**SoTL Citation Self-Assessment Tool**

When writing for a broad audience, SoTL authors must often integrate multiple, large bodies of literature. This tool is designed to help writers reflect on the references and citations they are choosing and to use them intentionally (Cappello & Miller-Young, 2020). The process requires

1. ***Coding*** each citation and reflecting on what level of citation is needed to best support your statement.
2. ***Reviewing*** an entire manuscript to reflect upon the use and distribution of citations throughout.

For this purpose, **references** are defined as sources which are listed at the end of an article, but may be cited more than once within the article, and **citations** as each individual mention of a source after a quote or paraphrase within the text of an article.

**1. *Coding citations*** Each time you cite a source, consider the surrounding text to determine which of the following codes (Zhao et al. 2016), below, apply to your use of the reference. Use the code to reflect upon whether this is the most appropriate use of the reference based on the statement you are making.

* **Applied** = An in-text citation that has borrowed or adopted a significant element from the cited paper and has used those elements in the development of its own theme or study; or when the whole cited paper inspired the citing paper to develop a significant element; or when a citing paper built upon a cited paper, expanded, or furthered a cited paper’s study or even modified a cited paper’s method or approach.
* **Contrastive** = An in-text citation that contrasts (or compares) the data, method, model, theory, findings, etc. with what was used, documented, reported, or found in the cited paper.
* **Supportive** = An in-text citation that makes reference to a cited paper in order to establish legitimacy of the topic, to substantiate an assumption or claim, to justify a central argument, data, or method, to confirm findings, or to support an assertion, opinion, method, or result.
* **Reviewed** = An in-text citation that describes or reviews relevant and similar studies. The in-text citation may be used to provide readers with background information, to set the stage for the research area or problem, or to introduce readers to the origin of the idea or concept discussed in the paper. The in-text citation may illustrate the history or state of the art of the research problem that is being investigated in the citing paper or may review the current state of knowledge or research area in a subject field related to the citing paper. These types of in-text citations provide readers with contextual information necessary to understand the broader context of the study or the significance of the research questions or problems used in the citing papers but are not used to support the validity of the article’s main arguments.
* **Perfunctory** = An in-text citation that has little importance, significance, or contribution to the theme, analysis, or the results of the citing paper. These citations are usually made without additional comments and more than one paper is usually cited in the same context. The cited paper is not very relevant to the citing paper’s immediate concern or theme, and the cited paper is not used to compare or analyze the citing paper’s contribution to the research.

**2. *Reviewing a manuscript***

Use the table below to analyze your manuscript. For each reference, indicate how many times and where in the article it is cited, the highest citation rating for that reference (with ‘Applied being the highest and ‘Perfunctory’ being the lowest), and reflect on your use of each reference.

For example, are there a high number of perfunctory references? If so, consider: *Are they necessary? Do they detract from the manuscript’s readability?* *Would the manuscript be strengthened by adding more specifics from those references?* Are there a low number of supportive and contrastive references? If so, *could the discussion be strengthened by comparing your findings with those from other contexts and studies?*

Two examples from the manuscript self-assessment illustrated in Cappello & Miller-Young (2020) are provided.

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| **Reference** | **Location (# of citations)** | **Highest citation rating** | **Explanation for highest rating** |
| MacMillan (2018) | Introduction (5)  Discussion (2) | Supportive | establishes the legitimacy of the topic of SoTL literature reviews |
| Zhao et al. (2016) | Introduction (6)  Methods (3)  Discussion (4) | Applied | applies the citation codes and methodology from this study |
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Cappello, A. & Miller-Young, J. (2020). Who are we citing and how? a SoTL citation analysis. *Teaching and Learning Inquiry.*

MacMillan, M. (2018). The SoTL Literature Review: Exploring New Territory. In N.L. Chick (Ed.), *SoTL in action: Illuminating critical moments of practice*. Stylus Publishing.

Zhao, D., Cappello, A., & Johnston, L. (2016). Functions of Uni- and Multi-citations: Implications for Weighted Citation Analysis. *Journal of Data and Information Science, 2*(1), 51-69.