

# Publishing your work in journals

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# Background

Today we are going to discuss what is involved in publishing the results of your research in a journal, with a focus on international top quality publications.

We will talk about **what** is involved and **how** the process works through various steps.

We will have **Discussion** sections where you will be asked to think about issues, share ideas and experiences, discuss together, and report back to everyone.

# Background

I have been editing books and collections of paper since 1983, and was Managing Editor of the journal *Language Documentation and Description* (LDD) from 2003 to 2022. I am on the editorial board of Cambridge University Press and several journals.

I would like to share my experiences, both as an author and as an editor, about how publishing in international journals usually works, and give you some pointers to think about for your own research and publications.

# Outline

- ❑ Submitting your paper
- ❑ Reviewing
- ❑ Getting a decision
- ❑ Revising
- ❑ Acceptance
- ❑ Publication
- ❑ What next?

# Submitting your paper

Each journal has a **topic** or **specialist area** of the kinds of papers they are interested in publishing – usually the journal website sets out clearly what its goals and topics are. Do some research. Look at recently published volumes.

Examples: *Language and Society*, *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, [LDD](#), *Linguistics in the Tibeto-Burman Area*, *Nusa*

Choose the journal for your submission:

1. general and specific topic areas your work relates to
2. already published papers similar to yours
3. the status of the journal (Scopus, editorial board, citations)
4. recommendations from supervisors or teachers

# The submission process

1. When you have chosen a journal, make sure your paper meets the requirements specified on the website: **maximum word length, structure, and format** (especially references) – e.g. [LDD](#)
2. If things are unclear use the Contact link or send email
3. **NEVER** submit the same paper to **multiple journals** at the same time
4. Most submissions are done online – see [LDD](#)
5. You may need to register your name, affiliation and email address and create a username and password. Some journals want an ORCID.
6. You will be asked for the title, an abstract (200 word description), keywords, and other basic metadata

# The review process

1. The Managing Editor will receive your uploaded submission and will review the abstract, keywords, metadata, and read through your paper. They may consult the Editorial Board for advice.
2. Your submission might **not be appropriate** for the journal:
  - wrong topic area
  - too long
  - poorly structured
  - poorly expressed
3. Or **too low quality**
  - incoherent
  - poor argumentation
  - weak exemplification
  - reads like an undergraduate essay
4. You may get a **desk rejection** – you will be told your submission is rejected and the reasons why. Desk rejection is **not uncommon** and does **not** mean you are a failure.



# For Discussion

**What should you do if you get a desk rejection?**

Possible responses:

1. politely thank the editor
2. revise the length and format as specified
3. aim to improve quality – how?
4. resubmit a better version
5. OR look for another **appropriate** journal to submit to

# If your paper goes to review

1. Most journals operate a **double-blind** review process: the reviewer does not know the author's name and the author does not know the reviewer's name
2. Most journals try to arrange at least **two independent** reviewers, some more
3. The Managing Editor will decide who to approach for reviews, sometimes after consulting the Editorial Board, especially for very specialist submissions, and after considering possible **conflicts of interest**
4. Potential reviewers will be contacted by email to ask if they can review within a specified timeframe – this may take several weeks to a month to arrange. You must be **patient**.

# Reviewers

1. Reviewers will be asked to assess the **suitability** and **quality** of the paper, and will have to answer a set of questions about it and provide **reasons** – let's look at an example from [LDD](#)
2. Reviewers are given a deadline for their report, usually 2-3 months from the date of receiving the paper. The Managing Editor will remind them regularly
3. Reviewers are busy people and have many demands on their time – be patient but if you do not hear anything after about three months check the submission system or contact the Managing Editor to ask about progress with your submission. **Be polite.**

# For Discussion

1. Have you ever had anyone review or comment on something you wrote?
2. What did they say about it?
3. How did you feel when you got the feedback?

# Getting a decision

1. Managing Editor considers the reviews and decides what to do (sometimes consulting the Editorial Board members)
2. Reviewers can agree or disagree in their evaluation – if there is a major disagreement, the Editor might ask for another review (“the dreaded [Reviewer 2](#)” – see also [FB page](#))
3. The Editor will compile a **Report**, presenting and moderating the Reviewers’ assessments and giving their decision:
  - Reject (up to 90%, depending on the journal)
  - Major revise and resubmit
  - Minor amendments
  - Accept as is (almost never given)

# For Discussion

Why would reviewers have different opinions?

What do you think you should do if all the reviewers think your paper should **not** be published?

If the Editor says you need to **revise** your paper to respond to the reviewers' feedback, how would you feel? What should you do?

# Revising

## The Stages of Revision



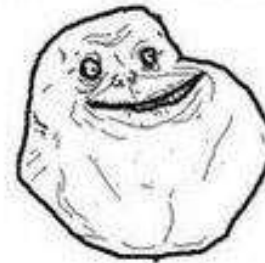
denial



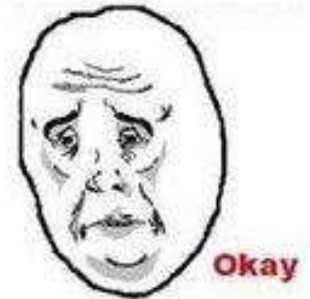
anger



bargaining



depression



acceptance

# Making revisions

1. Consider the reviewers' Report carefully and decide whether the comments and feedback are **valid**, or whether you have **arguments** or **evidence** against them
2. You may need to do more reading or data collection and analysis in order to respond to the report. **Consult** with your supervisors and trusted colleagues
3. Think carefully about how to change your paper to deal with **valid criticism**, or prepare **arguments** about why the reviewer is incorrect or your approach is superior
4. Prepare a revised submission (usually **not longer** than the original!) and a statement about **how** and **why** you have responded to the Report



# Resubmission

1. Submit the revised version of your paper together with **justification** for why and how you have changed it and why not
2. The Editor will decide whether to accept or reject your revised version, or whether further changes are needed to improve it more. Sometimes, the Editor will want to send the revised version for review – sometimes to the same reviewers as before, but sometimes to new reviewers
3. The Editor will make a final decision after revisions and reviews (if needed) and your paper will either be:
  - Accepted for publication
  - Rejected

## For Discussion

If the editor tells you that your revised paper is accepted, should you celebrate?

Is that the end of the publishing process and you can relax now?

# Acceptance

1. If your paper is accepted, it goes into **production**
2. You may be asked to submit your revised paper in a **particular format**, often with tables and images submitted **separately** as specified graphics files, e.g. png or svg or jpg
3. The revised paper may be sent to a **sub-editor** who will check it carefully for structure, format and layout (e.g. all examples in tables), spelling, style and English expression
4. After this, a **proof version** of your paper will be prepared, exactly as it will appear in the journal (online and/or printed)

# Production

1. The proofs will be sent to you with a request to indicate **corrections** of any errors introduced by the sub-editor or the design and production staff
2. Indicate changes clearly so the production staff can fix them, ideally without having to change page layout (use standard proof-reading [marks](#))
3. At this stage you generally **cannot change** the body of the paper unless it is absolutely **crucial** to correct a mistake
4. Some publishers will have **second proofs** to make sure that your corrections have been incorporated, but this is less common, and the production staff will usually do final proof checking

# Publication

1. Your article will now be placed in a volume of the journal and published – some journals do “publish on acceptance” so the paper may be online before the whole volume is completed
2. Yaay! You are now a **published author**
3. If the journal is **open access** then anyone who has the URL (or DOI) can download your paper and read it. Some journals require a **subscription** so readers can only access your paper through membership or via a library they belong to, or by paying to download it
4. Check the **copyright arrangements** and whether you hold copyright while the publisher has a **creative commons** licence

# What next?

1. Add your publication to your curriculum vitae (CV) and put a copy in your institutional repository and/or on your personal website (if the publisher of the journal allows it – most do)
2. Let the world know that you are a published author by announcing your paper on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, WhatsApp) or email
3. If your paper is open access or you hold copyright then consider posting it on Academia.edu or ResearchGate (join if you are not already a member) so that more people who do not know you will realise it is available

And then ...

Start work on your **next article!**

## For Discussion

A friend says to you: “Wow! The publication process is very complicated and takes a long time, sometimes more than a year from when you write your paper and when it gets published. Why bother?”

What do you reply?

What are **two new things** that you learnt today that you did not know before? Make a list for your group to share with others.



Thank you  
and good luck with  
your publication  
ventures

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The screenshot shows the homepage of the journal *Language Documentation and Description*. The browser address bar displays [iddjournal.org](https://iddjournal.org). The navigation menu includes Home, About, Submissions, Content, Research Integrity, and Contact. A search bar and an Account link are also present. The main header features the journal's logo and title. A prominent orange banner indicates the current issue is Volume 21 - 2021. The 'About this journal' section describes the journal's focus on peer-reviewed research in language documentation and description. On the right, a 'Start Submission' button and the Aperiio logo are visible. Below, a 'Latest Articles' section lists three recent publications with their titles, authors, and dates.

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 **Language Documentation and Description**

Current Issue

**Volume 21 - 2021**

About this journal

*Language Documentation and Description* (LDD) is an international journal that publishes peer-reviewed research on language documentation, language description, and language support, broadly conceived.

LDD publishes general Research Articles on the theory and practice of language documentation, language description, sociocultural aspects of language use and linguistic research, language policy, language revitalization, and related topics. The journal has a focus on small, minority, and endangered languages.

<https://iddjournal.org>

[Start Submission](#) 

Latest Articles

-  **Reo Ra'ivavae (Ra'ivavae, Austral Archipelago, French-occupied Polynesia) - Language Snapshot.**  
Hancock-Teed & Walworth — 31 Dec 2021
-  **Lexical variation in Namaqualand: Some evidence from ethnobotany**  
Christie — 31 Dec 2021
-  **The Arapesh "suitcase miracle": The interpretive value of reproducible research**  
Dobrin — 31 Dec 2021

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# Author Guidelines

## Submission information

When preparing your manuscript for LDD please consider these author guidelines, which draw liberally from those established by *Glossa*. Please note that formatting in accordance with the guidelines and stylesheet is not required unless the manuscript is accepted for publication.

Submissions should be made electronically through this website. Once submitted, the author can track the submission via the online journal management system.

When submitting, a word count including footnotes and references should be noted under the paper title.

The manuscript should be converted into a single PDF file containing all tables and figures. A Word file should also be submitted as a supplementary document. Separate properly formatted image files will be requested if the submission is accepted for publication.

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amlbrown.com/2015/11/10/how-not-to-be-reviewer-2/



Who is Reviewer #2? Literally, Reviewer 2 is the anonymised moniker given to the second peer to review a research paper. In common parlance, Reviewer 2 can be summarised as possessing the following qualities:

- Grumpy
- Aggressive
- Vague
- Unhelpful
- Overbearingly committed to a pet discipline
- Overly focused on a particular methodology
- Inflexible
- Unwilling to give the benefit of the doubt
- Unwilling to view the authors of a submitted paper as peers.

If you need examples, go on over to [Shit My Reviewers Say](#). Just a quick scroll through is enough to make non-academics shake their heads in sympathy.

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Group by Ayşe Pinar Saygin

## Reviewer 2 Must Be Stopped!

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