

# APA Thesis Format

**The Government of the Russian federation**

**Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Professional  
Education**

**National Research University – Higher School of Economics**

Faculty of Social Sciences, School of Psychology,  
Master's program  
“Cognitive sciences and technologies: from neuron to cognition”

**Coursework /  
Final qualifying work – MASTER THESIS**

**«Title»**

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## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

Every thesis should be written based on the APA (American Psychological Association) style (the 6th edition) but with some exceptions. This file explains format of the thesis, the basic rules of the APA style, the exceptions, and also some writing tips.

Note that this file itself is written following those rules with Microsoft Word and can be used as a template for the thesis. Using text styles specified in this template using Microsoft Word (HSE-Main, HSE-Chapter, HSE-Sec1, etc., see also **2.3 Chapters** and **2.4 Sections in a Chapter**), “Table of Contents” can be built automatically using “Table of Contents” function listed under “References” tab of Word.

### **1.1 Composition**

#### **1.1.1 Literature review (Proposal).**

- Cover page.
- Table of Contents.
- Introduction.
- Chapter/chapters for reviewing theories in prior studies.
- Research Proposal (e.g. proposed approach, design of a proposed study, plan for data analysis, and plan for interpreting results).
- References.
- Appendices.

Number of pages of a literature review should be between 30 and 50.

#### **1.1.2 Thesis.**

- Cover page.
- Table of Contents.
- Introduction.
- Chapter/chapters for reviewing theories in prior studies.

- Chapter/chapters about research accomplishments of a student (e.g. experiments, theories, and models)
- Summary and Discussion.
- Conclusion.
- References.
- Appendices.

Number of pages of a thesis should be between 50 and 90.

## **1.2 APA Publication Manual**

All the details of the APA style (6th ed.) are specified in the APA publication manual (American Psychological Association, 2003).

In the following chapters, any special style that is for the thesis but is different from the APA style is indicated by underlining explanations of the special thesis style.

## Chapter 2. Text

### 2.1. Page Layout

- Page size: A4.
- Margin: left 25 mm, right 15 mm, top 20 mm, bottom 20 mm.
- No page header (running head) is used.
- Page number is placed at the right-bottom corner of the each page (except for “Cover page” and “Table of Contents”).

### 2.2 Text Style

- Font: Times New Roman (14 pt).
- Line spacing: 1.5 lines and additional 6 pt after every paragraph.
- The first line of a paragraph is indented (0.5 in.).
- Text of the thesis is justified (be aligned on both left and right sides).

Note that estimated number of characters per page is expected to be around 1800 ~ 2000.

### 2.3 Chapters

Every new chapter begins on a new page. Except for Conclusion, References, and Appendices, all the chapters are referred as the main text of the master thesis and are numbered sequentially (e.g. Chapter 1, Chapter 2, etc.). Appendices are labeled with English alphabets (Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.) if there are more than one appendix. They are arranged in the order of their references. Each appendix must be referenced, at least, once in the main text or in another appendix.

Titles of the chapters and appendices are centered without any period ‘.’ at the end. If the title consists of two sentences, they are separated by a period. Words in the titles are capitalized if they are nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, and subordinating conjunctions. On the other hand, words that are articles, prepositions, and coordinating conjunctions are not capitalized. In this file, style of chapter titles is specified as “HSE-Chapter” using Microsoft Word.

## **2.4 Sections in a Chapter**

Sections in each chapter are designated by sequential numbers with the chapter number (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc.). Words in titles of the sections are capitalized as those of chapters and appendices. In this file, style of section titles is specified as “HSE-Sec1” using Microsoft Word.

**2.4.1 Sub-sections in a section.** If the sections are further divided into sub-sections, their designations include the chapter number, the section number, and the number of sub-sections (1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, etc.). Only the first words in their titles are capitalized. The titles end with a period. In this file, style of sub-section titles is specified as “HSE-Sec2” using Microsoft Word.

**2.4.1.1 Sub-sections in a sub-section in a section.** It is possible to divide the sub-section further into smaller sub-sections. However, it is not recommended to use this level of the sub-sections. In this file, style of sub-sub-section titles is specified as “HSE-Sec3” using Microsoft Word.

**2.4.1.1.1 Sub-sections in a sub-section in a sub-section in a section.** It is possible but is not recommended. In this file, style of sub-sub-sub-section titles is specified as “HSE-Sec4” using Microsoft Word.

## **2.5 Abbreviations**

Any abbreviation used in the thesis should be explained by the author when it appears first in the thesis (except for some very general abbreviations): e.g. Brain activity was measured using functional Near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS).

## **2.6 Listing Items**

If there are more than two items listed in text using “and” or “or,” the items are separated by a comma. For example:

- Mach (1906/1959) pointed out that the human visual system is sensitive to mirror- or bilateral-, rotational-, and translational-symmetry.

Note that a comma was added in the above example also before “and.”



## 2.7 Numbers and Units

A decimal point is represented by a period ‘.’ (not by a comma ‘,’).

A natural number below 10 is usually written in a word: one, two, three, etc. A number has to be written in words if a sentence starts with the number. However, it is better to be avoided unless the words are short and simple.

Abbreviations of units are written without a period: for example, g (gram), s (second), and m (meter). (Note that an exception is inches whose abbreviation is “in.” with a period. However, it is suggested to follow the International System of Units.) You cannot make these abbreviations of the units plural by adding an ‘s’ (e.g. 100 meters = 100 m). The abbreviated units and the percent symbol are used only with digits (e.g. nine kilograms, 11 kg).

## 2.8 Quotes

A text quotation must be accompanied with a citation to its source with specific page(s) from which the quoted text comes from. The quotation is enclosed within double quotation marks: e.g. for the human visual system, “3D symmetry is a property of the 3D shape of a single object” (Sawada, 2010, p. 13). See McAdoo (2010) in the APA Style Blog for other examples of quotations.

If the quotation includes more than 40 words, it becomes a block quotation without double quotation marks:

The main reason for why we observed veridical perception, while all others did not, is that we, but no one else, used symmetrical objects presented at non-degenerate viewing directions. Using Brunswik’s (1956) terminology, our stimuli were ecologically valid: they captured all important characteristics of natural objects in our natural environment. (Sawada, Li, & Pizlo, in press-b, pp. 272-273)

The whole block of the quotation is indented for 0.5 in. Note “pp.” means that the quoted text came from multiple pages.

## 2.9 Punctuations

If an abbreviation with a period appears at the end of a sentence, an additional period is not required to end the sentence:

- For perceiving depth from a 2D static visual stimulus, the human visual system uses pictorial depth cues: shading, cast shadow, blur, aerial perspective, texture gradient, etc.

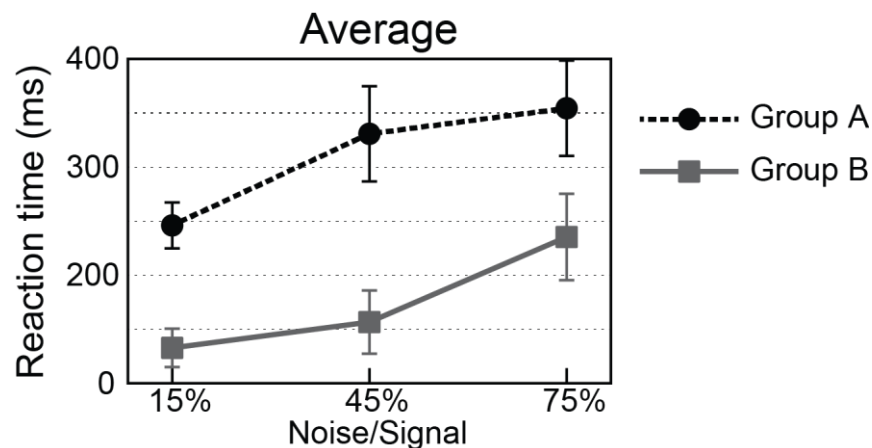
If a period ‘.’ or a comma ‘,’ come just after a pair of ‘quotations’ or “double quotations,” the period or comma are placed within the pair of the quotations. This writing practice is “North American style,” not “British style.” See Lee (2011) in the APA Style Blog for other examples of quotations and punctuations.

## Chapter 3. Figures, Tables, and Equations.

Unlike the APA style, figures, tables, and equations are placed within the thesis by the student him/her-self.

### 3.1 Figures

Figures appear after paragraphs that mention them for the first time, or on the next pages (Figure 1). They align at the center. They are numbered sequentially through the main text of the thesis. Their titles, numbers, and captions are placed below the figures. The numbers are written in italic. The captions explain contents of the figures. Single blank lines are inserted above and below the figures.



*Figure 1.* Averaged results from Experiment X. The ordinate shows  $d'$  and the abscissa shows signal to noise ratio. The two curves indicate the groups of subjects. Error bars represent the standard errors calculated from 20 subjects for each group.

The text in a figure is in a san serif font (e.g. Helvetica, Arial, Calibri, or Futura) and size of the font is between 8 and 14 pt.

### 3.2 Tables.

Tables appear after paragraphs that mention them for the first time, or on the next pages (Table 1). They align at the center. They are numbered sequentially through the main text of the thesis. Their titles and numbers are placed above the

tables in two separate lines. The titles are italics and do not end with a period. Single blank lines are inserted above and below the tables.

Notes can be added below the tables to provide any additional information. The notes start with “*Notes.*” in italic and end with a period. They, for example, explain abbreviations and symbols used in the tables and provide statistical information about the data in the tables.

Table 1

*The performance of the patients and the control subjects in test A, B, C, and D*

	Patients M ± SD (N = 10)	Control M ± SD (N = 10)	<i>t</i> -value (Cohen’s <i>d</i> )
Test A (msec)	60.31 ± 25.11	37.11 ± 17.07	2.42* (1.08)
Test B (%)	38.46 ± 30.95	55.09 ± 25.96	1.30 (0.58)
Test C (°angle)	44.00 ± 19.68	18.38 ± 6.21	3.17** (1.42)
Test D (cm)	10.99 ± 5.65	13.51 ± 3.81	1.16 (0.52)

*Notes.* \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

The suggested font size is 12 pt in the tables. The borders shown above are typical for APA Style.

If you report results of statistical analysis in a table, the table includes all the information about the analysis. For the *t*-test, average, standard deviation, *t*-value, and *p*-value appear in the table or its notes. Cohen’s *d* is optional. For the regression analysis,  $\beta$ -coefficients,  $R^2$ -value, *p*-value, and tolerance appear in the table or its notes. The *p*-value can be indicated by an asterisk “\*”: usually, \* for  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* for  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* for  $p < 0.001$  (see Table 1).

### 3.3 Equations

Equations can appear either in a text line or in a separate line aligning at the center after sentences that mention them for the first time. The equations are followed by explanations of symbols and values used in the equations. Note that the inline equations can be used only if they are simple enough: e.g.  $c = \Delta S/S$ , where  $S$  is a stimulus,  $\Delta S$  is a difference threshold, and  $c$  is a constant (Weber's law). Important equations (e.g. those referenced in other parts of the thesis) should be written in separate lines and be numbered sequentially through the main text of the thesis. Their numbers are written in Arabic with parentheses (e.g. (1), (2), (3)...) and align on the right side. Single blank lines are inserted above and below the equations.

Using Microsoft Word, equations can be placed in the specified style with a table:

$$p \propto \ln \frac{S}{S_0} \quad (1)$$

where  $p$ : perception

$S_0$ : an absolute threshold

(Fechner's law)

Note that borders of the table above are visualized just for the explanation here. Of course, they should be hidden in the thesis and it can be done by choosing "No Border" from "Borders" menu in "Table tools/Design" tab:

$$\psi(I) \propto S^a \quad (2)$$

where  $\psi(S)$ : subjective intensity of the stimulus  $S$ .

$a$ : a constant depending on the type of the stimulus  $S$ .

(Steven's power law)

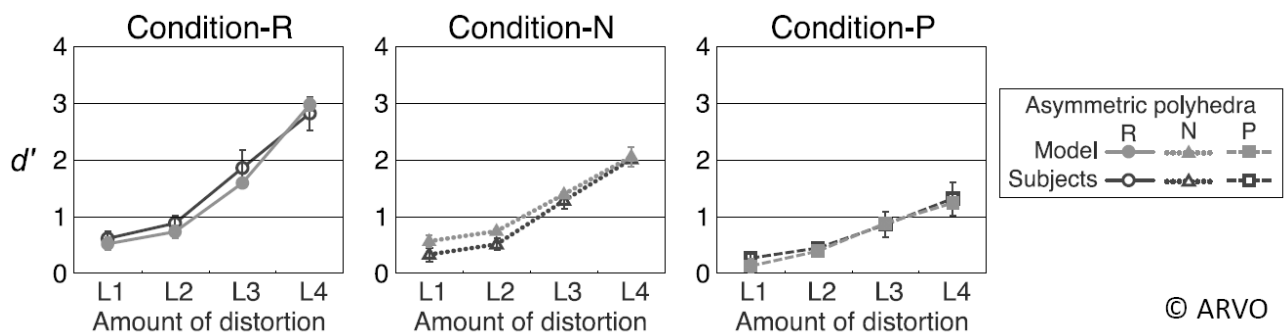
Note that equation (1) is written using the equation editing tool that is available from the 2010 edition of Microsoft Word. Equation (2) is written using “Microsoft Equation 3.0” tool in “Object” menu of “Insert” tab. They are both available in 2015.

### 3.4 Numbering in Appendices

If some Appendix has figures, tables, or equations, their numbering is separated from that in the main text. For example, figures in Appendix B can be numbered as: Figure B1, Figure B2, etc.

### 3.5 Consistency

Consistency of styles of figures (especially graphs), tables, and equations in the thesis is important for visibility and readability. For example, graphs of the same independent/dependent variables (e.g. multiple subjects in a single experiment) should be in the same style. In Figure 2 (from Sawada, 2010), ranges of both abscissas and ordinates in three graphs are consistent.



*Figure 2.* Results of the human subjects in the Psychophysical experiment (black) and of the computational model in the simulation experiment (gray). The model was applied to the images used in the psychophysical experiments. The ordinate shows  $d'$ , and the abscissa shows levels of distortion of asymmetric polyhedra. Results from different types of asymmetric polyhedra are plotted in separate graphs. Error bars represent the standard errors calculated from two sessions for each condition. All the images in Figure 2 were made by modifying Figure 9 in Sawada (2010) with courtesy of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO).

Consider consistency of equations. In section 3.3 Equations, equations (1) and (2) and the inline equation share a variable  $S$  representing the stimulus. This variable is represented by  $S$  in all the equations.

### **3.6 Copyright**

Copyright is a sensitive issue and all the students must be aware of it. In short, it is discouraged to use images copied from published articles or from internet (unless they are in the public domain). Images used in published articles are usually copyrighted by their publishers. If you have any reason to use an image from a prior article, you need to obtain written permission (usually, an email is enough) from its copyright holder. For example, the images in Figure 2 are after Figure 9 in Sawada (2010) and I, the author of Sawada (2010), received permission from the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO).

## Chapter 4. Citations and References

“References” section in the thesis is a list of literatures cited in the thesis. They should be listed in alphabetical order of the last names of their authors. The “References” section must list all the references cited in the thesis and they must be all cited, at least, once in the thesis.

### 4.1 Citations

A reference has to be cited specifically so that it is clear which reference is cited and why the reference is cited. The reference is cited with its author's last name (or its authors' last names) and a year of its publication. Depending on how the reference is cited, both the name/names and the year are in parentheses or only the year is in parentheses.

- Symmetry of a 3D shape can be detected even from its 2D image (Sawada, 2010).
- Sawada (2010) showed that...

**4.1.1 Number of authors.** If the number of the authors is two, they both are written each time. Note that an ampersand ‘&’ is used only in the parentheses.

- (Sawada & Pizlo, 2008)
- Sawada and Pizlo (2008)

If the number of the authors is between three and five, list them all the first time the reference is cited.

- (Pizlo, Sawada, Li, Kropatsch, & Steinman, 2010)
- Pizlo, Sawada, Li, Kropatsch, and Steinman (2010)

After the first citation, only the first author's last name is written to cite the reference. Note that “et al.” is used to indicate that there are more than two authors.

- (Pizlo et al., 2010)
- Pizlo et al. (2010)

If the number of the authors is six or more than six, only the first author's last name is written.



- (Tsuruhara et al., 2010)
- Tsuruhara et al. (2010)

**4.1.2 Multiple references in a single pair of parentheses.** Multiple references can be cited together in a single pair of parentheses, separated by a semi-colon ‘;’ if these references are cited for the same reason: e.g. (Sawada, 2010; Sawada & Pizlo, 2008). If they are cited for different reasons, they should be specified.

- Relative orientations between two eyes can be computed from eight pairs of corresponding points in their retinal images using a line algorithm (Longuet-higgins, 1981; see also Thompson, 1959 for an earlier algorithm that is highly non-linear).

However, it is rather good to cite them in different pairs of parentheses.

- Relative orientations between two eyes can be computed from eight pairs of corresponding points in their retinal images using a linear algorithm (Longuet-higgins, 1981) and from five pairs of the points using a non-linear algorithm (Thompson, 1959).

**4.1.3 Multiple works by the same author/authors in the same year.** If two of references were written by the same author/authors in the same year, they can be distinguished by lower-case letters (a, b, c) following the year: e.g. (Sawada, Li, & Pizlo, 2011a) and (Sawada, Li, & Pizlo, 2011b).

**4.1.4 Translated and re-published articles.** A translated or re-published reference is cited with a year of its original publication and that of the translation/re-publication (e.g. Mach, 1906/1959).

## 4.2 References

References in “References” section are listed using "hanging indent" style (0.5 in.). Single line space is used in References and every reference is separated by additional 6 pt from its following reference. In this file, style of references is specified as “HSE-Reference” using Microsoft Word.

Authors of each reference are listed with their last names and initials of their first names (and those of their middle names): e.g. Pavlov I. P. The references are

listed alphabetically based on the last names of their first authors. More specific cases are discussed below.

**4.2.1 Number of authors.** References can be categorized depending on number of authors: one to seven, and more than seven. If the number of the authors is seven or less than seven, all the authors are listed in the references (see Attneave, 1954 for one; Barlow & Reeves, 1979 for two; Chan, Pizlo, Chelberg, 2006 for three; Dzhafarov, Ünlü, Trendtel, & Colonius, 2011 for four; Enns, Austen, Lollo, Rauschenberger, & Yantis, 2001 for five; Feldman et al., 2013 for six; Gallivan et al., 2011 for seven authors in References). If the number of the authors is more than seven, only the first six authors and the last author are listed:

First, A., Second, B., Third, C., Fourth, D., Fifth, E., Sixth, F., . . . Last, X. Y. Z.  
(1999). How to reference a study done by more than seven authors. *Samples of HSE References*, 9, 99-999.

**4.2.2 Multiple references from the same author.** If the first authors of multiple references are the same, they can be ordered based on the following rules:

- His/her single-author papers come first (see Sawada, 2010 in References).
- His/her multiple-authors papers are ordered based on the last names of the second authors (see Sawada & Kaneko, 2007; Sawada, Li, & Pizlo, 2011a in References).
- If their second authors are also the same, they can be ordered based on the last names of the third authors (see Tsuruhara et al., 2010; Tsuruhara, Sawada, Kanazawa, Yamaguchi, & Yonas, 2009 in References).
- If their authors' lists are the same, they can be ordered based on years of their publication (see Sawada & Kaneko, 2006, 2007; Sawada & Pizlo, 2007, 2008 in References).
- If the years of their publication are also the same, they can be ordered based on their titles (see Sawada, Li, & Pizlo, 2011a, 2011b, in press-a, in press-b in References).

**4.2.3 Non-journal references.**

**4.2.3.1 Book chapters.** Edited books are collections of chapters about particular topics and those individual chapters are written by different authors. Usually, the individual chapters of the edited books are referenced. Their references include information of their edited books: their editor/editors, title, and publisher. Note that, in reference information of an edited book, “Ed.” means that there is a single editor for the book (see Sawada, Li, & Pizlo, 2011b in References) and “Eds.” means there are multiple editors for the book (see Sawada, Li, & Pizlo, in press-a, in press-b in References). Editors of edited books are not professional editors in their publishers but are specialists of the topics which the books are about. Addresses in the references of the chapters are locations of the publishers. Note that it is also possible to reference the edited book itself, not its individual chapters (see Dickinson & Pizlo, 2013 in References).

**4.2.3.2 Monographs.** A monograph (see Pizlo, Li, Sawada, & Steinman, 2014a in References) is a book that is a specialist work on a single subject. Its whole contents are written by its authors. Usually, the whole monograph is referenced rather than its individual chapters. The monograph is also referenced with its publisher’s information.

**4.2.3.3 Translated and re-published articles.** If a reference is a translation or a re-publication of some book, it should be indicated as follows.

Lambert, J. H. (2001). *Photometria*. (D. L. DiLaura, Trans.). New York, NY: Illuminating Engineering Society of North America. (Original work published 1760)

**4.2.3.4 Non-English language articles.** If an article is written not in English but in another Latin-based scripts (French, Spanish, German, etc.), its reference includes English translation of its title in square brackets.

Delorme, A. (1982). *Psychologie de la Perception* [Psychology of Perception]. Montréal, Canada: Éditions Études Vivantes.

If an article is written in Russian, names of its authors are transliterated and its title is translated.

Klucharev, V. A., Zubarev, I. P., & Shestakova, A. N. (2014). Нейробиологические механизмы социального влияния [Neurobiological mechanisms of social influence], *Экспериментальная психология*, 7, 20-36.

If an article is written in any other scripts (e.g. Japanese, Arabic, etc.), its reference information is transliterated and the title is also translated.

Ando, K. (2003). *Hikari to Hikari no Kiroku* [Light and Recording Light]. Tokyo, Japan: Sangyo Kaihatsu Kiko Inc.

Note that some non-English articles also provide English information as well. For example, main text of Sawada and Kaneko (2006) is written in Japanese but it has both Japanese and English titles and abstracts.

**4.2.3.5 Conference proceedings.** Depending on conferences, their proceedings are published in different formats and should be referenced in different ways (e.g. Sawada & Pizlo, 2007). See Hume-Pratuch (2012) in the APA Style Blog for some examples of references to conference presentations. More details of this topic can be found in the APA publication manual (American Psychological Association, 2003).

**4.2.3.6 Online articles.** Electronic books can be referenced as follows

Jacquelin, J. (2010, May 17). *Regressions et trajectoires 3D*. Retrieved from <https://www.scribd.com/doc/31477970/Regressions-et-trajectoires-3D>

Pizlo, Z., Li, Y., Sawada, T. & Steinman, R.M. (2014b). *Making a Machine That Sees Like Us* [Kindle DX version]. Retrieved from Amazon.com

Note that a reference to a Kindle book (e.g. Pizlo, Li, Sawada, Steinman, 2014b) is not with its publisher's information (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, see Pizlo, Li, Sawada, Steinman, 2014a in References for comparison). This is because

only one source information is necessary for each reference. For Pizlo et al. (2014b), it is “Amazon.com” (Lee, 2009).

Following examples show how other online articles can be referenced.

Corum, J. (2015, February 27). Is that dress white and gold or blue and black? *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/02/28/science/white-or-blue-dress.html>

Peterson, M. A., & Salvagio, E. (2010). Figure-ground perception. In *Scholarpedia*. Retrieved from [http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Figure-ground\\_perception](http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Figure-ground_perception)

Digital object identifier. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved March 26, 2015, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital\\_object\\_identifier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_object_identifier)

Hume-Pratuch, J. (2012, August 2). How to Cite Materials From Meetings and Symposia. [Web log comment]. Retrieved from <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2012/08/how-to-cite-materials-from-meetings-and-symposia.html>

References to most of online materials are not recommended because they are not peer-reviewed and are not necessarily written by its specialists. One exception in the examples above is Peterson and Salvagio (2010). This article was peer-reviewed by anonymous reviewer/reviewers.

**4.2.4 Notes.** Some references are followed by http addresses starting with “<http://dx.doi.org/>” (e.g. Sawada, 2010). They represent digital object identifiers (DOI), which uniquely determine electronic materials. See “Digital object identifier” (n.d.) for more details of DOI.

Note that a publication date of some reference is indicated as “n.d.” and it means “no date” (see “Comparison of reference management software,” n.d.; “Digital object identifier,” n.d. in References). For example, articles in Wikipedia have a line that reads “This page was last modified on...” but it is not their publication dates. Hence, their publication dates are indicated as n.d.

### **4.3 Reference managers**

Managing references is troublesome and time consuming. The problem just inflates as we read more papers and expand our research interest. To handle the problem, using reference management software is a possible solution. See “Comparison of reference management software” (n.d.) for a list of the reference management software.

## References

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