

What to do to get your research published (in linguistics)¹

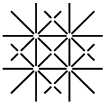
The 'right' time to start publishing

- If your work is good, it's never too early; don't hold back. If in doubt, ask your supervisor or senior peers
- BUT: don't go for easy and fast publication at the expense of quality outlets
- Make sure the publication can fulfill its function for a career later on: it should be a peer-reviewed journal or book (series); the publisher has to be solid with a good reputation; 'open access' if possible

Tips and strategies for novice researchers for getting papers accepted for publication

- Make a list of journals in which you would like to see your work appear (usually these are the renowned journals that you consult yourself for your research field)
- Then choose the journal that you read most for your own research as it will be read by people who will be interested in your work as well
- Read articles in that journal with respect to style; develop a feeling for academic writing; 'the way things are done' in this journal; download the style sheet of the journal
- Don't submit to more than one journal/publisher at the same time because the journal will have to find reviewers to give feedback; in fact, many journals require you to confirm that you have not submitted your work elsewhere
- Don't hesitate to ask your supervisor or more senior people about their experience with a particular journal [sometimes the process can be very long]
- Don't try to write up your entire PhD in one article; focus on a manageable sub-question
- Make sure your argument is coherent (Research question? Data? Ethics? Methodology? Match of data with methods? Results? Discussion? Outlook?)
- Take the technical requirements seriously for in-text referencing and the presentation of examples/tables/figures as well as the reference section (use endnote, citavi, etc.) and abide by the style sheet of the publisher
- Never submit your paper without having received feedback from peers with respect to content and language
- If you publish in a language that is not your mother tongue, make sure that a native speaker checks your language
- "Don't waist reviewers' time", i.e. make sure that you have done your job carefully so that you don't use the reviewers as a sounding board for rough ideas only or make their reading experience difficult by not paying attention to technical requirements
- Don't be offended when criticism is returned and you're asked to revise: this happens to all of us and is part of the academic dialogue; sleep over it and approach the points with a fresh mind; the paper is guaranteed to be better afterwards

¹ This (incomplete) list was provided by Miriam Locher for a workshop at the linguistics i-mean conference in 2015 at the University of Warwick. The headers were given by the workshop organizers. Updated 22/9/2021.



- If a journal rejects your paper, you can submit it to another journal; however, you should make sure to revise it first as it can happen that the new journal picks the same reviewers

Advice for good co-authoring and how to work effectively together on a paper

- Only work with people who you know you can get along
- Ideally, you have the same understanding of how to deal with deadlines
- Write with a particular journal in mind (target audience, download the style sheet)
- Start by sketching the paper in its rough shape (sections, aims, etc.); then assign who does what and try to make allowances for your different strengths
- Set clear dates for the steps: who has to have done what by when; always fix the next date for a meeting
- Allow enough time for steps that take longer: e.g. transcribing; establishing categories for qualitative coding and coder agreement, etc.
- Be constructive and nice: many academics are thin-skinned
- If the sequence of how the authors should be named is an issue, then either make sure that you write at least two papers together and alternate the sequence; or mention early on that you want to discuss the sequence of authors at the time of submission
- Publishing with your supervisor: In some disciplines this is common practice and even required (in the case of funded joint projects), in others it might be frowned upon (check with your supervisor)
- Career planning: Make sure that your publication list will also show clearly that you can work on your own as well as in a team. A hiring committee will want to know what parts of your publications are due to your input.

Further thoughts

- At the latest when you're going for jobs, make sure that you have an up-to-date website that lists your publications and academic activities and provides a CV. If you do not plan on publishing your PhD as a monograph (as is required in some parts of Europe and common practice in many parts of the US), make sure that it becomes clear what you have worked on.
- Make your work available to readers by providing downloads either through the repository of your institution or by uploading your papers to your personal website; however, make sure that you are not violating copyright agreements with the publishers. Publishers will let you know which documents can be made open access (e.g. the pre-reviewed version, or the post-review version, or the revised version; a pdf of an entire book, or pdfs directly from the edited collection or the journal itself are usually not allowed; if in doubt, check with your publisher)

Language issues and further writing tips

- Avoid colloquialisms or vague words (pretty, interesting, way, etc.)
- Avoid complex and convoluted syntax (no sentences that combine arguments with colons and semi-colons and lists in brackets and sub-clauses, etc.); if you cannot immediately 'draw' the syntax tree yourself, then consider splitting the sentence
- Avoid unwarranted generalizations in the conclusion
- Make sure to return to the literature review in the conclusion and clearly outline what your study has contributed to the field in general and what the next research steps could be (outlook)
- Strike all usage of 'hence' and 'thus' unless they are really necessary
- Avoid ad hominem attacks and be considerate and humble in your own suggestions