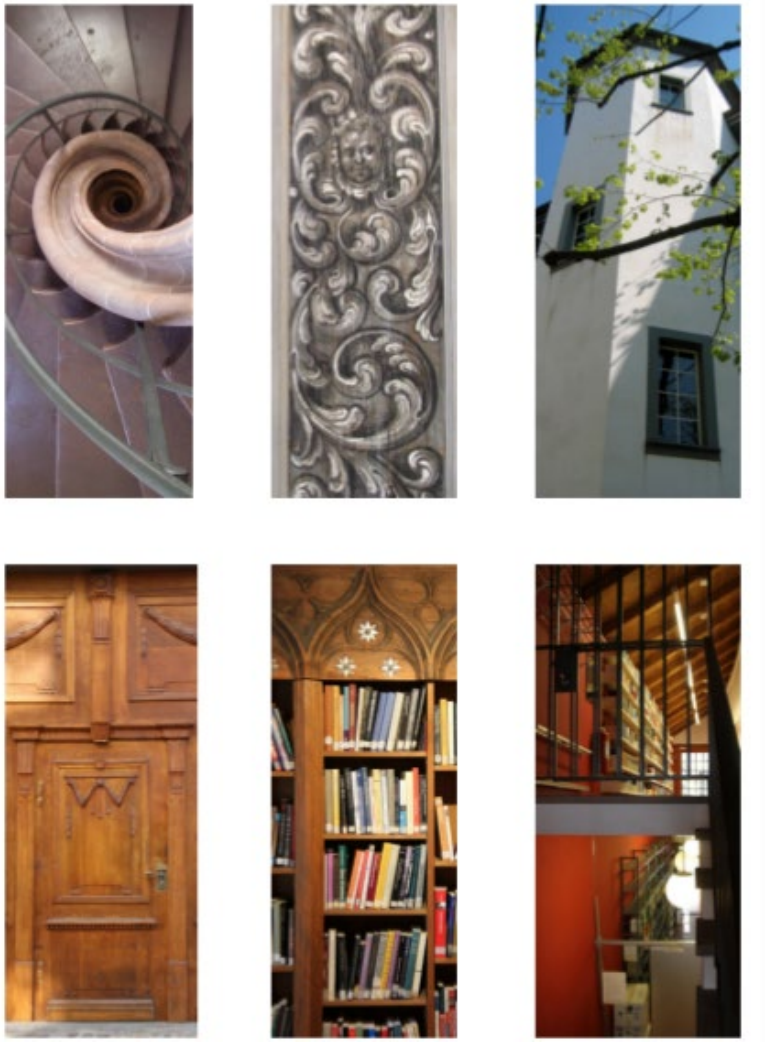
Department of Languages and Literatures
English Linguistics **University of Basel**

Manual
for Papers in English Linguistics



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Cover picture: Impressions of the English Seminar (Department of Languages and Literatures, University of Basel). Photos kindly provided by Sabina Horber and Philipp Dankel.

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Contents

1 General remarks 1
2 Types of written work and their scope 1
3 Evaluation criteria for written papers 2
4 Typical structure of an empirical paper in linguistics 4
5 Production plan of a research project 7
5.1 Preparation 8
5.1.1 Finding previously published work 9
5.1.2 Outline 10
5.2 Research 10
5.3 Writing 10
5.3.1 Building your arguments 11
5.3.2 References to other people's ideas 12
5.4 Revision 13
6 Style sheet 14
6.1 Introducing concepts 14
6.2 Emphasis 14
6.3 Giving examples and quoting your primary material 14
6.4 Tables and figures 15
6.5 Footnotes 16
6.6 References within the body of your text 16
6.7 References at the end of your paper 18
6.7.1 Books 18
6.7.2 Parts of books 20
6.7.3 Journal articles 21
6.7.4 Article in a reference book 21
6.7.5 Electronic sources 21
7 AI in the process of paper writing 22
8 Information on BA Exam 24
9 Information on MA Exam 25
10 Resources for English linguistics 26
10.1 Adam self-study workspace 26
10.2 Search strategies in library catalogues and databases 26
10.3 Library Catalogue 26
10.4 Online databases available through UB 26
10.5 Journals 27
10.6 Communal Online Platform 28
10.7 Recommended Professional Websites 28

1 General remarks

This manual is meant for students of English linguistics who are in the process of writing proseminar and seminar papers or MA/PhD theses. It gives advice on how to choose a topic, how to write and structure a linguistics paper, and on how to tackle some of the technical aspects of a linguistics paper. Expectations and evaluation criteria for each type of written work are explained and information on the BA exam and MA exam is provided. Please also note already at this point that the teaching staff of the English department feels strongly about plagiarism and the responsible use of AI tools. This manual is also meant to help you work in a responsible and ethical manner.

This manual complements the information in the lecture "Research methodology in linguistics" (available in each autumn term) and is an integral part of studying English linguistics. Students also have access to an Adam workspace for linguistic research skills, which provides modules with further information on "Finding and managing references", "Writing papers in English linguistics", "Introduction to quantitative research methods" and "Summarizing and visualizing data".

2 Types of written work and their scope

Over the course of your studies, academic writing in English linguistics increases in length and complexity. Here you can find information on the different expectations and requirements.

Proseminar paper: 4000 words

Proseminar papers are primarily *formative papers* written in connection with the introductory courses. With respect to content, this means that their aim is for students to learn the ropes of how to ask linguistic questions, to find literature on a topic (at least five sources) and to summarize and critically discuss it. This should be followed by a brief analysis in which students apply concepts to data. These concepts need to be grounded in linguistic theory, and the analysis needs to be done in a manner that critically reflects how the concepts were applied. The aim or a proseminar paper is also for students to familiarize themselves with the typical structure of a linguistics paper and to learn how to follow the style sheet meticulously (structure of paper, presentation of sections, tables, examples, figures, references, etc.). Appropriate use of academic English is expected.

The ideal time to write the proseminar paper in linguistics is during the summer between semesters 2 and 3. Students will discuss an outline with their supervisor, receive feedback, and then write the paper and submit it for assessment. Students will receive detailed feedback from your supervisors on the submitted version. Revising the paper is possible. In the system, the proseminar paper is booked with "pass/fail".

Seminar paper: 6000 words (BA), 7000 words (MA)

Seminar papers are primarily *evaluative papers* written in connection with seminars or research seminars. In seminar papers, students need to demonstrate that they have mastered the art of finding pertinent linguistic questions, finding literature on a topic (at least 15 sources), identifying a research gap and summarizing and critically discussing the literature. Students are expected to conduct an empirical analysis in which they not only apply concepts to data but also aim at generating new insights on a moderate sample size. We expect to see perfect command of the technical aspects of academic writing in linguistics (structure of paper, presentation of sections, tables, examples, figures, references, etc.). Appropriate use of academic English is expected.

Students will discuss the study design with their supervisor and receive feedback until the study design is sound. After that, they write their paper on their own. The submitted version will be assessed with a mark and a detailed report. Revisions are not possible. The marks for BA seminar papers will

count towards the final mark of the BA degree. The marks for MA seminar papers will not count towards the final mark of the MA degree, but feedback will provide further help in preparation for the MA thesis.

MA thesis: 30,000–35,000 words (without references or appendices)
The same expectations as for seminar papers hold for the MA thesis, but the scope is wider. We expect students to find a truly novel research niche where real insights can be gained. The literature review generally comprises several sections on different research areas and concepts that are brought into dialogue with each other (at least 30 sources). The data selection is larger than for seminar papers and aims at either more representativeness or richness of the sample to warrant a substantial study. The methodology can be a reproduction of approaches seen in published papers, but innovative combinations of research methods are a plus. The results section can be organized into different chapters. We expect to see perfect command of the technical aspects of academic writing in linguistics (the typical structure of a linguistics paper, the style sheet for sections, tables, examples, figures, references, etc.). Appropriate use of academic English is expected.

While the proseminar and seminar papers are administered directly by the supervisors, students need to register at the Dean's office for the MA thesis. The deadlines and registration forms are announced there well in advance. To register, at least 20 credit points in total for both MA subjects, including a written seminar paper in English linguistics, are required. You need a working title and the signature of a supervisor (helping you with the process of writing the thesis) and a referee (writing an independent second evaluation) to register. Please approach both the supervisor and the referee early and heed the deadlines.

During the nine months of writing your thesis, you will discuss the study design with your supervisor and receive feedback until the study design is sound. Ask your supervisor how your supervision process will be handled. The submitted version will be assessed with a mark that counts towards the final mark for the MA degree. When submitting, you need to send an electronic version in DOC and PDF form to both your supervisor and referee and ask one of them to sign an official form that acknowledges receipt. Please also include a Turnitin report that you can create yourself («Plagiatsprüfung Self Check-in»).

PhD thesis: about 110'000 words (plus apparatus)
The main difference between an MA thesis and a PhD thesis, apart from their length, is that we expect a PhD thesis to make a substantial contribution to research with respect to findings on a particular data set that is large/rich in scope, to advance theory and find innovative methodological solutions that can serve as an example for future research. While the target audience for pro/seminar papers and MA theses generally remains within the boundary of the department, the target audience for a PhD is the international academic peer group.

3 Evaluation criteria for written papers

Section 2 described the expectations concerning the scope of the different types of written academic work in English linguistics. Below you can find the assessment criteria that are valid for all the mentioned types of papers. Supervisors will take the type of paper into consideration when assessing.

Criterion 1. Content and structure

- Does the paper follow the required structure of a paper (title page, table of contents, introduction, theory, method, data, results, discussion, conclusion, references, appendices)?

- Do the sections appropriately cover the ground they are meant to cover? (E.g., does the introduction ideally prepare the reader for the remainder of the paper? Does the method accurately describe the analytical steps that were conducted to arrive at the findings?)
- Has the student found relevant and up-to-date published work on the topic that informs a solid literature review? (see also Criterion 2)
- Does the student show a good understanding of the topic chosen?
- Is the choice of research topic, questions and aims reasonably motivated and understandable for the reader? (Tip: Think about why the reader would want to learn about what you have found, not so much about how you came up with the idea.)
- Does the student critically engage with concepts used in the literature?
- Does the student demonstrate independent thinking, i.e. introduce innovative ideas, interpretations, criticisms, take a stance, include their own voice, etc.?
- Does the student formulate clear and operationalizable research questions?
- Are these research questions operationalized successfully?
- Does the student find and describe methodological steps that help answer the research question(s)?
- When using data, is research ethics mentioned and heeded?
- Is the choice of data appropriate for the paper – in terms of its scope as well as its thematic orientation?
- Are the selection criteria for the corpus compilation clearly reflected on and explained, and is the choice of data plausible?
- Is there good alignment between research questions, methodology, data sample, findings and conclusions?
- Does the student explicitly mention the scope and limitations of the empirical study?
- Does the student give a consistent and replicable interpretation of the data? Is the interpretation convincing and in line with the sample and the limitations of the study?
- Is the structure of the text logical, balanced, with the appropriate use of theory, methodology and discussion?

Criterion 2. Appropriateness of literature used

- Has the student based their reasoning on a well-grounded presentation of the important literature on the topic?
- Has the student found the most recent work on the topic in the linguistic databases?
- Has the student identified a gap in the literature regarding the chosen topic?
- Is the number of sources adequate for the type of paper? (proseminar paper: at least 5 sources; seminar paper: at least 15 sources; MA thesis: at least 30 sources; PhD thesis: more than 50 sources)
- Is the quality of the sources adequate?
- Is the literature relevant for the topic and research aims as well as for a paper in linguistics?

Criterion 3. Language

- Does the student show good control over the structures and stylistic constraints of academic written English?
- Are ideas expressed coherently and in a way that is easy to follow for the readership?
- Is the range of vocabulary diverse, precise and appropriate?
- Do grammar, spelling, punctuation adhere to a formal standard of English?
- Is a formal and non-colloquial, academic style used?

Criterion 4. Technical control
(Please consult Section 6 and Section 7 for details).

- Does the student display control over quoting with the following style: Author (year: page number)?
- Are block quotations correctly displayed?
- Are examples numbered consecutively and referred to in the text by number?
- Do figures have numbers and descriptive titles/captions?
- Do figures that show percentages indicate what these percentages are based on (N=?)?
- Do figures and tables that report the mean also report the standard deviation?
- Are inferential statistics tests clearly indicated?
- Does the reference section follow the style sheet?

Evaluation:
In assessing the progress made by the student towards thinking and arguing academically, criteria 1 and 2 are most important. The first two assessment criteria can determine up to 60 per cent of the mark. Since we are in a language department, the student must show good and accurate command of English. For this reason, criterion 3 receives about 20 per cent. Criterion 4 is important because the student should learn to master the technical vagaries of writing an academic paper in linguistics. Control over this aspect of paper writing accounts for up to 20 per cent.

The following scale will be used to give a final assessment of the overall paper in the case of a mark (other papers are pass/fail):

Table 1. Alignment of percentage with mark

Percentage	**Mark**
60-64	4
65-73	4.5
74-82	5
83-91	5.5
92-100	6

Any result below 60 per cent is insufficient and will receive a fail mark.

Best practice:
Sample papers are available on the Linguistics Presence Shelf in the linguistics library (Nadelberg 6, first floor, room 12).

4 Typical structure of an empirical paper in linguistics

A research paper dealing with an analysis of linguistic data should normally contain the sections listed in Table 2. You can use it as a template for an outline. In Section 5, we will explain how you will arrive at this structure, but we want you to first see what you are aiming for. The sections should be numbered, except for the table of contents, references and appendices. Page numbers start on the first page of the introduction. For good legibility use font size 12 for the main text and do not go below font size 10 for tables, examples and figures. Use 1.5 line spacing. In the case of MA and PhD theses, the same structure pertains but we speak of chapters rather than sections.

Table 2. Outline of a typical linguistics paper

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Formal elements</td><td>Title Page
The following information should be included on the title page:

University of Basel, Department of Languages and Literatures
Course and semester: ……
Instructor: ……

Title

Student name: ……
Immatriculation number: ……
Email: ……
Date of submission: ……
Number of words: ……</td></tr>
<tr><td>Table of contents
Indicate sections and page references. Remember that page numbering only starts on the first page of the text, not with the table of contents. Indent subsections for clarity.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Introductory part</td><td>1. Introduction / aim and scope
State your aim briefly and indicate why the subject of your paper is worth writing about. Keep the introduction short. Make sure that the title of your paper reflects its aim and scope.
“Set the stage”
➢ Introduce the research question/thesis
➢ Point to the relevance of the question
➢ Procedure: the last paragraph of the introduction outlines how the paper is organized</td></tr>
<tr><td>Main part</td><td>2. Literature Review
Give a brief, critical survey of earlier work dealing with your subject and derive your research questions and hypotheses based on the state-of-the-art literature. Introduce your terminology and give important definitions of your theoretical concepts within this literature review.

“Prepare the tools”
– Identify the key issues by reviewing previous research.
– Introduce & define the terminology that is relevant for your analysis/topic.
– Outline the theoretical concepts you use.
– End up clearly identifying the research niche/gap on the basis of the previous literature
– Be selective in your literature review. Consider what the reader needs to know to fully grasp the depth and relevance of your study.

Note: In the case of MA/PhD theses, the literature review can be split into several distinct sections or even chapters. You need to clearly point out the research gap that you wish to fill.</td></tr>
</table>

	3. Material/Data State the nature of your primary material (i.e., your data): – Specify the data on which your empirical analysis is based – State the nature and limitations of your primary material: whether you use naturally occurring data, elicited material, representativeness, etc. – Describe your method of collecting data as well as the advantages and/or limitations of your material: explanation of selection criteria – If applicable, use descriptive statistics to describe your data – Consider whether your choice of data is likely to affect the results in an important way – Discuss ethical considerations
	4. Method The aim of the methods section is to show the reader how you arrived at your results. State how you address your research interest and turn it into operationalizable research questions. If your investigation is long and complex, give a step-by-step description of what you did. In case of codebooks/thematic analysis: illustrate and explain the categories and report on how you establish coder-agreement in case you quantify an analysis of functional categories. *Note:* For (pro)seminar papers, the sections on material and method can also be combined to form one section. In MA/PhD theses, two separate chapters are customary.
	5. Results and Discussion First present your results, and then discuss them. Analyse your data by applying the chosen theoretical and methodological tools. You may want to present your results in the form of tables/figures or lists of examples, or both. Try to make your findings as clear as possible, and concentrate on one aspect at a time. Support your arguments by giving examples from your data. Long and complicated sections should have a short summary at the end. *Note:* In the case of MA/PhD theses, the results can be discussed in several analysis sections/chapters, followed by a discussion chapter.
Conclusion	**6. Conclusion** "Looking back and forward" – Summarize your work with reference to the research question(s) – Point to the implications of the study – Show awareness of the limitations of your study – Make links to the literature review (what have you added?) – Outlook to future research: Explain the next desirable steps in this research field
References	**References** Under this heading you list your sources in alphabetical order. They may be divided into Primary (the data you looked at) and Secondary sources (the literature you consulted on the topic). Follow the style sheet on how to present references. Note that the title 'References' is not numbered. Every source you mention needs to be documented.

Appendices	**Appendices** If you want to include specimens of your primary sources, questionnaires you used, scripts you created to search corpora, etc., you may do so in one or more appendices at the very end of your paper. They should have separate numbering (App. I, App. II etc.), but continuous page numbers with the rest of the paper.
	Download, sign and include the official, **mandatory pledge on good academic practice** **Declaration of AI usage**: List all the tools you used and describe how you applied them (e.g. picture generation, assistance in finding references, language checks, etc.)

Note: Each section can have sub-sections. For example, section 5 can be split into sub-sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3. Please note that, if there is a section 6.1, then there also must be a section 6.2.

Other modes of organization are more suitable for other types of papers. For example, if you write a **theoretical paper** rather than an empirical paper, similar criteria apply, but there will be no sections on Material and Data Analysis. Try to state the focus of your investigation as clearly as possible – a critical review of the literature is more than just a summary of articles and books. Your task is to pinpoint the state of the art in a particular debate. Often, the positions held by different authors seem or are controversial. Try to work out if they are really contradictory, or perhaps supplementary because the authors address the problem from different angles. If you cannot reconcile the different positions or research traditions, you may say so and thus identify areas for future research. Make sure that important literature is not only summarised, but that you make clear what your position is relative to them, what you adopt for your own empirical analysis and potentially also what you disregard or disagree with. Before writing a paper, make sure to consult your supervisor for advice.

5 Production plan of a research project

You can think of your writing as a project with different phases. Figure 1 shows the typical flow for an empirical paper. Sometimes the different phases may overlap and you might want to go back to particular phases in order to improve your argument. The arrows indicate the directions of this process. In what follows, you can obtain guidance on each major phase.

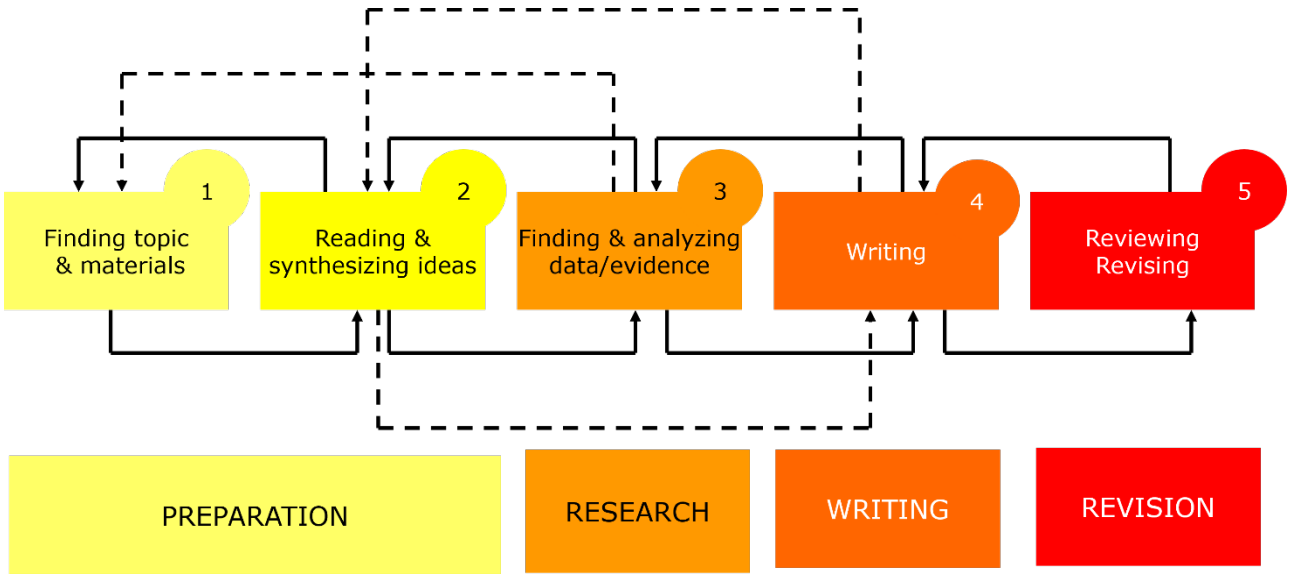

Figure 1. Typical research steps and phases for paper writing

5.1 Preparation

Before you start writing, you should approach a supervisor and discuss your topic with them. They will help you

- to define/clarify your ideas
- to flesh out these ideas
- to grasp how to structure your main argument and limit its scope
- to find out what methodological steps you will have to take
- to decide which aspects of the subject and/or what kind of linguistic material to focus on

None of these instructions can be given in general terms because they depend on the individual needs of each student and the specificity of the topic you want to write about.

> It is *essential* for you to consult the person who will be supervising your work before you start working on a paper, as outlined in the regulations.

In your papers, you are supposed to show that you are able to read, understand, and critically evaluate the existing research literature and report your insights in proper academic style. This is shown by a comparison and evaluation of different theories, including the identification of (apparent) contradictions and open issues, or by the application of a particular theory or approach to new data. To achieve this goal, you must specify your research question concisely and then focus on relevant aspects only. In other words, we expect a discussion that is deep and substantial regarding a focused research question rather than a broad and shallow summary of a large research area.

To tackle, develop and grasp the complex structure of the academic product 'research paper', we suggest the following mnemonic **rule of 'hand'** (an obvious pun on the English idiom ***a rule of thumb*** = 'a rough measure'), which you should keep in mind when working on your paper (see Figure 2).

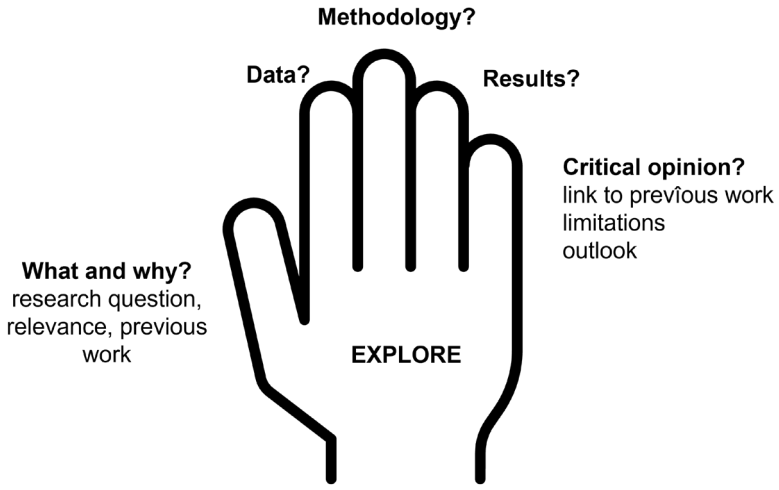

Figure 2. Rule of 'hand'

This rule of hand can be applied both for reading other people's work critically, as well as when developing your own research. When reading papers in linguistics by other people, you can work with the following set of questions in order to grasp the gist of the paper:

1. What is the main argument of the research article? What are its research questions? What previous work is the paper based on?
2. What data is worked with? What type? Is the selection representative?
3. What methodology is employed? What steps for analysis are proposed?
4. What are the results and can you follow them?
5. What is your critical opinion of this text?

In analogy, when writing papers in linguistics, you should work with the same set of questions:

1. What is the main argument of my research article? What are my research questions? What previous work do I build on?
2. What data do I work with? What type? Is the selection representative?
3. What methodology do I employ? What steps for analysis do I follow?
4. What are my results and can my readers follow them?
5. What is my critical opinion of my findings and how do I link them to previous work? What next steps do I propose for this field of research?

Research topics can be found in many areas of interest. For the proseminar paper, we suggest you work on an issue introduced in class. For seminar papers, we recommend you write in connection with the course topic and find your own research angle, drawing on additional literature and your own data. In the case of MA/PhD theses, you are free to suggest topics of your own and to build on all the insights gained cumulatively during your studies. In general, the linguistic lecture series also gives you insights into issues and topics that you can explore in more depth by doing research of your own. It is usually a good idea to approach your topic top-down as well as bottom-up: What linguistic theory can be applied in your study and give meaning to your findings, and what language-relevant observations have you made that warrant explanation? Here are some concrete steps to help you develop a project.

5.1.1 Finding previously published work

- Identify a topic that you like. Then, use the library catalogue (swisscovery, activate the VPN when off-campus) to browse for literature. Students writing theses and seminar papers should make sure that they also use the electronic databases BLLDB, Web of Science and MLA, which can be accessed through the University Library and also our website (cf. Section 10.4). This will give you an idea of what has been published on your subject worldwide. You can then go and search for the relevant titles here in Basel (or even in Switzerland). Please also see the comments on AI-assisted literature searches in Section 7.
- Discuss your ideas about the topic, questions, or material that interest you with your peers: you will find it much easier to start writing if you have already formulated your argument or parts of it within a communicative oral context. For this reason, form discussion groups.
- Write down *all* the bibliographical references (including page numbers) of any material and ideas you glean from elsewhere. Be meticulous when doing this: it will save you much time during the writing stage of your paper. Also, it will help you to **avoid plagiarising.** We strongly suggest that you work with **referencing programs** that keep stock of what you have read. They also provide fields where you can add your thoughts and assessments of the reference in question. We recommend Endnote, Mendeley, Zotero, etc.
- Be careful to transcribe quotations very precisely (including punctuation and archaic gendered forms).
- When taking notes, carefully distinguish between your own and other people's thoughts.

- When reading papers, use the list of questions above to create summaries for your use.
- Use dictionaries and reference books to look up words and concepts.

5.1.2 Outline

After you have chosen a topic and browsed through the library to find material that seems appropriate, **you must consult your supervisor** to discuss what methods and tools of analysis and interpretation you need to apply, and whether you need to limit the scope of the material you will be scrutinising. Some supervisors may wish to see an **outline** early on in the supervision process. You are encouraged to make use of this opportunity.

When making an outline, keep the rule of hand and guiding questions in mind and use the structure of an empirical paper introduced in Section 4. At this stage, you should also rely on your reading summaries, notes and ideas. Try to specify where in your paper you want to include which sources, salient quotations, etc. You can use your outline as an argumentative template to put the pieces of gathered knowledge and insight together. Ask your supervisor in advance whether they have a template for the outline. In general, your outline should include at least:

- a working title
- main research interest and research questions
- theoretical tools
- ideas for data collection (ethics, scope, feasibility)
- ideas on methodological approach
- potential structure of the presentation of results
- a list of references

5.2 Research

The research phase contains making the ideas obtained in the literature review usable for creating new knowledge. You will develop a research design that entails collecting and analyzing your own data. This phase is different from writing up results and might take the bulk of your research time. Depending on your decisions, it could be administering and analyzing questionnaire or interview data. It could be collecting recorded data, transcribing it and analyzing it with a codebook. It could be working with linguistic experiments or existing language corpora. Please refer to the reader of the obligatory lecture on Research Methdology in English Linguistics for input on research questions, types of data and methodologies.

Once you have completed your analysis, you can prepare figures, tables and examples that summarize your research results, which you then discuss. Usually, you select a handful of examples that demonstrate your analysis. For instance, the examples are chosen to represent a particular pattern, or they are unique and deserve to be discussed and presented in their own right. In this way, the reader can understand how your results came about. Ideally, a scholar can reproduce your findings with the information provided in your paper.

5.3 Writing

Writing a paper is not just a matter of putting your thoughts down on a page: it also requires knowing the formal demands of academic writing and developing a structured argument for what you want to say. While doing your research, try to learn from the structure of articles and books you are reading. Please see the guiding questions in Section 5.1 and the typical structure of an empirical paper in Section 4. Here is some further information on the writing process.

5.3.1 Building your arguments

- The division into sections should never be an attempt to escape the necessity of establishing **links in your argument between each section**. Listed in the table of contents, the titles of sections should offer the reader the backbone of your argument at one glance. Do not hesitate to give the parts of your paper so-called **working titles** first, and to revise those titles once you have finished your paper and have a clear overview of where your argument has led you.

- **Scope of your argument**: If you realise that you have to leave a question open, i.e. that the scope of the paper does not allow you to deal with it in detail, then it is best to mention this limitation rather than to try and hide it behind fuzzy or bombastic rhetoric. Be honest.
- The larger your paper, the more necessary it is to go through several revisions of it. While writing, you may discover that the whole structure of your paper needs to be changed because your work on the material has led you to new insights. Though it is important to **stick to an argument throughout an academic paper**, you must not hesitate to **revise its overall structure** if you see that the argument no longer works. This may imply modifying the original outline and moving around paragraphs, sections or chapters.
- What you must ultimately achieve in any academic paper is **logic and coherence of argument, and precision of expression**. The most effective way of checking whether your argument works is by asking a colleague or colleagues to read through the paper before you hand it in.
- When writing your paper, use as many **dictionaries** (OED, accessible with VPN) and **reference books** as possible. Even native speakers do not write papers without occasionally checking the meaning of words and their correct use in specific contexts and punctuation rules. The list of resources in English linguistics in Section 10 is a starting point.
- **Abstract concepts** in particular require careful use, as they have acquired very precise and (sometimes heavily disputed) meanings in linguistics. Even the simple word "text" is used differently in linguistics than in literary studies. You can only make words mean exactly what *you* want them to mean if you know what *other* people (i.e. the academic community) have made the words mean *before* you.
- **Provide definitions** of your analytical and methodological **concepts**, relying on theoretical and critical literature that is relevant both to your field of study and to your argument or hypothesis. (See also Section 6.1 on introducing such concepts).
- Remember that an academic paper is *not* an essay. Therefore, avoid giving impressionistic personal accounts. This does not mean, however, that you should withhold your own opinion. On the contrary, we expect you to take a position: "I maintain / argue / propose / suggest / agree / am in favour of / contest / dispute / contend / am critical of / disagree / question".
- Avoid broad generalisations or pontificating about life and society.
- Your paper should not be a simple collection of notes. Information in bullet points that leave it up to the reader to figure out how ideas work together are not acceptable.
- Throughout your paper, **foreground the argument** you want to make: formulate your thoughts in such a manner that *every* paragraph you write supports your argument in one way or another. State your points clearly and link them with a logic that will immediately be apparent to your reader.

- While doing your research, you may find interesting details that do not really fit into your argument. As painful as it may be, delete these points if they distract from the argument you are making. Do not use footnotes to distract readers from the main line of argumentation.
- Imagine a concrete audience who might agree or disagree with the ideas you are expressing in your paper, and you will find it easier to argue. Assume that your readers are members of the linguistic community. This has several consequences:
    - They have a basic interest in what you are saying.
    - They do not want to have to read between the lines, so you have to be absolutely clear and explicit.
    - They need to be convinced of your ideas.
    - And they are not familiar with your way of thinking, so give all the steps of your thought processes through to your conclusions.

5.3.2 References to other people's ideas

- One does not write an academic paper in a void: writing is a form of communication with a community of (imagined and real) interlocutors. One way of participating in an academic debate is by quoting. Remember that your audience needs to be given exact information about the sources of your quotes and ideas.
- In order to avoid plagiarism, to be reader-friendly, and therefore prove that you are interested in engaging in a discussion about the material you are working on, whenever you refer to somebody else's work, you need to include references.
- When writing a summary of any text, only mention details that are relevant to your argument, but make sure that what you say is correct with respect to the *whole* passage you have summarised.
- **Do not simply paraphrase** what other people have said: comment on their arguments and integrate them into your own argument in a visible way.
- **Quotations must be integrated into your own argument:** This means that everything in a quote should be relevant to your argument, either because it illustrates what you are claiming, or because you agree or disagree and want to show how and where this is the case, or because you propose to analyse the quote bit by bit. For these reasons,
    a) always introduce quotations with your own words,
    b) as a rule, do not end a paragraph in someone else's words,
    c) avoid lengthy quotations in which several ideas are expressed at the same time, especially if they are not all relevant to your own argument,
    d) comment on every element in the quote,
    e) make sure that you have understood what you are quoting within the context of the other author's whole argument.

The end of your paper must have a list of all your sources, whether integrated in your paper as summarised facts, opinions, or quotations. In linguistics, this list is called "References". A "Bibliography" contains much more material than the quoted sources; therefore, do not use this term for your list of references.

- Check Section 6.7 for the main bibliographical rules and ways of presenting references.
- Note that the title 'References' is not numbered.

– Begin collecting items for your list of references as soon as you start doing research on your topic. It is easier to cross out superfluous items than desperately hunt for missing references when you have finished writing. To facilitate this process, you may wish to use a reference programme that helps you to keep track of your sources (e.g. Endnote, Zotero, Mendeley, etc.).

5.4 Revision

Once you have finished your analysis and you have written it up in a first draft of your paper, plan enough time to revise your manuscript. The aim is to ensure that the introduction, literature review, data section, method section, analysis and discussion all lead to a logical conclusion section.

– Finalize your title: Choosing a title for your paper is an important part of the process of writing. It is useful to start off with a provisional *working title*, which you can modify or replace when you have completed the paper and know exactly where your initial questions and interest in the material have led you. Titles should not be immoderately long; a brief title followed by a more explicit subtitle can be a good solution.
– Titles of sections should help the reader follow the argument at one glance. If you started off with working titles for the sections, now that you have a clear overview of where your argument has led you, revise these titles to make them reveal the development of your argument or the steps leading to answering your research questions.
– Correct the language and the overall logic of your argument.
– Take out sweeping statements about life and the world, about morality, broad ethical issues, vague political or philosophical ideas, and focus on the main argument.
– In general, make sure your conclusion does not end in someone else's words. This is *your* paper that should have a clear take-home message.
– Use your computer's spell check programme but make sure you do not let the computer correct words for you automatically. The same goes for AI-assisted help in formulating passages. Always remain in control and document your usage (see Section 7).
– To see whether your argument works, ask a colleague or colleagues to read through your paper and comment on it critically. Where appropriate, let their questions about what you wrote lead you to revise aspects of your paper.
– Revise your list of references and cut out or add items depending on the final version of your paper, i.e. make sure all the references you give in the paper are documented in the final list of references. Also check that you gave page numbers in all cases and that these numbers are correct. Include the DOI whenever possible.

Once you have completed the revision process, you should hand in your papers as follows:

– Send it in electronic form as DOC and PDF to your supervisor(s). Please ask whether they also want a printed version.
– Note that your paper will be checked for plagiarism electronically. At the same time as submitting your paper, please also submit the detailed similarity report that can be created here: check your paper yourself at the university's website. If you are insecure on how to avoid plagiarism, please read our documentation on good academic practice.
– Make sure that you have added and signed the plagiarism declaration available at https://philhist.unibas.ch/de/studium/studierende/plagiat/.

– Please also include information on how you used AI tools during your entire research process (see Section 7).

6 Style sheet

During your studies, you will not only engage with the content of linguistics but also with the form of how research is presented in academia. These conventions were created to facilitate the flow of an argument and have to be heeded. Unfortunately, there is no universally valid style sheet that all linguistic publications and journals follow. Nevertheless, it is important to strictly follow the house rules for each publication outlet, and – in your case – the present style sheet for linguistics research in the English seminar in Basel.

6.1 Introducing concepts

If you introduce technical concepts in your text, you can highlight them with double quotes, single quotes or capitals. You should be consistent, however, once you have decided which format to use. Avoid italics for this purpose. This is how you can do it:

> When Hamlet said *words, words, words*, he used three “tokens” but only one “type”.
>
> When Hamlet said *words, words, words*, he used three ‘tokens’ but only one ‘type’.
>
> When Hamlet said *words, words, words*, he used three TOKENS but only one TYPE.

Quotation marks or capital letters do not have to be repeated every time you use the concept.

6.2 Emphasis

Academic prose avoids expressions of emotion. Do not use italics to give emphasis in your text.

> RIGHT: There is not a single instance of double negation in this text.
> WRONG: There is *not a single* instance of double negation in this text.

6.3 Giving examples and quoting your primary material

Letters, words or phrases cited as linguistic examples should be italicized in the text; do not use double quotes for this purpose! Translations or other explanations of meaning should be given in inverted commas (‘single quotes’), thus:

> RIGHT: The quantifier *many* means ‘a lot’.
> WRONG: The quantifier “many” means ...

Example sentences quoted in the text should be italicized, thus:

> Many linguists have quoted the sentence *Many arrows didn’t hit the target*.

Preferably, however, quoted example sentences should be set apart from the main body of the text by indentation. This is especially important if they are longer than a few words. In that case they should be preceded by Arabic numerals in parentheses. Notice that indented and numbered examples are not italicized. This is a good example of how you may proceed:

> Consider the quantifier *many* ‘viele’ in sentences (10) and (11):
>
> (10) Not many arrows hit the target.
>
> (11) Many arrows didn’t hit the target.

In both (10) and (11) the scope of the quantifier ....

Notice that **examples should be numbered and referred to by number**, not as "the following sentence."

6.4 Tables and figures

Very often a table is a good way of displaying results of a quantitative nature (e.g. describing the composition of a data set, or when presenting the results of a quantified analysis; please also see the Adam workspace for linguistic research skills, and the section on "Summarizing and visualizing data"). A table will help the reader to grasp at a glance what your results are. For instance, if you are reporting on the occurrence of different types of relative markers in three corpora of different text samples, your data could be presented as in Table 3.

Table 3. Relative markers in subject function with human/non-human antecedents in three corpora of spoken American and British English, the Santa Barbara Corpus, the London-Lund Corpus and the British National Corpus.

	Human antecedents						Non-human antecedents					
	SBC	%	LLC	%	BNC	%	SBC	%	LLC	%	BNC	%
SUBJECTS	n=76		n=56		n=70		n=48		n=63		n=113	
zero	2	3%	-	-	3	4%	1	2%	-	-	6	5%
that	25	33%	4	7%	18	26%	46	96%	31	49%	84	74%
who	49	64%	51	91%	47	67%	1	2%	-	-	-	-
which	-	-	1	2%	-	-		-	32	51%	23	20%
as, what	-	-	-	-	2	2%	-	-	-	-	-	-

Key: SBC = Santa Barbara Corpus, LLC = London-Lund Corpus, BNC = British National Corpus.

Table 3 shows purely descriptive statistics and nicely sums up the situation. Notice also that even though a table is a practical way of summarizing information, **it does not free you from also describing and interpreting your results in the text either before or after the table**. Notice that all tables must be numbered so that you can **refer to them in the running text**. A table must also have a clear **title** (at the top), telling the reader what is represented in it; again, this is for ease of reference so that a reader who wants to glance through a paper or quickly recapitulate an argument can quickly make sure that she or he is looking at the relevant data. If you have abbreviations in your table, you should also have a **key** to the abbreviations.

Table 3 gives both raw data – absolute numbers – and proportions expressed as percentages. You may find it suitable to give this information in different tables, for instance having only raw data or only percentages, as this makes the reader's work easier. If you give only percentages, you must always give the totals on which your percentages are based.

You may also choose to display your data graphically in figures, such as bar charts, pie charts, etc. See Figure 3, which provides the same information as Table 3, just in graphic form. Notice that the **legend appears under a figure**. For both figures and tables, it is essential that the title, the legends and the descriptors of the rows and columns (x- and y- axis, respectively) clearly indicate the presented information.

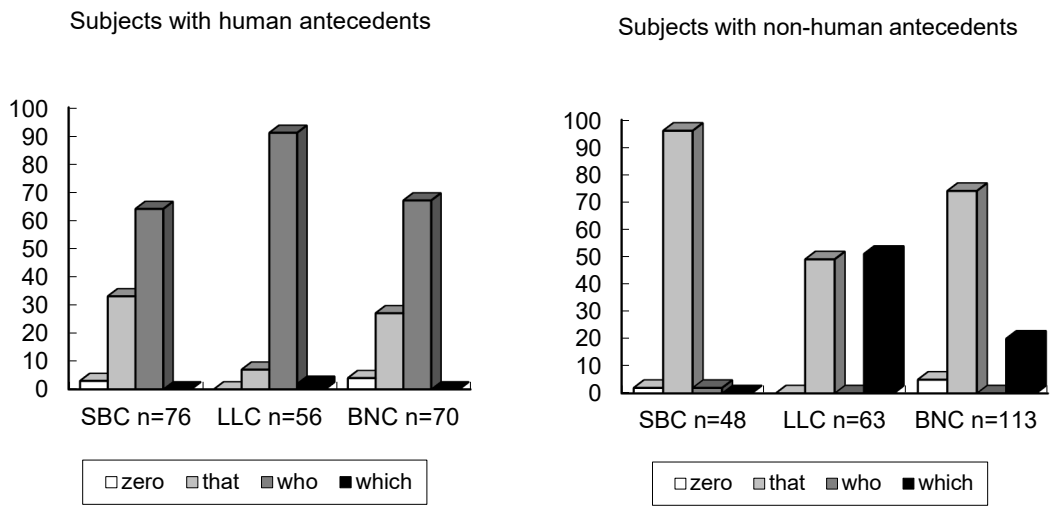

Figure 3. Distribution of relative markers in subject function (in percent) in three corpora of spoken American and British English, the Santa Barbara Corpus (SBC), the London-Lund Corpus (LLC) and the British National Corpus (BNC).

6.5 Footnotes

Do not use footnotes for references. They should only be used for additional information which you do not want to stop the flow of your argument. Please use them sparingly so as not to distract from your main argument. If you quote extensively from one single source in the same paragraph, you may use a **blanket footnote.** This allows you to document all quotations after the first by simply using page numbers directly following the quoted material in the text (e.g. "All subsequent references to this text will be noted by page number in parentheses following each quotation"). Please make use of this option only sparingly.

6.6 References within the body of your text

References to books and articles are included in the body of the text **within parentheses**. The parentheses contain the surname of the author if it is not already mentioned in the text, the year of publication, followed by a colon, followed by a space and the precise page number. The latter should be included when a concrete point is being made about the author's research. When you refer to a study in general, page numbers can be omitted. Make sure that you **give readers enough information** in the text to allow them **to find the passage referred to** as easily as possible, **and to locate the full bibliographical information** in the list of "References". Therefore, take great care in proof-reading all your references.

EXAMPLES:

Schiffrin (1994) does not agree with …

Schiffrin (1994: 97) underlines that …

According to Schiffrin (1994), ...

Chomsky (1980a: 3) introduced the term ...

Many syntacticians (e.g. Matthews 1981: Ch. 3) distinguish ...

This insight has gained ground in recent years (Atlas and Levinson 1981; Sperber and Wilson 1985).

According to Locher (2004: 51), relational work comprises "the entire continuum of verbal behavior from direct, impolite, rude or aggressive interaction through to polite interaction, encompassing both appropriate and inappropriate forms of social behavior."

> Relational work comprises "the entire continuum of verbal behavior from direct, impolite, rude or aggressive interaction through to polite interaction, encompassing both appropriate and inappropriate forms of social behavior" (Locher 2004: 51).

When you quote several studies within the same brackets, order the references alphabetically according to author name rather than chronologically according to publication year.

Longer quotations (more than three lines) need to be indented in the form of a block quotation and appear without quotation marks. Note that the source is given twice, once in general in the main text and once in detail. Also note that the reference after the block quotation is not followed by a period:

> Quirk et al. (1985) propose that
>
> > aspect is so closely connected in meaning with tense, that the distinction in English grammar between tense and aspect is little more than a terminological convenience which helps us to separate in our minds two different kinds of realization: the morphological realization of tense and the syntactic realization of aspect. (Quirk et al. 1985: 189)

There is an indentation of about 1 cm for the block quotation and the text is single-spaced. The detailed bibliographical information is repeated at the end of the quotation after the final punctuation mark.

Sometimes, authors use emphasis in the original text. When quoting, you therefore need to indicate whether emphasis was already put on certain parts of the text in the original source or whether you removed emphasis. For example, the original passage in Herring (2011: 1) looks like this:

> As a heuristic to address this goal, a three-part classification of Web 2.0 discourse phenomena is introduced: phenomena *familiar* from older computer-mediated discourse (CMD) modes such as email, chat, and discussion forums that appear to carry over into Web 2.0 environments with minimal differences; CMD phenomena that adapt to and are *reconfigured* by Web 2.0 environments; and new or *emergent* phenomena that did not exist … prior to the era of Web 2.0.

You may wish to keep this original emphasis or remove it:

> Herring (2011: 1) distinguishes between "phenomena *familiar* from older computer-mediated discourse (CMD) modes […], phenomena that adapt to and are *reconfigured* by Web 2.0 environments; and new or *emergent* phenomena that did not exist […] prior to the era of Web 2.0" (emphasis in original).

> Herring (2011: 1) distinguishes between "phenomena familiar from older computer-mediated discourse (CMD) modes […], phenomena that adapt to and are reconfigured by Web 2.0 environments; and new or emergent phenomena that did not exist […] prior to the era of Web 2.0" (emphasis removed).

When you quote a passage and you add emphasis of your own, you need to indicate this in brackets (emphasis added).

You may want to quote a source which is known to you only through another secondary source because the original is not available. You can do this like this:

> A collocation can be defined as "actual words in habitual company" (Firth 1957: 14, as quoted in Kennedy 1998: 108).

This means that you have Kennedy (1998) in front of you, while you did not have access to Firth (1957). **Both references must appear in the reference section** at the end of your paper. Use second-

hand sources sparingly to avoid misrepresentation of sources. Whenever possible, check and quote the primary reference.

Page reference in the text has to be made to the edition you used. However, the year of the original publication has to be mentioned as well if it differs from the year of your edition:

(De Saussure [1916] 1974: 13)

6.7 References at the end of your paper

There are many different style sheets employed in linguistics as every organization, publisher or journal may have their own house styles. For you this means that in your readings you will find several bibliographical styles, but that in your own text, all bibliographical information has to be presented according to our style sheet. The instructions given here for the **reference section** follows the APA-style (the *American Psychological Association,* http://www.apastyle.org), which is widely used in linguistics and the social sciences. Many referencing programs such as EndNote, Citavi, Zotero, Mendeley etc. provide an output style in the APA format. The Purdue Owl is also an excellent APA resource. A style sheet determines how bibliographical information is presented consistently with respect to

- the type and sequence of information (author, year, title, place, publisher, page numbers, DOI, etc.)
- capitalization
- the use of italics
- punctuation

Please also see the Adam workspace for linguistic research skills, and the section on "Finding and managing references").

6.7.1 Books

Author's name, first name initial(s). (Year). *Title of the book: Subtitle of the book.* Place: Publisher.

Editor's name, first name initial(s). (Ed(s).). (Year). *Title of the book: Subtitle of the book.* Place: Publisher.

Note: The title is italicized and uses sentence case (capitalize the first word of the title and the subtitle as well as any proper nouns). Pay attention to punctuation.

The list of references will follow the **alphabetical order of authors' or editors' names**. Use a **hanging indent** for each bibliographical entry (see format in the rule box).

In the case of several works by the same author or editor, list the items in the **chronological order of publication** (earlier work first). Repeat the author's or editor's name for each entry. If an author has more than one publication in the same year, **add a, b, c**, etc. to the year of publication, according to their chronological order of publication. If someone is listed as the author of some titles and as the editor of others, list the authored titles chronologically first, then the edited titles.

EXAMPLES:

Clark, H. H. (1996). *Using language.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power.* London, England: Longman.

Haugen, E. (1966a). Dialect, language, nation. *American Anthropologist 68,* 922–935.

Haugen, E. (1966b). *Language conflict and language planning: The case of modern Norwegian*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse markers*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Schiffrin, D. (1994). *Approaches to discourse*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.

Schiffrin, D. (Ed.). (1984). *Meaning, form, and use in context: Linguistic applications.* Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Van Maanen, J. (Ed.). (1988). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

There are several aspects to remember:

- The title you are referencing may contain **several volumes**, or a book may be one in a series. This information needs to be given.
- If relevant, you should also mention which **edition** of a book you are using, whether it is revised, when the first edition appeared, or when the text was first published in another edition.
- The text may be by one author, but it is introduced, edited, compiled, or translated by someone else.
- The book may have **more than one author** or editor, in which case you mention them all unless there are more than seven (in the case of eight or more authors or editors, you list the first six then add "…" and then the last author). Note that you need to separate authors with commas and with an ampersand (&) before the last author.
- Hyphenated first names need two initials with a hyphen (e.g. John-James is rendered as J.-J.)
- If the publication location is in the US, include the state abbreviation (e.g. Chicago, IL); for all other places include the country (e.g. London, England)
- For correct formatting of special cases, please refer to the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA manual)
- The following abbreviations should be used (for further abbreviations, see APA manual)

ed.	edition
Rev. ed.	Revised edition
2nd ed.	second edition
Ed.	Editor
Eds.	Editors
Trans.	Translator(s)
n.d.	no date
Vol.	Volume
Vols.	Volumes

EXAMPLES:

More than one author or editor (pay attention to the use of '&' and the sequence of last name, followed by abbreviated first name)**:**

Atkinson, M., Kilby, D., & Roca, I. (1982). *Foundations of general linguistics.* London, England: George Allen and Unwin.

Bolinger, D., & Sears, D. A. (1981). *Aspects of language*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

More than one place:

If two or more places of publication are listed, just use the first one.

Carter, R. (1995). *Keywords in language and literacy.* London, England: Routledge.

Michaels, L., & Ricks, C. (Eds.). (1980). *The state of the language.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Republished book:

A republished book is listed under the date of the first publication. The original publication year is added at the end.

Trudgill, P. (1975). *Sociolinguistics: An introduction.* Harmondsworth, England: Penguin. (Original work published 1974)

Revised editions:

For a revised edition of a book you should give the date of the new edition.

Mathews, P. (1991). *Morphology* (2nd Rev. ed.). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Multivolume work:

Osherson, D. N., & Lasnik, H. (Eds.). (1990). *Language: An invitation to cognitive science* (Vol. 1). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Book with an author as well as an editor/translator or other person presenting the original text:

Milner, J.-C. (1990). *For the love of language.* (A. Banfield, Trans.). London, England: The Macmillan Press. (Original work published 1978)

De Saussure, F. (1974). *Course in general linguistics.* (W. Baskin, Trans.). London, England: Fontana. (Original work published 1916)

Book by a corporate author:

American Council of Education. (1997). *Annual Report 1976.* Washington, DC: American Council of Education.

Dictionaries:

Crystal, D. (Ed.). (1992). *An encyclopaedic dictionary of language and languages.* Oxford, England: Blackwell.

Trask, R. L. (Ed.). (1993). *A dictionary of grammatical terms in linguistics*. London, England: Routledge.

6.7.2 Parts of books

A chapter in an edited collection is part of a book. It should be given in normal font, without quotation marks, with sentence case, and followed by the reference to the book of which it is a part:

Author's name, first name initial(s). (Year). Title of chapter. In Editor's first name initial(s) and surname (Ed.), *Title of the Book* (pp. page numbers). Place: Publisher. DOI.

*Note: The title of the article is **not** italicized. The book title is italicized. Both use **sentence case**. Do not forget the exact page range of the article and pay attention to punctuation. If possible, include the DOI and test that it works.*

EXAMPLES:

Labov, W. (1972). Rules for ritual insults. In D. Sudnow (Ed.), *Studies in social interaction* (pp. 120–169). New York, NY: Free Press.

Arundale, R. B. (2010). Relating. In M. A. Locher & S. L. Graham (Eds.), *Interpersonal pragmatics* (pp. 137–165). Berlin, Germany: Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110214338

6.7.3 Journal articles

Author's name, first name initial(s). (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical, volume*(issue), page numbers. DOI.

*Note: The title of the article is **not** italicized and uses sentence case. The journal title is italicized and uses **title case** (i.e. all words but pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions are capitalized). Do not forget the volume and issue number and add the exact page range of the article. Pay attention to punctuation and the use of spaces. Make sure the DOI works.*

EXAMPLES:

Milroy, J. (1997). Internal vs external motivations for linguistic change. *Multilingua, 16*(4), 311–323. https://doi.org/10.1515/mult.1997.16.4.311

McCarthy, M., & Carter, R. (1997). Grammar, tails and affect: Constructing expressive choices in discourse. *Text, 17*(3), 405–429. https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.1997.17.3.405

6.7.4 Article in a reference book

If the article is signed, it is listed under the author's name, if it is not signed, it is listed under the headword.

EXAMPLES:

Lyons, J. (1981). Linguistics. In *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (15th ed.). Chicago, IL: Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Bullamakanka. (1988). *The Australian national dictionary.* Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

6.7.5 Electronic sources

Electronic sources include e-books, online journal articles, online newspaper articles, online reference works, and others.

Electronic books

Provide the same information you would for a print book, but instead of the publication information (place and publisher) provide information on the e-book version, and the DOI (digital object identifier). For books without a DOI, add the URL. If there are no page numbers, add "n.p." for "no page number".

EXAMPLES:

Dynel, M. (Ed.). (2013). *Developments in linguistic humour theory.* doi:10.1075/thr.1

Labov, W. (2013). *The language of life and death: The transformation of experience in oral narrative* [Kindle version]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.de.

Electronic journal articles

Provide all the information you would for the print version and add the DOI. If there is no DOI, include the URL of the journal in the reference.

EXAMPLES:

Haugh, M. (2013). Im/politeness, social practice and the participation order. *Journal of Pragmatics, 58*, 52–72. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2013.07.003

Lichtkoppler, J. (2007). 'Male. Male.' – 'Male?' – 'The sex is male.' – The role of repetition in English as a lingua franca conversations. *Vienna English Working Papers, 16*(1), 39–65. Retrieved from https://anglistik.univie.ac.at/views/

Online newspaper article

For online newspaper articles, include not just the year, but the full date of publication. Italicize the title of the newspaper.

EXAMPLE:

Brody, J. E. (2007, December 11). Mental reserves keep brains agile. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

Entry in an online reference work

If no year is available, use "n.d." (for "no date") instead. Italicize the title of the reference work.

EXAMPLE:

Tweep. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary* (11th ed.). Retrieved from http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/tweep

Online Corpora:

If the corpus is linked to a compiler/creator, start with their name. Otherwise start with the name of the corpus. Note that some corpora indicate what information they want to be included when you cite them (see for instance http://corpus.byu.edu/ faq.asp).

EXAMPLES:

Davies, M. (2010-). *The corpus of historical American English: 400 million words, 1810-2009*. Retrieved from http://corpus.byu.edu/coha/

British National Corpus. (2008). Lancaster University. Retrieved from http://bncweb.lancs.ac.uk

7 AI in the process of paper writing

AI tools are continuously evolving. While they are helpful for some research steps, they need to be critically and consciously used. It is mandatory to **document this use at the end of your pape**r. Also make sure that you deactivate the automatic addition of your input to open AI. This is particularly important if you are working with audio(visual) data of your informants but also with your own ideas.

Here are some guidelines (the list is open-ended):

- Brainstorming of ideas and outline development:
  It can be helpful to ask an AI tool to give you feedback on the clarity of your ideas at the outline stage. Make sure you are not uploading your own ideas to open AI by deactivating the automatic addition of your input to open AI.

- Finding literature:
  Only use AI tools such as consensus that draw on quality-controlled input, such as a database of abstracts (rather than the entire web). Use AI help always only in addition to regular database research in the BLLD, Web of Science and the MLA. It does not replace this work. Always check the sources the AI identified to make sure you are not working with hallucinated (i.e. not existing) references. Do not to use any sources that you did not access and read yourself.

- Summaries:
  Use AI generated summaries of research papers only to check whether you have understood the paper after reading it yourself. The AI tool might be able to indicate a nuance you missed. Crucially, you need to go back to the paper to verify this. You can only assess whether the AI's summary is accurate if you have read the text yourself. Never trust a summary without having access to the paper itself.

- Linguistic editing of your text:
  When you want to edit and smooth your text, refrain from uploading your entire text to an AI tool. Only ask for rephrasing suggestions for particular passages and insist on seeing the changes. This has the advantage of you learning to express yourself better the next time and it guarantees that you remain in control of your text, for which you carry responsibility. Grammarly or LanguageTool, for example, show you what changes were made.

- Linguistic translations:
  If you work with research literature that is not English, you can draw on translation help by drawing, for example, on DeepL. Indicate this in brackets after the translation (translated by …). Deactivate automatic uploading of your input to open AI.

- Tables and Figures:
  It can be helpful to use AI tools such as Canva to design tables and figures that are based on your own research results/data and ideas. When you do this, indicate this in the caption of the tables/figures.

- Pictures:
  Pictures and screenshots that show people from whom you cannot obtain consent to use their pictures in an academic paper can be turned into generic AI-generated re-presentations of the original picture. Discuss this with your supervisor and make sure the original picture is not uploaded into open AI.

- Transcriptions:
  It can be tempting to use open access tools for automatic transcription of audio and video data. However, please heed research ethics and only use tools that do not upload your data

onto a server or open AI. All automatic transcriptions need to be critically assessed, checked, and refined if necessary.

- Programming:
  AI tools can assist in programming search strings in corpus linguistics (e.g. the programming language R). If you draw on such help, make sure to test the results for plausibility and reliability.

8 Information on BA Exam

Before the exam

Please inform yourselves about the regulations on our website (see the PDF with exam topics and the PDF with examiners). Please follow the procedure of registration as described on the Dean of Studies homepage.

To apply for the BA exam, students must get in touch with their examiner **two weeks before the official application deadline at the latest**. Students must send the **completed BA-application form** and their **academic progress summary** to their examiner in advance.

As preparation, students are to choose **two areas of specialization** from the provided list. Note that the two topics can be offered by the same examiner or by two different ones. When two topics cannot be combined, this is indicated in a note below the topic title. Only one examiner signs the form to accept the candidate.

During the exam

Students will receive the official dates (and place) for the written exam from the *Dean of Studies*. Whether the exam is open book will be communicated in advance. In the 4-hour written exam, you will receive question(s) for only **one topic**. In other words, there is no choice between the two prepared topics.

Please read the question(s) carefully and make a draft of how to answer it/them. Make sure to actually answer the question(s) and not only write down everything you know about the topic in general. Whenever possible, juxtapose different points of view (by the different scholars on the reading list) and give examples of your own. In addition, you should make sure that your own critical thoughts and assessment of the texts on the reading list can be clearly discerned. You are expected to follow the academic way of writing a linguistic text by following the style sheet in this Manual when referring to other people's work (quoting, references, etc.).

After the exam

Criteria for assessment:
(1) clarity and correctness of the answer;
(2) demonstration of having understood the texts on the reading list;
(3) clear evidence of the candidate's own position concerning different points of view found in the literature;
(4) correctness of presenting academic sources and ideas;
(5) academic English

9 Information on MA Exam

Please follow the procedure of registration as described on the Dean of Studies homepage. You need to decide whether you want to be examined in "English Linguistics" or in "Anglophone Literary and Cultural Studies".

Before the exam

If you choose linguistics, please contact one of the available examiners (announced on our website) early on (at least two weeks before the application deadline, but you can start earlier). Once an examiner has accepted you as a candidate, you need to electronically send them the filled-in registration form (available at the Dean's office homepage), and at the same time you already need to indicate **two topics** and provide **reading lists** (consult the most recent work in the linguistics databases). Once the topics are agreed on, the examiner will sign the form, return it to you and you will submit it to the registration office.

Per topic, you need to submit a reading list of 10 texts (formatted according to the departmental style sheet). Two of these ten texts have to be monographs (please recall that edited books are not monographs and check before you put a reference on the list). Please consult your examiner on how to make up for the two monographs when there are no suitable options for your topic.

The topics should not be identical with the title/scope of a course previously taken nor overlap with a seminar paper/MA thesis. The topic cannot be a general theme in linguistics ('the history of English', 'language and emotion', etc. are too broad). Instead, you should find a particular research focus within your field of interest and find the latest publications on this focus in the linguistic databases. Usually, you will complement literature on this focus with important publications on the general theme. For example, your focus might be so novel that there are no monographs published yet. In this case, the two required monographs may be on the more general theme.

Every examiner has their own way of examining. Some ask students to prepare theses statements in advance, others might bring extracts from texts that can be discussed during the exam. Please ask your examiner how the exam will proceed and whether you have to prepare and submit work in advance.

During the exam

Both topics will be discussed for 30 minutes each. Please consult the examiner on how those two blocks will be organized.

After the exam

Once the one-hour exam is over, you will be asked to step out of the room, and the supervisor of the exam and the examiner will discuss the result of the exam. You will then be called back into the examination room, and your mark will be explained to you.

Evaluation criteria

- clarity and correctness of any preparatory work and their discussion (if the examiner requested this in advance)
- demonstration of having understood the texts on the reading list (research question, data, methodology, results, limitations)
- finding differences and similarities between positions/findings reported on in the different texts on the reading list
- clear evidence of the candidate's own position concerning different points of view found in the literature

- proactive volunteering to share linguistic examples to illustrate concepts and issues raised in the texts
- proactive suggestions to link ideas and shape the discussion
- agile and correct responses to questions that come up during the discussion
- academic English

10 Resources for English linguistics

10.1 Adam self-study workspace

Students have access to an Adam workspace for linguistic research skills , which provides modules on "Finding and managing references"; "Writing papers in English linguistics"; "Introduction to quantitative research methods"; "Summarizing and visualizing data".

10.2 Search strategies in library catalogues and databases

Keyword and subject searches in library catalogues and databases are two different things, and both are part of an effective strategy for searching databases:

- Begin with a keyword search by entering words that describe the information you are seeking.
- Once you have some results, look at the records to see what subject headings (Normeintrag/Standardeintrag) the database uses.
- Revise your search using the appropriate subject terms.

Please note that the **UB Swisscovery catalogue** gives you results for edited books and monographs only. For papers in edited books or journals, you have to do a database search. Depending on the type of database, you will receive bibliographical information, abstracts, or even the text itself. We recommend that you complete your bibliographical searches at least with the following databases: **BLLDB, MLA, Web of Science**.

More information and a list of relevant sources for linguistics can be found at the UB's 'virtual library':
https://ub.unibas.ch/en/subject-areas/english/.
Please also consult the "Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft (HSK)", which are available at https://www.degruyter.com/view/serial/16647.

10.3 Library Catalogue

Swisscovery
https://basel.swisscovery.ch/ (Note: The catalogue only presents results of monographs and edited books available in Switzerland; for articles in journals and edited collections, the databases need to be consulted.)

10.4 Online databases available through UB

Make sure to use the VPN client and to and access the different databases via the UB: (see https://ub.unibas.ch/en/subject-areas/english/

- Annual bibliography of English language and literature (ABELL): 1920-
- **BLLDB**: Bibliography of Linguistic Literature Database.Onlineversion ab Jg. 1971
- Dictionary of Old English
- Encyclopædia Britannica

- Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics
- ERIC: Education Resources Information Centre (see link Online-Datenbanken)
- Internationale Bibliographie der Zeitschriftenliteratur (IBZ)
- International Encyclopedia of Linguistics
- LexisNexis (see link Online-Datenbanken)
- Linguistics Abstracts Online: 15,000 abstracts from nearly 300 linguistics journals published since 1985
- **MLA:** Modern Languages Association International Bibliography
- Oxford English Dictionary
- ProQuest dissertations and theses – A&I
- **Web of Science**

10.5 Journals

The UB provides access to electronic and hard copy journals. Please consult the links below for lists of relevant journals for linguistics. In addition, there are many online databases that provide access to texts online. JSTOR, MUSE and PAO are among the most relevant for linguistics. There are also journals that are entirely free and published online.

This link helps you find journals available at the UP: https://ub.unibas.ch/en/search-find/databases-e-journals-e-books/find-e-journal/

You can also find further Open Access journals on the DOAJ, the Directory of Open Access Journals: https://doaj.org/

JSTOR: http://www.jstor.org/
Scientific journals, excluding issues of the past five years (some of which are available through MUSE (see below)). JSTOR contains the following scientific journals amongst many others:

- American Speech 1925-1999
- Journal of Linguistics 1965-2006
- Language 1925-2006
- Language in Society 1972-2006
- The Modern Language Journal 1916-2008

Periodicals Archive Online (PAO):
http://search.proquest.com/pao

Project MUSE:
http://muse.jhu.edu/
Scientific journals from 1993 to today

A **selection** of linguistics journals:

- Applied Linguistics
- Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Reviews
- Bilingualism: Language and Cognition
- British Journalism Review
- Cognitive Linguistics
- Corpora
- Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory
- Gender and Language
- Discourse
- Discourse Analysis Online
- Discourse Studies

- First Language
- International Journal of Corpus Linguistics
- International Journal of the Sociology of Language
- Journal of Applied Linguistics
- Journal of Child Language
- Journal of Computer-mediated Communication
- Journal of Historical Pragmatics
- Journal of Linguistic anthropology
- Journal of Linguistics
- Journal of Logic, Language and Information
- Journal of Neurolinguistics
- Journal of Phonetics
- Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages
- Journal of Politeness Research
- Journal of Pragmatics
- Journal of Semantics
- Language
- Language@internet
- Language Learning
- Language Learning and Development
- Language and Literature
- Language & Communication
- Language in Society
- Language Policy
- Language Variation and Change
- LiLi: Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik
- Lingua
- Linguistic Inquiry
- Linguistics
- Linguistics and Education
- Linguistik Online
- Mind & Language
- Morphology
- Multilingua
- Pragmatics and Cognition
- Speech Communication
- Text and Talk
- etc.

See http://linguistlist.org/pubs/tocs/browse-current-tocs.cfm for table of contents of many linguistics journals.

10.6 Communal Online Platform

The LINGUISTLIST: http://linguistlist.org
This site offers a wealth of information. Subscribe to LINGUIST or LINGLITE to receive information on the newest publications.

10.7 Recommended Professional Websites

Corpus BYU (metasite for English Corpora): http://corpus.byu.edu/

Corpus linguistics: http://tiny.cc/corpora/ Bookmarks for Corpus-based Linguists

GOOGLE Scholar: http://scholar.google.com Allows more specific searches for research related sites only, gives access to many previews of publications

Language Log University of Pennsylvania: http://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/

Linguistic Data Consortium: http://www.ldc.upenn.edu/ Access to corpus data and corpus software

Linguistic Resources on the Internet: http://www.sil.org/linguistics/topical.html

TalkBank (metasite for corpora in communication, including child language):http://talkbank.org