This work has been submitted to NECTAR, the Northampton Electronic Collection of Theses and Research.

http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/4336/

Creator(s): MacLellan, F.

Title: PRACTICE: Parenthetical Referencing Affecting Comprehension: Timely Investigation Changing Educational Practice

Date: 2012

Originally presented to: Research Active: Library and Learning Services Conference 2012

Conference URL: http://llsconference2012.wordpress.com/


Version of item: Presented version
A work in progress investigating whether use of parenthetical referencing (i.e. Harvard) affects reading comprehension and fluency.

**Research stages:**
- Literature review
- Interviews with academic staff
- Data analysis
- Questionnaire for students
- Follow-up interviews

**Idea initiated from PGCTHE inquiry based project.**

**Future indicative timeline:**
- Summer 2012 – Project proposal to University Ethics Committee
- Autumn 2012 – Data analysis (allocation of marks for referencing using a parenthetical and non-parenthetical system)
- Winter 2012 – Prepare interview questions and student questionnaire
- Spring 2013 – Questionnaire for students & interviews with academic staff
- Late spring 2013 – Follow up testing and interviews
- Summer 2013 onwards – dissemination of results and conclusions drawn

**Hypothesis:**
By using a parenthetical referencing system as the standard university students with reading difficulties are being disadvantaged. By their nature parenthetical references break up the flow of text making reading comprehension tricky this research will investigate whether introducing an alternative “university standard” non-parenthetical system will redress the balance for students with reading difficulties.

**Important developments:**
- 2010 – Initial idea mooted
- December 2011 – Literature review undertaken
- April 2012 – Initial ideas presented at LILAC conference

**References**

Fiona MacLellan, 01604 893012 Fiona.MacLellan@northampton.ac.uk, twitter: @fionaunis