very** useful for a large project such as this. They will keep track of your sources and in many cases will automatically create your references for you in the proper format, so you don't have to worry about where the comma goes or whether you included all of your cited sources in the bibliography. If you use LaTeX, You can enter your sources and notes into JabRef and then use BibTex to cite your sources and automatically build your references section in any style you choose. Zotero will link citation info directly to pdfs or web pages, allow you to add tags and notes, and will interface directly with Word and Google Docs or produce a BibTex file for you to use in TEX. Links to all of these are on the Moodle, and we can help if you need a hand getting started.