



Writing An Annotated Bibliography

What is an annotated bibliography? First, let's break it down into components:

Bibliography: An alphabetized list of scholarly sources on a specific topic
As with any Works Cited (MLA) or References (APA) page, you should read and collect published academic sources to support your claims

Annotation: A note of explanation or comment
Write an annotation for each source in order to describe its main idea and to highlight its usefulness for your research topic and focus.

What is the purpose of an annotated bibliography?

Its purpose is to organize and prioritize the many sources you have gathered so that you can use the information in these sources most effectively in your research study or research paper.

How does an annotated bibliography benefit me?

Creating annotations helps with organizing your research, especially if the project is lengthy. Annotations condense a large amount of information into single paragraphs that can be grasped easily and moved around, and they are a great way to critically analyze the content and sources for your project.

What are some of the formatting differences between MLA and APA for an annotated bibliography?

Remember, APA and MLA styles differ stylistically in how sources are cited in-text and at the end of your paper. Here are examples of each style.

APA Style: Zhang, T. (2012). English learning and teaching journey of second language learners in postgraduate program: A study of bilingual and multilingual speakers' construction of identity in autobiographical narratives [Abstract]. *DSpace/Manakin Repository*.

MLA Style: Zhang, Tong. "English Learning and Teaching Journey of Second Language Learners in Postgraduate Program: A Study of Bilingual and Multilingual Speakers' Construction of Identity in Autobiographical Narratives" Abstract. *DSpace/Manakin Repository*. (2012): Web.

Now let's look at how to write an effective annotation for a source.

Annotated Bibliography Example

Imagine that this abstract is the text you must annotate:

In this study, I explored four bilingual and multilingual speakers' constructions of identities in their language learning and teaching journeys. Conducting this research by using autobiographical narrative analysis method, I collected and analyzed participants' autobiographies and the follow-up interviews which offer a rich data resource to utilize in order to unfold these four ELLs' language learning and teaching experiences inside and outside of school and to help me investigate bilingual and multilingual speakers' constructions of identities and explore how their multiple aspects of identity are related to their identities as English teachers. Participants presented their identities as co-constructed and complex in nature and viewed their identity construction in autobiographical narratives: Language learners or language teachers, gender identities, and members of different language communities, which were collaborated and interconnected within their entire constructions of identities. The participants' narrative also indicated the uniqueness and complexity in their construction of identities.

Step 1: Summarize the article (be sure to include important theoretical and methodological information)

Example: Zhang's (2012) autobiographical and narrative research study reveals the complex identity negotiations and (re)constructions that multilingual speakers experience as teachers and students during their studies in a U.S. MA TESOL program.

Step 2: Relate the article to your research topic

Example: Zhang's (2012) study focuses on multilingual students' identity constructs; my study aims to understand identities of multilingual students as well.

Step 3: Address any gaps in the source

Example: Zhang's (2012) study is situated in an academic context, thus future research is needed to understand multilingual students' identity constructions outside of academic contexts, specifically social and home contexts.

Step 4: Put it all together. Remember to add transition words and phrases to make the annotation cohesive for the reader.

Example annotation: Zhang's (2012) autobiographical and narrative research study revealed the complex identity negotiations and (re)constructions that multilingual speakers experience as teachers and students during their academic studies in a U.S. TESOL program. Similar to Zhang's (2012) focus on multilingual students' identity constructs, my study aims to understand identities of multilingual students as well. Although Zhang's (2012) study used an academic context, further research is needed to understand multilingual students' identity constructions outside of academic contexts, specifically social and home contexts.

Remember the length of the annotated bibliography will depend on your assignment and your professor's requirements. Specific sections of the annotation may vary depending on the purpose of the annotated bibliography.