



**DEPARTAMENT DE FILOLOGIA ANGLESA I DE GERMANÍSTICA**

**PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITING  
PAPERS IN LINGUISTICS**

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## 1. Content

**Always start with a draft outline** and work on it until you have the one you think is the best. Use your own criteria and your own words. *Do not copy without referencing the source.* Remember that *plagiarism* (even just a few words) is a serious offence that will result in you failing the exercise.

**Always follow the teacher's instructions.** If they set a limit on the number of pages or the number of bibliographical sources to be consulted, do not use more than asked for.

Bear in mind that careful editing will not hide a badly researched exercise (paper/project/assignment/TFG/TFM) or one that contains concepts or ideas that you have not understood. However, remember that faulty editing is inexcusable and a discourtesy towards your reader.

## 2. Organization and sections

Research papers should always include an **Abstract** (150-200 words), presenting your topic and objectives, your research question and thesis statement and your main arguments, followed by between 5 and 8 keywords, an introduction (presenting your topic and objectives), a development and a conclusion. In short works you need not label these sections "Introduction", etc., but they must be included and must follow this order. In longer works (paper/project/assignment/TFG/TFM) you must identify the sections, which may have a subtitle and must be clearly numbered.

You need to clearly define the aims you pursue, that is, the topic/object of study (what is the paper about?), the objectives (what for?), the research questions (what do I

want to analyse/study/explore?) and the hypothesis/thesis statement (what is my point of view, according to what other authors/sources have written on the subject?).

The first section of the paper proper is the **Introduction**, in which you need to state what you intend to discuss or analyse in the exercise (topic) and present your point of view (thesis statement), together with the objectives and how your paper connects with previous research on your topic. The longest part of the paper should be the **development**, which can vary depending on the kind of paper you are writing. In most cases (but follow the instructions of your teacher or supervisor), it includes a **Review of the literature/Theoretical background**, a **Description of the topic under study**, and an **Analysis of the examples**. If the paper/project/assignment/TFG/TFM is research-based, the following sections must be included: **Method**, **Results** and **Discussion**. The paper finishes with a **Conclusion**, in which you summarize what you have discussed (**never add new information**). It can also include limitations of the study and issues for further research.

The sections must be balanced and proportionate, that is, for example, in a ten-page paper, the introduction should not occupy more than 1.5 pages at the very most. The conclusion should be even shorter.

### **3. Edition: Basic instructions**

All papers must have a **cover page**, with the following information: your name, title of the paper/project/assignment/TFG/TFM, name of subject/degree, teacher's/supervisor's name, date and [UAB logo](#). After the cover page come the **Statement of Intellectual**

**Honesty**, the **Acknowledgements** (if any) and the **Table of Contents**,<sup>1</sup> which is a list of the sections of the paper together with the page numbers. The Table of Contents is not necessary in short essays or assignments. An **Index of Tables and Figures** must be included, if necessary,<sup>2</sup> on the page following the Table of Contents. This is followed by the **Abstract**.

Papers must be written with **double spacing** (except for abstract, long quotations, reference list and notes, which are single-spaced). Use **Times New Roman** font, **size 12** for the text (section titles included) and the references, Times Roman **size 18** for the title on the cover page, and Times New Roman **size 11** for the abstract, long quotations and notes. The title of the paper and the main section headings (e.g., **2.2.1 Neologisms**) should be in **bold**, and all sections must be **numbered**.<sup>3</sup> **Margins** should be left on both sides of the page (3 cm), and at the top and the bottom (2.5 cm). The text should be fully **justified**.

**Page numbering** is a little complex. The cover page, Statement of Intellectual Honesty and Acknowledgments (if present) are not numbered. The Table of Contents and the Index of Tables and Figures (optional) are numbered in **Roman** numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.). From the abstract onwards, **Arabic** numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) are used.<sup>4</sup> Leave a **blank space** before a new section, but **not** between paragraphs. The first line of paragraphs must be indented (1.25 cm) (in *Paràgraf > Especial > Primera línia*), **except** the first line of each section.

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<sup>1</sup> Tables of Contents can be created automatically in *Word* using the Title styles for your section titles.

<sup>2</sup> An Index of Tables is necessary even if there is only one table, and the same applies to Figures.

<sup>3</sup> You can only number sub-sections if there is more than one (you cannot have a subsection 1.1 if there is no subsection 1.2).

<sup>4</sup> This can be a bit daunting, but do not get discouraged. You can do it using *Salts de secció + desvincular* in *Word*.

You may use **footnotes** but restrict them to giving extra information (do not use them for referencing secondary sources). The following are examples of useful notes:

- Additional examples of the concept or idea you are discussing.
- More evidence to support the statement you are making.
- Notes to draw reader's attention to other works dealing with a similar concept.

Notes must be numbered by superscripts, **after punctuation marks**. Use the tool *Referències* in *Word*.

Diagrams, tables, graphs, figures and maps must be labelled and numbered. Place a descriptive caption underneath in font size 11 (e.g., "Table 5. Statistics for literacy in Australia 1905-1925").

The list of works you quote from or refer to in your paper must be included in the section **References**, which occurs after the Conclusion, and before the Appendix (if there is one). There is more information about this issue in Section 9.

You may have to use **examples**, which must be numbered sequentially in the whole paper (that is, do not start anew in each section) and indented.

(1) Can you please open the door?

(2) He is the president of the United States.

When referring to them in the text, use numbers (e.g., "In (1) we find a clear example of the deictic use of the definite article, and in (2) of the cataphoric use").

#### **4. Paragraphs**

A paper should be written in full and well-developed paragraphs. The idea dealt with in each paragraph is announced in the initial sentence, called *topic sentence*. The sentences in a paragraph should be well connected: develop your ideas and link them up correctly

with the help of words and phrases such as *however, in spite of, on the other hand* or *besides* (but try to avoid *moreover*). Use connectors sensibly, however, never in excess.

If you have doubts about when and how to use them, you can consult a reliable English grammar. Please note:

- Do **not use bullet points** unless they are absolutely justified.
- Avoid short paragraphs and never write **one-sentence** paragraphs.
- Do not begin paragraphs (or sentences) with the conjunctions *and, or* or *but*.
- Do not start a paragraph with a quote.

## 5. Sentences

All sentences must have a **subject** and a **finite verb**. In English it is not possible to join two independent clauses by a comma; (3) is ungrammatical and (4) is grammatical:

(3) \*Students often join two separate clauses with a comma, this is incorrect.

(4) Students often join two separate clauses with a comma, which is incorrect.

In (4) we can see subordination; other options are coordination (with *and*) or the use of colons and semi-colons. Try to vary the structures you use, and avoid unnecessarily long sentences, particularly those with several embedded clauses (quite frequent in Catalan or Spanish). As for **punctuation**, bear in mind that the word right after a colon must be capitalised.

## 6. Language (register and tone)

The language used should be formal both in register and tone:

- Avoid informal or colloquial expressions such as *stuff like that, anyway, a lot of*.
- Avoid all-purpose words such as *thing, fact, idea*. Find more specific vocabulary.

- Do not use contractions.
- Do not use abbreviations.
- Use ONLY black ink.
- Do not use ... to indicate *etc.*
- Do not use expressions such as *I think, I suppose, It is important to mention that.*
- Do not use *he* as a generic pronoun.
- Be careful with unclear pronoun references.
- Do not rely on the same words all the time (e.g., *important* or *interesting*). Use the Thesaurus function (Shift+F7) in *Word* for variety.
- Proof-read your paper, to make sure that there are no typing mistakes, well in advance of the deadline.

## 7. Metalanguage

Metalanguage is language used to talk about another language, called the object language. It is marked with **italics**. If it is not clearly marked, confusion may arise. If the object language is not marked, this clause is ungrammatical: see the difference between (5) and (6). Italics is also used when mentioning words in another language, as in (7).

(5) If you say the word and make sure that you pronounce the final sound.

(6) If you say the word *and* make sure that you pronounce the final sound.

(7) The French word for pencil is *crayon*.

## 8. Quotations

**A good scholar always refers to other scholars' work.** However, a large number of quotes and references does not imply that it is automatically a good paper. Include only

those quotes and references that you have understood and are related to what you are discussing.

The quotations in your paper prove that you have engaged in the on-going debate around the topic of your choice. You may use them to include information you yourself cannot know, to support an opinion you present, or even to contradict it. It is very important to acknowledge other people's words and ideas, in order to avoid **plagiarism**. Acknowledgement is carried out, as you can see in the following examples, by including the author's surname + comma, the date of publication of the text + colon, and the page number(s) in parentheses.

### 8.1 Direct quotations

When using a direct quotation (i.e., the author's exact words) you must consider its length.

- If you quote **fewer than 50 words**, the quotation should be embedded in your text and placed between double inverted commas (“...”), with the same type and line spacing.

#### EXAMPLE

As described by van Someren, Barnard and Sandberg (1994, p. xi), this technique “consists of asking people to think aloud while solving a problem and analysing the resulting verbal protocols.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The full stop must be placed before the inverted commas.

- If the quotation is **longer than 50 words**, it should be separated from your text by one space before and after, indented (1 cm both sides), single-spaced and size 11. They are introduced by a colon, and do not appear between quotation marks.

EXAMPLE

It has also been suggested that successful use of reading strategies was, largely, dependent on “awareness” of, and flexibility in, the use of these strategies according to the purpose of the task or the problem to be solved:

Too often students in second language reading programs, who receive instruction only in the skills or strategies, fail to use them intelligently and on their own volition because they do not appreciate the reasons why such strategies are useful, nor do they understand where and when to use them. (Carrell et al. 1989, p. 129)

- If your next reference is to the **same source**, you need only reference author and page:

EXAMPLE

“Adding instruction in “awareness” or knowledge about a strategy’s evaluation, rationale, and utility should greatly increase the positive outcomes of instruction” (Carrell, p. 130).

- If you quote an author, **not by direct consultation** but because you have found them quoted in another source, you should indicate this as in:

EXAMPLE

“r-pronunciation clearly correlates with social prestige in New Yorker’s perceptions” (Labov 1976, quoted in Trudgill 1983, p.36).

- You may **skip some words** in quotations that might be irrelevant to the point you are making. Indicate this with (...).

**EXAMPLE**

Too often students in second language reading programs (...) fail to use them intelligently and on their own volition because they do not appreciate the reasons why such strategies are useful, nor do they understand where and when to use them (Carrell et al. 1989: 129).

## 8.2 Indirect quotations

- If instead of using the author's exact words you are using their idea or theory, the author's name may appear in the text or between parentheses, but the year (and page number(s), if applicable should always appear between parentheses:

**EXAMPLE**

In order to account for the ungrammatical constructions under (11) above, we must refer to the Minimality Condition (Chomsky, 1995).

OR

**EXAMPLE**

Chomsky accounts for the ungrammatical constructions under (11) by referring to the Minimality condition (1995)

OR (if pages are relevant)

**EXAMPLE**

In order to account for the ungrammatical constructions under (11) above, we must refer to the Minimality Condition (Chomsky, 1995, pp. 25-28).

- If you refer to the work of various scholars, order them **chronologically** (from the oldest reference to the newest):

**EXAMPLE**

Early research on the L2A of English subjects adopted the traditional version of the Null Subject Parameter (NSP) (Chomsky, 1981; Jaeggli, 1982; Jaeggli and Safir, 1989).

### **8.3 For all kinds of quotes and paraphrases**

- Work by **three authors** (or more) should include all names in the first citation, with only the first author followed by “et al.” in subsequent citations. Work by **four or more authors** should use “et al.” in all citations.

#### EXAMPLE

According to Hauser, Chomsky and Fitch (2002), recursivity is a central property of human language (**first mention**). Hauser et al. (2002) (**subsequent mentions**).

#### EXAMPLE

Kortmann et al. (2004) give an overview of the grammatical and phonological features of major non-standard varieties of English.

- If you refer to two or more publications by the same author published in the same year, use a letter after the date to organise them: 1983a, 1983b.<sup>6</sup>
- If there are two or more authors, use *and* between the authors' names within the text and use the ampersand (&) in the parentheses.

## 9. References

The References contain the list of sources from which you have borrowed direct and indirect quotations and information. Do not include sources you may have read but do not quote from. They must be organised with the author's surnames in **alphabetical order**. Each type of source (book, journal, etc.) follows particular conventions. Please use the ones presented here in your work, and also use French-style indentation at 1.25 cm for text in the References (an option within *Paràgraf* in *Word*).

- **BOOKS:**

**Basic format:** Author's Surname, Full first name. (Year of publication). *Title of Book*. Publisher.

[Please not the use of periods right before and after the parenthesis enclosing the year of publication.]

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<sup>6</sup> This is also the way in which these works must be presented in the References.

EXAMPLE

Crystal, David. (2002). *The English Language*. Penguin.

**Books with one author:** Author's Surname, Full first name. (Year of publication). *Title of Book*. Publisher.

EXAMPLE

Carstairs, Andrew. (1987). *Allomorphy in Inflection*. Croom Helm.

**Books with two authors:** Author's Surname, Full first name & Full first name Surname (Year of publication). *Title of Book*. Publisher.

EXAMPLE

Isaac, Daniela & Charles Reiss. (2008). *I-Language. An Introduction to Linguistics as Cognitive Science*. Oxford University Press.

**Books with three or more authors:** Author's Surname, Full first name, Full first name Surname & Full first name Surname (Year of publication). *Title of Book*. Publisher.<sup>7</sup>

EXAMPLE

Wysocki, Anne Frances, Johndan Johnson-Eilola, Cynthia L. Selfe & Geoffrey Sirc. (2004). *Writing New Media: Theory and Applications for Expanding the Teaching of Composition*. Utah State UP.

**Books by a corporate author or organization:** Name of organization (Year of publication). *Title of Book*. Publisher.

EXAMPLE

American Allergy Association. (1998). *Allergies in Children*. Random House.

**Books with no author:** *Title of Book*. (Year of publication). Publisher.

EXAMPLE

*Encyclopaedia of Indiana*. (1993). Somerset.

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<sup>7</sup> In the references, you must never use *et al.*, that is, you must write the full names of all authors.

**Edited books:** Author's Surname, Full first name, and Full first name Surname, editors. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year of publication.

EXAMPLE

Payrató, Lluís & Josep Maria Cots (Eds.). (2011). *The Pragmatics of Catalan*. De Gruyter Mouton.

**E-books:** Author's Surname, Full first name & Full first name Surname. (Year of publication). *Title of Book*. E-book. Publisher.

EXAMPLE

Silvia, Paul. (2007). *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*, E-book. American Psychological Association.

- **CHAPTERS IN COLLECTIVE VOLUME:**

**Basic format:** Author's Surname, Full first name. (Year of publication). Title of Chapter. In Editor's Full first name Surname (Ed./Eds.), *Title of the Collective Volume* (pp. page numbers). Publisher.

EXAMPLE

Grinevald, Colette. (2006). The Expression of Static Location in a Typological Perspective. In Maya Hickmann & Stéphane Robert (Eds.), *Space in Languages. Linguistic Systems and Cognitive Categories* (pp. 29-58). John Benjamins.

- **ARTICLES IN ACADEMIC JOURNALS:**

**Basic format:** Author's Surname, Full first name. (Year of publication). Title of Article. *Title of Journal*, volume(issue), page range. DOI: doi number (if available).

EXAMPLE

Kasper, Gabriele. (1996). Introduction: Interlanguage Pragmatics in SLA. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 18(2), 145-148.

**Journal articles with an article number:** Author's Surname, Full first name. (Year of publication). Title of Article. *Title of Journal*, volume(issue), Article + article number. DOI: doi number (if available).

EXAMPLE

Pagán-Cánovas, Cristóbal & Javier Valenzuela. (2017). Timelines and Multimodal Constructions: Facing New Challenges. *Linguistics Vanguard* 3(1): Article 20160087. DOI: 10.13140/RG2.2.12024.70406.

- **ARTICLES IN WEBSITES:**

**Basic format:** Author's Surname, Full first name. (Year of publication). Title of Article. *Title of Website* (if available), date of uploading (if available). Retrieved Month Day, Year, from URL.<sup>8</sup>

EXAMPLE

Chou, Luyen, Robert McClintock, Frank Moretti, Don H. Nix. (1993). Technology and education: New Wine in New Bottles. Choosing Past and Imagining Educational Futures. *Institute for Learning Technologies, University of Columbia*. Retrieved November 16, 2020, from <http://penta2.ufrgs.br/edu/edu3375/newwine.htm>.

- **INTERNET RESOURCES:**

**Entire websites:** Name of Website. (Year of Publication). Retrieved Month Day, Year, from URL.

EXAMPLE

Linguistic Society of America. (2001). Retrieved April 22, 2018 from <https://www.linguisticsociety.org/>.

**General website article without an author:** Title of article. *Name of Website*. (Year of publication). Retrieved Month Day, Year, from URL.

EXAMPLE

SQ3R reading method. *Study Guides and Strategies*. (n.d.)<sup>9</sup>. Retrieved April 21, 2018 from <http://www.studygs.net/texred2.htm>.

- **THESES (doctoral or masters):**

**Basic format:** Author's Surname, Full first name. (Year of elaboration). *Title of Thesis*. [Unpublished doctoral/masters thesis or dissertation]. University. URL (if available).

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<sup>8</sup> Articles published in electronic journals follow the conventions of articles published in academic journals.

<sup>9</sup> n.d. stands for "no date."

EXAMPLE

Pérez-Parent, Montserrat. (1999). *The Production of Requests by Catalan Learners of English*. [Unpublished masters thesis]. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

EXAMPLE

Nölle, Jonas. (2021). *How Language Adapts to the Environment: An Evolutionary, Experimental Approach*. [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. The University of Edinburgh. <https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/38890>.

Before you hand in your paper take the time to proofread it carefully and make any necessary corrections. Careless typing errors and obvious misspellings will not dispose the reader towards you favourably.