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1. General remarks

This manual is meant for students in the first year of the English programme. It will walk you through the basic steps of writing a **linguistics** essay, since the conventions used in linguistics are often different from those you have been taught for literary essays. In this short manual, you will find the main points of how to structure and present linguistic research, including:

- outlining the basic structure;
- explaining the “building blocks” of a linguistics paper;
- quoting, paraphrasing, and summarising;
- dealing with primary data;
- referencing in linguistics.

(There is a separate guide for writing seminar papers at second and third levels of the BA, which you will be introduced to next year.)

2. Basic structure

The classic rule that a text should have a **beginning, middle, and end** is valid for all academic papers. Therefore, every paper should have at least:

- (1) an **introduction** that explains what your argument is, what material you will be working on, and what methodological steps, i.e. the approach, you intend to take. You also try to imbed your argument/research question in existing studies on the topic. This is in order to show what your study will contribute to the research field. The introduction may also need to mention what you are *not* going to do if there are other possibilities of dealing with the subject. Importantly, **at the end of the introduction the reader should know what your paper is about and how you will get them from start to finish.**
- (2) a **main part** of the paper, which can be divided into sections. (We never say *chapters* since chapters can only occur in book-length productions.) In this part you will present your research results and discuss them.
- (3) a **conclusion**, that not only summarises the main points of your paper but **ties your essay together**, assessing your results and perhaps commenting on how the research could continue or be applied beyond the scope of the essay. You can also discuss limitations of your study here, i.e. in order to avoid criticism. New information or concepts should not be introduced in the section of your paper.

3. Building blocks of linguistics paper

In modern linguistics writing, these three main points are further subdivided; it is these sections that you should use in your paper. (In second and third year, you’ll be expanding on this; details can be found in the *English Linguistics Manual*.)

You should use the following numbered sections or “building blocks” in your first-year linguistics writing:

1. Introduction

Present your **research question** in the context of previous studies in the field and tell the reader what aspects your analysis will focus on. Say what data/material you are using

and what the overall intention of your inquiry is.

2. Previous work / theoretical framework [select an appropriate title]

Give a brief, critical survey of earlier work dealing with your subject. Introduce the main theoretical concepts that you will use in your own study, including clear definitions of key concepts used, and present your terminology.

3. Methodology

This section is divided into two subsections: data (section 3.1) and method (section 3.2). The purpose of this section is to present the material and method used in such a way that the study can be replicated.

3.1 Data (or material)

State what data you are examining: a corpus, elicited material, interviews, etc. Describe your method of collecting data as well as the advantages and/or limitations of your material. If you use an existing corpus, describe the make-up of the corpus. Consider whether your choice of data is likely to affect the results in an important way.

3.2 Method

The contents of this section depend on the type of investigation that you are doing. If you are doing an empirical study (corpus-based, questionnaire-based, interview-based, etc.), you will have to explain to your reader what methodology you used for your study. Specifically, you must state how your investigation was conducted, clearly defining all analytical categories and concepts used. If your process is long and/or complex, be sure to give a step-by-step description of what you did.

If your data were collected in a different way you can skip this section.

4. Results and discussion

This is the **main section** of your writing. In this section, you first present your results and then discuss them. You should analyse your data by applying your chosen theoretical and methodological tools. If you are conducting an empirical study, you should use tables, graphs, and/or lists of examples, or a combination thereof, to streamline your results. Try to make these as clear as possible, and concentrate on one aspect at a time. Make sure that you describe the tables, graphs, and lists as your reader cannot be expected to understand the images without explanation. Support your arguments by **giving examples** from your data. Also, try to link your findings with the previous studies discussed earlier. In that way, you can show what your findings contribute to existing research, i.e. they can disprove or confirm previous findings. Long and complicated sections should have a brief summary at the end.

5. Conclusion

Give a **general summary** of your results and state the conclusions you can draw on the basis of your discussion. There should be **no new information** in this section but you can build on your previous discussion and state where you think the research could go or how it could be applied beyond the scope of the paper. If there were any limitations to your study, or if part of your results was inconclusive, that is okay; you just need to show

that you are aware of the limitations of your work. You can also indicate areas or aspects that would benefit from further study.

Give a general summary of your results and state the conclusions you can draw on the basis of them. If part of your results is inconclusive, e.g. because you did not have enough material, say so. It is common practice to indicate (a) limitations of the study, and (b) future research directions. Provide an answer to your research question in the concluding statement.

References

This section is unnumbered. Use this section to list all of the sources that you used in your paper, in alphabetical order by the first author's surname. You may separate your references into **primary** and **secondary** groups, but do not separate your resources by type (books, articles, etc.).

4. Quoting, paraphrasing, and summarising other people's work

You will always write a paper against the background of the research that has already been done in the field. This is called *previous studies*, *previous literature*, *secondary material* or *secondary literature*; you must refer to previous work to ground your essay in your chosen field of study, to give the reader the necessary background, and to justify the line of your argument(s). You can do this in one of three ways:

- (1) **Quoting** is when you include the **exact words** from a source in your essay. The source material must be enclosed in double quotation marks (“ ”), unless it exceeds thirty words, in which case it should be added as a block quote. You must include the author(s)'s name, the work's year of publication and page number(s) whenever you quote existing material.
- (2) **Paraphrasing** is when you restate someone else's words in detail using **your own words, phrasing, and sentence structure**. You do not need to include the parts that are irrelevant to your topic but you must be sure to represent the author(s)'s idea accurately. As with quoting, you must include the author(s)'s name, the work's year of publication and page number(s).
- (3) **Summarising** is when you condense a passage from a source – or an entire source – to convey its main points or message. As with paraphrasing, you must use **your own words, phrasing, and sentence structure** and you must represent the author(s)'s work accurately. Unlike quoting and paraphrasing, you must include the author(s)'s name and the work's year of publication; page number(s) need only be included if you are summarising a portion of the original source.

The works that you reference show the reader where to look for further information and prove that you are interested in engaging in a discussion about the material you are working with. No matter which option you use, you must remember to engage in a discussion with the material you are referencing, thinking critically about the material.

Any time you reference someone else's idea or work, you must cite it so that you do not inadvertently present it as your own. It is essential that you make every effort to **avoid plagiarism**.

How do you decide which of these options to employ? Wherever possible, you should either paraphrase or summarise. If you need to quote, keep the following guidelines in mind (partially adapted from Quitman Troyka, Buckley, and Gates 1996: 545):

- Use quotations to support your argument, not as your thesis statement or main point(s).
- Choose a quotation only if:
 - its language is particularly appropriate or distinctive;
 - its idea is particularly hard to paraphrase or summarise accurately;
 - the authority of the source is especially important to support your material;
 - the source's words are open to more than one interpretation, so you need to show the reader the original quotation.
- Quote accurately; do not misrepresent the author(s)'s ideas by using a quotation in an inappropriate or incorrect context.
- Avoid lengthy quotations that express several ideas at the same time, especially if they are not relevant to your argument.
- Always introduce quotations and integrate them smoothly into your prose, paying special attention to verb tenses and forms.
- Do not end a paragraph on someone else's words.

5. Giving examples

In a linguistics paper, you often need to give examples of the phenomena that you are investigating. As such, it is important to make a distinction between the expressions you are using as part of your writing and the letters, words or phrases you are discussing.

When you give linguistic examples, such as letters, words or phrases, you need to distinguish them from the body of your text. This should be done using *italics* in the text; do not use double quotes for this purpose! (Double quotation marks should only be used for quotations.). Glosses, 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 "a lot".

If you give an example that you want to integrate into your text, then you put the whole example in italics as well, as in:

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

It is better practice, however, to set quoted sentences apart from the main body of the text using numbered examples. These examples should have an Arabic numeral in parentheses, and should also be indented. It is good to leave a line between the body of your text and the example(s). Your example should also be indented, particularly if they are longer than a few words. This is a good example of how you may proceed:

Consider the quantifier *many* 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

Note that indented and numbered examples are not italicised. If you refer back to these sentences, you should use the example number, as illustrated above. If your examples come from another source, this must be indicated in your paper:

- (10) a. I think that he will not come.
 b. I do not think that he will come. (Horn 2001: 315)

6. Presenting tables and figures

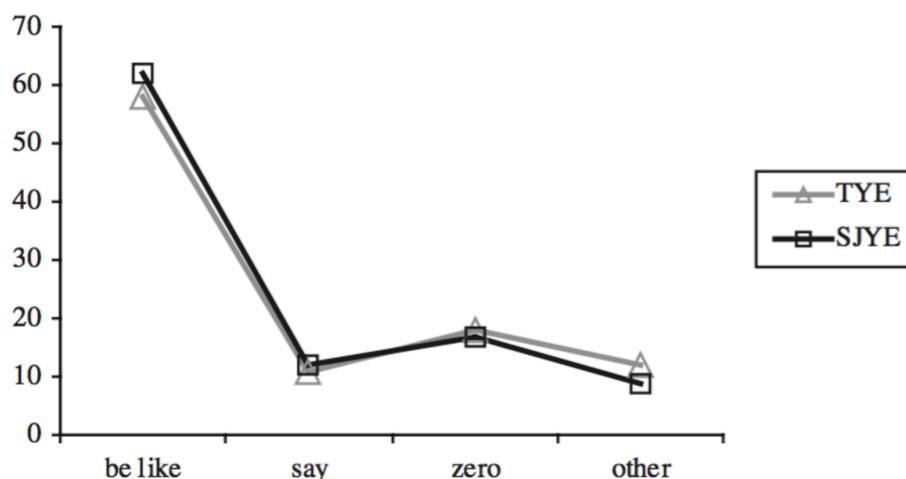
In an empirical paper, it is often helpful (for both you and the reader) to display your data graphically in tables or in figures such as bar charts, line charts, etc. **Using a table or a figure does not mean that you need not explain its contents**, but they can make findings clearer. Often, a combination of tables and figures is the best route, though it does depend on the type of data you are working with. All figures must have a title and a legend; all tables must have a clear title and headings.

In the examples below you can see that the table is clearly labelled with a descriptive title, and the chart is clearly labelled with both a descriptive title and a legend explaining what is being represented.

Table 1. Overall distribution of quotative verbs in St. John's youth English (D'Arcy 2004: 332)

Quotative	%	N
<i>be like</i>	62	114
<i>say</i>	13	23
zero	17	31
miscellaneous	9	16
Total		184

Figure 1. Comparison of the overall distribution of quotatives (%) in St. John's youth English and Toronto youth English (D'Arcy 2004: 332)



7. Referencing

In linguistics, the way to cite material is different from what you have been taught for your literature classes. **You must not use the referencing style presented in *EDGE*** for your linguistics papers; instead, you are expected to follow the linguistics style sheet we have provided in this document. (Further details can be found in the *English Linguistics Manual*, available on the department website under BA > Resources.)

7.1 *In-text referencing*

When referring to someone else's work in your text, references must be included in the body of the text **within parentheses**. This is different from literature, which uses footnoting for references.

When citing a source, you must include the author(s)'s surname and the work's year of publication; for direct quotation, you must also include the page number(s). As a rule of thumb, you should make sure that you **give the reader enough information** in the text to allow her or him **to find the passage referred to** as easily as possible, **and to locate the full bibliographical information** in the list of references you will include at the end of your essay.

There is some flexibility in how this information is presented, depending on the structure of your sentence, as illustrated below:

Schiffirin (1994) does not agree.

Schiffirin (1994: 97) underlines that ...

According to Schiffirin (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).

You may sometimes 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.

7.2 *Linguistics style sheet (for your reference list)*

A style sheet determines how bibliographical information is presented in a consistent way with respect to

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

There are many different style sheets employed in linguistics as every organisation, publisher or journal may have their own house styles. For you, this means that you will come across different citation styles in your readings but you are expected to follow the departmental style sheet for your linguistics essay, which basically follows the style guide for the journal *Language*. Other styles widely used in linguistics are Chicago Style or the APA-style by the American Psychological Association (www.apastyle.org).

Referencing books

The general rules for books are:

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

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

Note: The title is italicised and capitalised. Pay attention to punctuation.

The list of references will follow the **alphabetical order of the first 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**, starting with the oldest and ending with the most recent work. 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:

Atkinson, M., D. Kilby and I. Roca 1982. *Foundations of General Linguistics*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Fairclough, N. 1989. *Language and Power*. London: 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, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Michaels, L. and Ch. Ricks (eds.) 1980. *The State of the Language*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schiffirin, D. (ed.). 1984. *Meaning, Form, and Use in Context: Linguistic Applications*. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Schiffirin, D. 1987. *Discourse Markers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schiffirin, D. 1994. *Approaches to Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Van Maanen, J. (ed.). 1988. *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Note that only the first person's surname is placed before the first name(s); the other(s) are given in normal order.

Referencing book chapters

The general rules for book chapters are:

Author's name, initial(s) of first name(s). Year. Title of chapter or short text. In Editor's initials of first name. and surname (ed.), *Title of the Book*. Place: Publisher, Page numbers.

Note: *The title of the article is **not** italicised and **not** capitalised. The book title is italicised and capitalised. Don't forget the exact page range of the article and pay attention to punctuation.*

Example:

Labov, W. 1972. Rules for ritual insults. In D. Sudnow (ed.), *Studies in Social Interaction*. New York: Free Press, 120–169.

If you list **more than one article from the same book**, you may enter the book itself, with complete publication information, and list individual items by **using cross-references to the main entry**. In a cross-reference, the last name of the editor of the book and the relevant page numbers follow the title of the article:

Example:

Labov, W. 1972. Rules for ritual insults. In Sudnow (ed.), 120-169.
Sudnow, D. (ed.) 1972. *Studies in Social Interaction*. New York: Free Press.

Referencing journal articles

The general rules for journal articles are:

Author's name, initials of first name(s). Year. Title of the article. *Title of the Journal* vol #.issue #, page numbers.

Note: *The title of the article is **not** italicised and **not** capitalised. The journal title is italicised and capitalised. Don't forget the volume and issue number and add the exact page range of the article. Pay attention to punctuation.*

Examples:

Milroy, J. 1997. Internal vs external motivations for linguistic change. *Multilingua* 16.4, 311-323.
McCarthy, M. and R. Carter 1997. Grammar, tails and affect: Constructing expressive choices in discourse. *Text* 17.3, 405-429.

Referencing electronic sources

The general rules for electronic sources are:

Author's name, initial(s) of first name(s). Year. Title of article or page. *Name of Website or Journal*. Available at: URL. Accessed on: dd/mm/yyyy.

Note: The title of the article or page is **not** italicised and **not** capitalised. The website or journal title is italicised and capitalised. Don't forget the exact URL and access date.

Examples:

- DemocracyNow! 2000. Exclusive interview with Bill Clinton as U.S. Presidency hangs in balance. *Pacifica Radio*. Available at: www.democracynow.org. Accessed on: 15/11/2000.
- Herring, S. C. 1999. Interactional Coherence in CMC. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 4.4. Available at: <http://www.ascurs.org/jcmc/vol4/issue4/herring.html>. Accessed on: 16/10/2008.

8. British versus American English

Your papers should be consistently written in either British or American English. These varieties of English differ not only in vocabulary and grammar, but there are also differences in style and layout of the paper. You are also expected to use the spell-checker of your word processor; make sure it is set to the right variety of English.

The following table shows some of the most prominent differences between British English (BrE) and American English (AmE). For further details and British versus American vocabulary, see David Crystal's *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (1999: 306-311).

		British English	American English
Layout	Paragraph	Indentation	Blank line
	Dates	Day Month Year <i>13 March 2001</i>	Month Day, Year <i>March 13, 2001</i>
	Collective nouns	Plural option <i>The family / government <u>is</u> / <u>are</u></i>	Only singular <i>The family / government <u>is</u></i>
Spelling	-ou-	<i>behaviour, colour, humour</i>	-o- <i>behavior, color, humor</i>
	-re	<i>centre, litre, metre, theatre</i>	-er <i>center, liter, meter, theater</i>
	-ise	<i>analyse, organise, recognise</i>	-ize <i>analyze, organize, recognize</i>
	-ll-	<i>counsellor, labelled, travelling</i>	-l- <i>counselor, labeled, traveling</i>
		<i>aesthetic</i>	<i>esthetic</i>
		<i>programme</i>	<i>program</i>

For further information see:

- <http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/british-american.htm>
- <http://www3.telus.net/linguisticsissues/BritishCanadianAmerican.htm>

9. Resources for English linguistics

Finding appropriate scholarly resources is often a challenge for students. This section of this manual will help you find books, articles, etc. for your linguistics paper, using resources available through the library and online.

9.1. *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 (and keywords) the database uses.
- Revise your search using the appropriate subject terms.

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: **Bibliography of Linguistic Literature Database (BLLD)**, **Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA)**, **Modern Language Association International Bibliography (MLA)** and **Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)**.

More information and a list of relevant sources for linguistics can be found at the BCU's 'bibliothèque numérique RERO DOC': <http://doc.rero.ch>. Please also consult the linguistic encyclopedias and handbooks that are available at BCU.

10. How your essay is evaluated

The assessment sheet for first-year essays can be found on the next two pages. We encourage you to keep the descriptors in mind when working on your essays.

Level 1 - Research Paper Assessment Form (English Linguistics)

For empirical studies and practical analyses

Student's name:
Student no.:
Variety: BrEng / NAmEng

Course:
Date:
Examiner:

Basic structure and layout

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

- TITLE
- APPROPRIATE LENGTH OF RESEARCH PAPER SECTIONS
- REFERENCES IN THE TEXT AND A REFERENCE SECTION AT THE END OF THE PAPER
- LAY-OUT
- PARAGRAPHING

Style, grammar and vocabulary

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

- TENSE USE
- OVERALL GRAMMATICALITY
- ACADEMIC FORMAL REGISTER
- CONCISENESS
- WORD FORM & SPELLING (INCLUDING CONSISTENT USE OF ADOPTED VARIETY OF ENGLISH)
- PUNCTUATION
- VARIATION / AVOID REPETITION OF WORDS AND PHRASES [NB: SEE MANCHESTER ACADEMIC PHRASEBANK FOR HELP - [HTTP://WWW.PHRASEBANK.MANCHESTER.AC.UK/](http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/)]
- APPROPRIATENESS OF TERMINOLOGY AND STYLE

Abstract (c. 200 words)

- PRESENCE OF RESEARCH QUESTION
- PRESENCE OF METHOD
- PRESENCE OF MAJOR FINDINGS
- CONCISENESS

Introduction

1 2 3 4 5 6

- OUTLINE AND PURPOSE PAPER (INCLUDING THE FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION OR RESEARCH STATEMENT), DATA AND METHOD
- REFERENCE TO PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Theoretical framework/previous research

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

- DISCUSSION OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH
- VARIATION IN REPORTING VERBS [NB: SEE MANCHESTER ACADEMIC PHRASEBANK FOR HELP - [HTTP://WWW.PHRASEBANK.MANCHESTER.AC.UK/](http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/)]

Method

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

- REPLICABLE STUDY ON THE BASIS OF THE METHOD?
- ALL NEEDED SUBSECTIONS PRESENT (SUBJECTS, MATERIALS, PROCEDURES)

Results

1 2 3 4 5 6

- PRESENTATION OF RESULTS CLEARLY STRUCTURED
- USE VISUALS (TABLES, GRAPHS, ETC.) IF APPROPRIATE FOR THE TOPIC
- CLEAR HIGHLIGHTING ELEMENTS (FOCUS ON IMPORTANT INFORMATION)
- APPROPRIATE INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS
- APPROPRIATE MITIGATION/HEDGING

Discussion

1 2 3 4 5 6

- INCORPORATION/REVISITING PREVIOUS WORK
- LINK BETWEEN DISCUSSION AND RESULTS
- FACTUAL INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Conclusion

1 2 3 4 5 6

- SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS
- INDICATION OF LIMITATIONS
- CONCLUDING STATEMENT – ANSWER RESEARCH QUESTION

Final grade out of 60