

Guide to publishing across languages and boundaries



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1. Overview

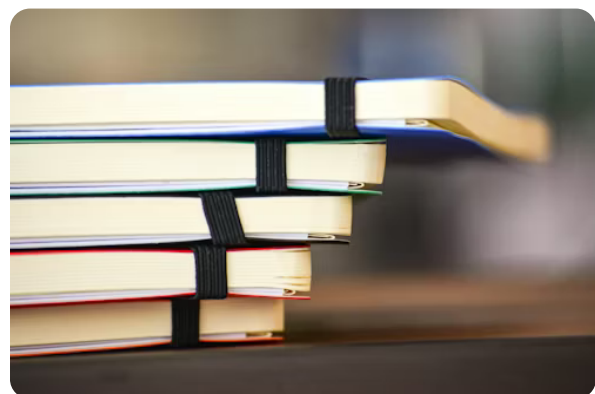
This is a guide to publishing across linguistic, geographic and other boundaries. Written from the perspective of researchers working between Anglophone and Latin American geographies, it is of wider relevance to anyone working across boundaries. Knowledge is produced and disseminated in all languages and regions in a variety of ways. However, several factors impede its circulation. Status inequalities devalue some forms of knowledge and limit their reach, while financial, institutional and legal restrictions delimit highly valued intellectual production. Many such barriers and inequalities are inherited from and reproduce colonial hierarchies. They tend to map onto divisions between the global North and South but also exist between and within countries at smaller scales.

As this guide outlines, such barriers exist even within the circumscribed and relatively privileged world of academic publishing. That is, there are significant inequalities in the reach of academic knowledge produced in different countries/languages, in the ability to access that knowledge and in the status it enjoys. These inequalities clearly have a political-economic dimension linked to the huge disparities between rich, middle-income and poor countries: in the resources available to universities, research funding bodies and journals, for example. They also have a linguistic dimension, both in the hegemonic status of English in global academia and in the unequal status of majority and/or official languages in many countries vis-à-vis minority and/or indigenous ones. Finally, there is an epistemological dimension linked to widespread assumptions about the validity of different epistemological perspectives and the ability of Western knowledge producers to impose theirs on others (in part through political-economic structures and linguistic hegemony).

The authors of this guide assume that *this is a problem*. We believe that we are all worse off when some producers of knowledge are systematically silenced, and when the knowledge produced in prestigious universities and journals is not made available to anyone who wants to access it. This guide responds by providing a set of practical resources for those seeking to publish across boundaries. It focuses specifically on the dynamics of academic production and exchange between Anglophone and Latin American geographies. However, many of the key points addressed also apply to other disciplines, languages and regions. We hope the guide will help scholars to break out of regional, disciplinary and linguistic siloes and encourage publishers and journal editors to find new ways of facilitating the resulting exchanges.

The first section provides a general overview of the publishing landscape in Anglophone and Latin American geographies. It identifies the broad structures and conventions through which geographical knowledge is produced and disseminated, the challenges these present and some current efforts to overcome them.

The second section offers concrete information and advice for Latin American scholars who would like to publish their work in English. The topics addressed include everything from selecting a journal to structuring and writing a manuscript to navigating the peer review process.



2. The publishing landscape in Anglophone and Latin American geographies

i) Challenges of the current publishing landscape

Increasingly, our academic performance is evaluated by the number of publications. This has generated strong pressure, resulting in what some academics criticise as 'productivism'.^[1] In addition, a certain type of productivity is required. There is pressure to publish in so-called international journals:

this productivism is not limited to accumulating any amount of published work, because the indexing of the journal takes precedence in the process of valuation. That famous phrase 'publish or perish' has become 'publish in the mainstream or perish in the periphery'.^[2]

This issue poses different challenges for Anglophone and Latin American geographers.

What are international journals? There is no clear definition, although some of the criteria usually mentioned are: having an editorial board with members from different countries; being indexed in a global database (e.g. SCOPUS); achieving integration into global communication channels; publishing articles by authors with international reach; having a high **impact factor**; and simply

having the reputation of being an international journal.

The Journal Impact Factor was originally used only by librarians but is increasingly used to evaluate researchers. It measures the frequency with which the average article in a journal has been cited in a particular year. The companies that began to measure this impact now own the main journal databases from which quality standards and placement in rankings are established: for example, *Web of Science* (WOS) is owned by *Clarivate* and *Scopus* is owned by *Elsevier*. These databases have a clear bias towards the English language and journals published in the Anglophone world.^[3]

These processes have established a kind of 'mainstream' and 'periphery' (or several 'peripheries') of journals, where language is a key defining element. So-called 'mainstream' journals publish almost exclusively in English, considered the 'global language'.



[1] Fernanda Beigel and Osvaldo Gallardo, 'Productividad, bibliodiversidad y bilingüismo en un *corpus* completo de producciones científicas', *Revista Iberoamericana de Ciencia, Tecnología y Sociedad*, 16, no. 46 (2021): 43. Translations from Spanish by authors of this guide.

[2] Beigel and Gallardo: 43.

[3] Éric Archambault and Vincent Larivière, 'The limits of bibliometrics for the analysis of the social sciences and humanities literature', in: *World Social Science Report: Knowledge Divides*, ed. by UNESCO and International Social Science Council (UNESCO, 2010); and Michael Meadows, Ton Dietz and Christian Vandermotten, 'A perspective on problems and prospects for academic publishing in Geography', *Geo: Geography and Environment* 3, no. 1 (2016).

Some authors draw attention to what they define as a 'geographic-linguistic periphery'.^[4] The linguistic periphery explains the limited inclusion of journals published in Spanish and Portuguese and, more broadly, in languages other than English.

In this context, journal databases have also emerged in Latin America to make scientific production in the region more visible, as well as in Spain and Portugal, which, despite being European countries, are also poorly represented in the 'large', or mainstream, databases. These include, for example, *Latindex* (Sistema Regional de Información en línea para Revistas Científicas de América Latina,

el Caribe, España y Portugal) and *Redalyc* (Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina y el Caribe, España y Portugal), both of which emerged in Mexico, and *SciELO* (Scientific Electronic Library Online), which emerged in Brazil. These databases have developed and succeeded in guaranteeing quality criteria. Even so, within the evaluation systems of Latin American countries, they are usually considered 'regional' rather than international databases.

The geographical periphery, for its part, is closely related to language and is linked to the potential marginalisation in journals with the greatest impact of research agendas of local interest in Latin American countries.^[5] In general, journals tend to favour contributions that engage with certain 'circuits' of debate prevailing in the countries that publish them. If we consider that most journals in mainstream databases are published in Anglophone countries, or European countries more generally, this creates a bias towards

preference for particular topics. This undermines openness towards debates generated in other academic contexts. For Latin American researchers, this presents the challenge of having to master the state of the art in two different contexts.

The practice of ranking journals is leading to a parallel system of ranking individual scholars. Google Scholar is increasingly used to evaluate the breadth and reach of an individual researcher's scholarly impact.^[6] In addition to quantifying the total number of citations any author has by year and across their lifetime, the Google Scholar **H-index** is a specific metric which indicates the number of papers that have received at least a given number of citations. For instance, an H-index of 10 indicates that the researcher has published at least 10 papers each cited at least 10 times.

These metrics have now permeated academic evaluation more generally. The 'quality map' of journals that prevails in Latin American evaluations tends to reproduce the international ranking. Researchers' publications are regarded as worth more if the journal in which they have published is indexed in one of the *Web of Science* databases than if it is indexed in *Redalyc* or *Latindex*. Although in some countries progress has been made within the social sciences towards giving more weight to databases generated in Latin America (for example in CONICET in Argentina and CAPES in Brazil, journals indexed in *SciELO* have as much value as those indexed in *WoS*), in other countries the trend has gone in the opposite direction. This is the case in Mexico and Colombia, where national science and

[4] Federico Vasen and Ivonne Lujano Vilchis 'Sistemas nacionales de clasificación de revistas científicas en América Latina: tendencias recientes e implicaciones para la evaluación académica en ciencias sociales', *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* 62, no. 231 (2017): 202.

[5] Vasen and Lujano Vilchis: 202.

[6] Google Scholar is a search engine that reflects the language of the websites it trawls, which include publishers, universities and professional societies.

technology systems have adopted the impact factor as an indicator for classifying journals, using the main international databases as their reference. In these countries, the classification obtained from the journals in which researchers publish even feeds into the salary regime.^[7]

All this has several consequences for knowledge circulation. On the one hand, we can identify the existence of ‘coloniality of knowledge production’,^[8] which is reproduced in the global North and South: knowledge from the North is the ‘best’, both in the North and in the South. On the other hand, for Latin American academics, publishing in English-speaking journals becomes very difficult, particularly due to the language barrier, given that these journals publish almost exclusively in English, entailing significant hidden costs. These inequalities of access and reach have been intensified by a growing divide between ‘open access’ and ‘subscription-only’ models of publishing (see Box 1). Moreover, discussions in Anglophone journals are biased towards debates that are prominent in the global North and less open to debates from elsewhere. In these ways, journals are part of a circuit that reproduces epistemological hierarchies.

Some further questions should also be considered in light of the challenges these conditions present. For example: if Latin American scholars are increasingly expected to publish in the mainstream, which means publishing in English, how is the knowledge co-produced within communities to be shared with their members? Meanwhile, even within Latin American academia, the overvaluing of Northern journals can lead local research to orient towards incorporating Northern debates to gain

acceptance, to the detriment of developing local agendas and theoretical debates.

ii) Developments and innovations

Many Latin American geography journals accept and publish articles in English as well as Spanish/Portuguese. A few also accept articles in French. *Investigaciones Geográficas* (Mexico) and *Mercator* (Universidade Federal do Ceará, Brazil) sometimes publish articles simultaneously in Spanish/Portuguese and in English.

The barriers to multi-language publication are higher in Anglophone journals. They are not necessarily the product of editorial bias: major publishing companies often refuse to publish in any language other than English. Although some interdisciplinary or area studies journals focusing on Latin America will accept submissions in Spanish or Portuguese, and may even publish articles in these languages, the same does not apply to Anglophone geography journals.

Some journals, however, are introducing interesting changes that may present alternative paths to overcome linguistic and epistemological barriers.

One example is the *Journal of Latin American Geography* (JLAG), edited by the US-based *Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers* (a not-for-profit organisation). This journal publishes articles from different disciplines, as long as they have a geographical focus. They define Latin America in broad terms, including the geopolitical region but also ‘Latinx geographies’ (geographies of Latin American populations in the U.S. and elsewhere).

[7] Vasen and Lujano Vilchis: 219.

[8] John C. Finn, Martha Bell, Jörn Seemann, Gabriela Valdivia and Eric Carter ‘Introducing *JLAG em Tradução/JLAG en Traducción*, *Journal of Latin American Geography* 19, no. 1 (2020): 248.

Box 1. 'Open access' versus 'subscription-only' models

Most prestigious Anglophone journals are subscription-based, meaning organisations (usually universities) must pay annual fees to make their content available to staff and students. Given the prohibitive costs of such subscriptions, it is often only universities in the global North and the most well-resourced universities in the global South that can maintain extensive collections of subscription-based journals. By contrast, most journals in Latin America are open access, meaning that anyone can access a journal's contents directly via its website without encountering a paywall. While there have been attempts to create more open access journal options in Anglophone geography, the vast majority of journals, including the most prestigious ones, continue to be subscription-based. There is usually an option for individual articles published in subscription-based journals to be made 'open access', thus removing barriers to access. However, there is often a large payment required to make an article 'open access', which only wealthy Northern universities can afford to pay for their staff and students (in the interest of increasing the number of readers and citations). In other words, being able to publish 'open access' in Anglophone journals is, today, a privilege rather than the norm.

Although it is not an open access journal, the journal implemented a tiered **Author Publication Charge (APC)** where South-based authors/budget holders pay a significantly reduced APC for articles to be published 'open access'.^[9] Furthermore, JLAG pays for translation and one year of open access for original articles that they consider particularly significant, publishing the article in both Spanish/Portuguese and English.^[10] Likewise, they publish reviews in English of Spanish- and Portuguese-language books in order to promote their circulation.^[11] Authors from every continent and almost every Latin American country have published in JLAG but most readers access the journal from the US, Canada or Europe. Subscriptions are used to pay translators and income from events is also used to sustain the organisation.

An alternative path may be to incorporate translations in Anglophone journals. For example, *Antipode: A Journal of Radical Geography* occasionally publishes translations of original or already-published articles that are considered significant in terms of their contribution to theory and/or praxis at a given time. These articles are published with notes from the translator/editor whenever necessary. The editors may seek to situate the article by describing its relevance in the historical and geographical context of its original publication.

There are as yet no examples of geography journals, in Latin America or elsewhere, that have published articles in an indigenous language spoken in Latin America. The interdisciplinary periodical *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*

[9] John C. Finn, Eugenio Arima, Martha Bell, Jessica Budds, Jörn Seemann, Gabriela Valdivia, Diana Tung and Alan Marcus, 'Expanding access to the Journal of Latin American Geography', *Journal of Latin American Geography* 20, no. 3 (2021).

[10] Finn, Bell, Seemann, Valdivia and Carter: 247.

[11] Jessica Budds, Martha G. Bell, John C. Finn, Jörn Seemann, Eugenio Arima and Gabriela Valdivia, 'Language, translation, and the practice of decolonizing academic publishing/Lengua, traducción y la práctica de la descolonización de las publicaciones académicas/Linguagem, tradução e a prática de descolonização das publicações acadêmicas', *Journal of Latin American Geography* 22, no. 3 (2023).

will accept submissions in an indigenous language but publishes in English. However, the editors of the *Journal of Latin American Geography* have recently indicated that they are open in principle to receiving submission in indigenous languages, subject to logistical considerations around review and copyediting.^[12]

The thesaurus built into word processing packages is a valuable tool for any author, whether or not they are writing in a language that is not their own, to check the meaning of words and/or to find a more appropriate term.

Beyond this, the increasing availability of AI translation tools is seen by many as a watershed in addressing the barriers posed by translation to publishing outside one's home context. It is still early days, however, and a joint review by the author and a native speaker is strongly recommended before any AI-translated manuscript is submitted for possible publication. Importantly, authors should always follow any journal specific **author guidelines** and make sure they declare in what way (if at all) AI was used in the preparation of the manuscript.



^[12] Budds, Bell, Seemann, Arima and Valdivia: 7–8.

3. Publishing across languages and borders: A step-by-step guide

i. Developing a publication strategy

As we have seen, publishing has become crucial to academic career development. In most parts of the world, and certainly in Anglophone and Latin American contexts, publishing regularly and in the right places is vital to gaining employment, earning promotions, and winning research grants. Notwithstanding important critiques about ‘productivism’ and the perversities of a system built around journal Impact Factors, there are also clear positives to publishing regularly. It offers scholars the opportunity to work through their ideas and improve them through the peer review process. And it allows them to disseminate their research findings to academic peers – and potentially wider society – in a structured and focused way. This section offers practical and strategic advice on approaching the publishing process.

A good starting point is the development of a publishing strategy. This is a plan for publishing the type, number, and range of outputs that will help you achieve your academic and career goals and share your research with the audiences you wish to reach. The specifics of what strategy to adopt may vary between countries, disciplines and individual circumstances, but it is generally useful to develop one. For the reasons already outlined, the aims of career progression and engaging across linguistic and other boundaries may often come into conflict. You may wish to produce outputs in a language or for an audience that are not prioritised or highly valued by academic institutions. On the other hand, you may be professionally expected to publish in a language that presents you with additional challenges. Considering these conflicting pressures, two strategies to consider are

varying outputs and publishing collaboratively.

Varying your outputs can help you to meet academic expectations without neglecting the intellectual and social benefits that come from publishing in other languages and for different audiences. Of course, at times you may have to prioritise, but this does not mean your outputs must be subordinated to instrumental logic or institutional measures of success. There is intrinsic value in publishing in different languages and for non-academic audiences, and, indeed, these are likely to benefit you and your work in the long run.

Admittedly, this is easier said than done. As we have argued, Anglophone and Latin American journals tend to focus on different agendas and to be immersed in different debates and theoretical approaches. They also have different norms in the ways that academic outputs are structured and in writing style. To engage meaningfully with either, it is necessary to read extensively, be up to date with the literature, and to develop the expected style. Similarly, engagement with non-academic users can also be time-consuming and present its own challenges of engagement and translation. As such, authors who put in this additional work may find themselves disadvantaged in relation to peers who do not.

For these reasons, varying outputs across languages and formats is easier if you can work collaboratively with others who have different linguistic skills and epistemological insights from your own. Collaboration helps share the load and makes it easier to produce a greater number and variety of publications, while also bringing together different skills and insights that can enrich academic work and help adapt it to different settings. Collaboration can mean different things, from developing informal networks through reading groups, to exchanging support with translation and proof-reading, or developing more intense forms of team-based research

and collaborative writing.

ii. Choosing a journal

While the recognition given to different types of outputs varies between contexts, peer-reviewed, full-length journal articles are generally seen as the gold standard. That is because they go through the most rigorous and impartial processes of review: usually, though not always, **double-blind peer review** by two or three **referees**. Any publishing strategy should therefore focus on the production of journal articles in highly regarded journals, in particular for what you consider to be your strongest work.

That does not mean that you should abstain from publishing before the results of a long and complex research project are available. Many journals publish different types of contributions, beyond what are most commonly called 'research articles'. They may publish what are sometimes termed 'interventions' or 'debates' (or equivalent terms in Portuguese/Spanish), which are usually shorter pieces that involve critical, reflective or provocative essays intended to encourage discussion, without the need for original research. Other shorter article types include reports on methodological innovations or new data or archive sources. Book review essays (comparing a few publications in depth) could also be an option, although individual book reviews and review essays are often commissioned by journals that do not, for ethical reasons, accept unsolicited reviews.

One consideration in choosing a journal to which to submit your work may, therefore, be the types of academic output which it will accept, as stated on the journal's webpage. The rest of this section provides more general points to consider when choosing a journal for a research article.

Firstly, it is important to consider the journal's prestige. This is a somewhat elusive concept. Notwithstanding the concerns

outlined above, database indexing and quantitative metrics like impact factors and rankings can provide some indication of where to look, although individual journals are likely to perform differently over time. Beyond the metrics, however: journals are more or less highly regarded within their (sub) disciplines (although their reputation can also vary over time), and consulting an experienced scholar will usually help to provide clarity in this regard. Not every article you publish need be in a highly ranked, prestigious journal, but it is expected that some will, and it is advisable to target what you consider to be your strongest works towards such outlets.

Secondly, a crucial issue to consider, which affects both the likelihood of acceptance and the eventual readership, is fit. Not all work by geographers is best positioned in a geography journal. You may be able to make a greater contribution if you choose to publish in a journal that draws its readership both from geography but also, perhaps primarily, from related disciplines, such as urban or environmental studies. The choice of journal will affect how you approach writing an article and what debates you will engage with. Similarly, some journals primarily publish research results, while others may be more open to, or more focused on, theoretical contributions.

To assess the suitability of a potential outlet for your work, you should always consult the journal website, where there will usually be a section on '**Aims and Scope**' (or similar), and some recent articles. A good indicator is whether you have cited (or plan to cite) articles published in that journal (indeed, editors sometimes use the lack of such citations as evidence of your having chosen the wrong journal for your work). If you are still in doubt, you can also enquire directly, emailing the journal's main editor with an **abstract** or short summary of your paper. They will usually happily respond (it's in their interest to do so - peer review is a time-consuming process that should be avoided if

a paper is not a good fit).

Finally, there are some practical issues to consider when choosing a journal. You should look at the journal's guidelines in terms of article length and format and consider whether it is appropriate for the piece of work in question. You may also want to check any information available about the average **turnaround time** for receiving peer reviews (often found on journal websites), particularly if you are trying to publish quickly. There may be a specific reason for publishing in a journal, such as if you are part of a **special issue**. Finally, you may want to consider whether the journal has a subscription or 'open access' model, which will have a significant impact on who your eventual audience will be. (As explained in Box 1, this is more of an issue in Anglophone geography, as Latin American journals mostly publish on an open access basis). When choosing a journal, you should always consider questions of prestige and fit as well as these practical aspects and balance them in such a way as to ensure the best chance of acceptance while advancing your publication strategy.

iii. Writing your manuscript

A journal article must be capable of standing on its own in terms of structure and argument. This is particularly relevant when writing up pieces linked to larger projects, such as a PhD thesis.

Articles must demonstrate that they are making an original and substantive contribution to scholarship. Review articles are often not of interest to most Anglophone journals, although there are some, such as *Progress in Human Geography*, *Progress in Development Studies*, and *Geography Compass*, that specialise in this format. That specialisation does not mean, however, that a literature review chapter from a PhD thesis will be suitable, because it serves mainly as a preface to what follows in the thesis and because it may well take a longer-term

perspective rather than focusing on current debates ('progress').

Framing your argument is a key part of developing your manuscript. This is done by placing your argument in a broader debate or literature, which should be relevant for the journal to which you are submitting. In Anglophone journals, the emphasis tends to be placed on contemporary debates and contributions, without necessarily placing these in longer disciplinary and conceptual genealogies. This might differ from approaches in Portuguese and Spanish-language journals, where more extensive genealogical framings are common, if not expected. In turn, these different ways of framing contributions shape what is understood as originality in Portuguese, Spanish and English-language journals and academic cultures. Although debates housed in publication circuits of the global North have long dominated Anglophone journals, peer reviewers and editors are slowly beginning to recognise the need to incorporate debates from Latin America or elsewhere that may not fully overlap with the former. Nevertheless, pragmatically, it is important to recognise the persistence of this bias if wishing to publish in an Anglophone journal, since failure to engage sufficiently with debates appearing in these journals is likely to lead to a rejection. That said, if you are writing *about* a Latin American topic, a failure to cite any academic literature from the region is unacceptable and unlikely to escape critical comment from referees, leading at best to a need for revision.

Journal articles tend to follow a standard structure. When writing, the conceptual framing should be linked to your methodology, findings and discussion in a particular way, although how exactly this is done will vary depending on the kind of information you are analysing and the conventions of various geographical subfields. For example, in Anglophone journals, cultural geography and adjacent subfields are likely to favour more essay-like

structures; physical geography usually entails a clearer distinction between methods, findings and discussion. In any case, referees and editors will expect to see a clear discussion of your approach and/or methods, as this is crucial in assessing the strength of your argument and contribution. The conclusion should not merely repeat what you have already said: it should elaborate on the significance and implications of your argument. It is a good idea to check articles published in the journal in question to familiarise yourself with the preferred structure.

Style conventions can differ significantly between Portuguese, Spanish and English-language journals. Anglophone journals mostly prefer a direct, explicit style of writing, using plain, everyday terms rather than a preponderance of vague abstractions. Connections are expected to be clearly made for readers. Academic English also tends to avoid the passive voice. Human geography journals generally accept the use of personal pronouns, although some journals and subfields may expect a more impersonal style. Most authors will use “I” and only “we” when it is a multiple authored article, an important distinction from Portuguese and Spanish language. As with structure, it is a good idea to study articles published in the journal of interest to familiarise yourself with style conventions, especially if you are writing in a language which is not your first.

iv. Preparing to submit your manuscript

Before submitting your manuscript, you must ensure that it meets the formatting requirements of the journal. These can usually be found on the journal website on a page entitled ‘Author Guidelines’ (or similar). This page will provide basic information about formatting requirements, like font and text size. They will also specify the house style for citations and bibliographic references and, crucially, the word limit.

Journals tend to be strict about word limits, so it is very important to avoid going even slightly over. References, in particular, can take up a surprisingly large number of words, and are generally included in the permitted word count (unless otherwise specified), so great caution should be exercised rather than crashing the word limit and then having to spend a long time revising a draft to bring the word limit down. A failure to observe the word limit may result in a manuscript either being returned to the author for shortening and resubmission, leading to delays in the review process, or, at worst, immediately rejected (**desk rejection**) without review.

You will also be expected to provide a title, key words (usually up to five or six) and an abstract of a specified length. Articles submitted for review should never include the name of the author(s), and self-citations within the text should usually be anonymised. However, you may be asked to provide a ‘title page’ – a separate one-page document that includes key article information (title, abstract, key words) and the author’s name and affiliation – or a separate copy of the manuscript with this additional information. You may also be asked to include a cover letter to the editor(s), where you provide a (usually very brief) description of the paper or a concise statement of its intended contribution and suitability for the journal.

When formulating your title, **keywords**, and abstract, remember that these are the main ways readers unfamiliar with your work will locate your work. This information appears on large journal databases, where people will search for work published on a particular topic. The title and keywords should therefore seek to reflect the topic as accurately as possible, while also using interesting terms related to the field addressed that will help to attract attention. Abstracts should clearly and succinctly summarise the article’s topic, approach and key findings.

It can be surprisingly difficult to write a good abstract, but it is worth dedicating time to doing so, as, again, it is one of the main ways to attract potential readers.

The abstract is particularly important. From an editor's perspective, the title and abstract are key to identifying suitable peer reviewers and determining whether a manuscript should proceed to full review. A poorly written abstract can therefore be a major obstacle at an early stage of the editorial process. An abstract should summarise the paper rather than simply introduce it. A useful structure for an abstract is: (1) briefly state the problem or research context; (2) explain the paper's purpose and contribution to the literature; (3) indicate the approach, methods or evidence used; and (4) summarise the main argument or findings. When writing the abstract, it can be helpful to think from the perspective of a potential reviewer or reader encountering the paper for the first time. From the abstract alone, they should be able to identify the topic, theoretical or subdisciplinary perspective, methodological approach, and the debates with which the article engages. A clear and well-structured abstract will make it easier for editors to identify reviewers and will increase the likelihood that readers searching journal databases will discover and engage with your work.

In order to submit your article, you will have to navigate a journal portal. These vary between journals and can be tricky to use. You will have to create an account and provide personal information, such as name, affiliation and contact details. You will also need to provide information about the manuscript, including title, abstract, key words, funding information (where relevant) and acknowledgements. You will then be asked to upload your document (usually in Microsoft Word or a similar format) along with a cover page (where applicable), and any figures (such as maps, graphs or photos) you plan to use. There will be requirements about image resolution and, if the article is

accepted, you will need to have copyright permission to use any figures you did not produce yourself. You will need to provide numbers and captions for figures and tables, and to indicate where they should be inserted in the text.

Although submission portals vary significantly from journal to journal, there are today no major differences between different national contexts. One minor difference is that Portuguese- and Spanish-language journals will often require titles, key words and abstracts to be provided both in the language of the article and in at least one other specified language. With a few exceptions, this is usually not the case in Anglophone journals. Navigating submission portals can be confusing but using them becomes less daunting with experience.

v. The peer review process

Formal refereeing processes in Anglophone and Portuguese- and Spanish-language journals are almost identical. These involve four stages: pre-screening, refereeing, editorial decision-making and, once revisions are completed, final acceptance or rejection of the article. Pre-screening involves journal editors assessing whether the manuscript is suitable for the journal. This includes considerations related to style, substance, length, quality, approach and fit. It is rare to receive extensive comments if your manuscript is rejected at this stage.

The second step is refereeing. Editors will select potential referees, although some might ask you for suitable referees at the moment of submission. Double-blind peer-review is the most common refereeing method. It is usual for Anglophone journals to seek two to three **referee reports**, although final editorial decisions may require fewer. Referees should advise editors on the quality and suitability of your manuscript. To do so, they will write a critical appraisal, which can sometimes be tough, especially if referees believe you have not substantiated your

points sufficiently or you have missed the point. It is important for you to take these critical comments on board, as they can often help you improve your argument and presentation.

While most referees should point out errors in your writing, some might do so in ways that you consider to be unwarranted and/or missing the point. If that is the case, you can approach the journal editors with your concerns, but this is a response to be used very occasionally and only after careful reflection and consultation with others. When the critiques are related to language, it might be useful to reach out to your academic networks for volunteer proofreaders, preferably native speakers, who can help you write your article in a clear and accurate way. A difficult decision for those paying for professional translation is when to do this: for the initial submission? or following a major revision? This will depend on your level of competence in the language in question but remains a concern.

There are usually four main recommendations open for referees: 1) accept; 2) **minor revisions**; 3) **major revisions**; and 4) reject. Once the editor has sufficient feedback, they will communicate and explain their editorial decision to you in a letter. This letter might include a list of suggested changes. In cases where referee reports vary widely, you will usually receive clear guidance on how to address and respond to the recommendations. Once revised, your article might be sent back to one or more of the original referees. In some cases, you might be asked to respond to further recommendations and suggested changes.

If you receive minor or major revisions, you should consider them seriously. Doing so will help you develop your article further, strengthening its main arguments and contribution. This is also the case when you feel the referee has missed the point, as there might be ways for you to explain your argument or idea more clearly, even if not in

the way that the referee has recommended.

Once you have revised your manuscript, you can submit an updated version to the journal using the same submission portal. You should also upload a letter, addressed to the editor, where you explain the changes you have made, how these respond to suggestions and recommendations, and how doing so has helped you develop your manuscript. This does not mean you must accept all the suggested changes and recommendations, as you can disagree with them, explaining clearly and thoroughly why this is the case. It is however unwise to contest most of the recommendations, especially when referees have agreed with each other (they do not, of course, know who the other referees are). Referees will usually be able to read this letter, so it is important that it is specific, clear and carefully written. Some journals might have specific instructions on how to structure this letter. Others might ask you to submit a copy of the manuscript where you highlight changes and one where you do not. It is always important to make sure you follow any such instructions.

Your article will only be accepted once the editor and referees are satisfied with the revisions made. You will receive a formal acknowledgement of acceptance and your article will move to the production stage. In Anglophone journals, production tends to be managed by the publisher. This usually involves little contact with you until the proofs of the article are sent. These are the final version of your article and will include a list of queries by the production editor. Queries might refer to style and grammar issues, to the placement of figures and tables and other such issues. They will almost certainly include queries about the references, so it is worth getting the bibliographic information right at the outset. Re-writing is otherwise discouraged, and major changes are certainly not to be made at this stage. Once the proof-reading is complete and your responses have been accepted, the article will be published.

Articles are often published online ahead of print, although not all journals proceed this way.

Finally, it is important to consider that major revisions and rejection are the likeliest outcomes for all authors; they cannot be appealed. Receiving these decisions is not a comment on your ability or worth as an author.

Ideally, it should be an appraisal of your article's quality or fit and an opportunity to improve it. This is the case not only for major revisions but also for rejections. Often, rejected articles can be improved using referees' and editors' recommendations and then submitted to a different journal. When doing so, consider how your manuscript fits the new journal, and make sure to adapt it according to the guidelines and stylistic conventions as necessary.

Glossary of terms

Abstract: A short summary of a journal article, usually between 150 and 250 words, that outlines the research problem, the paper's contribution, the approach or methods used, and the main argument or findings. Abstracts appear in journal databases and search engines and are often the first part of the article that potential readers encounter.

Aims and Scope: A section on a journal's website describing the topics, approaches, disciplines and types of contributions the journal seeks to publish. Authors should consult a journal's aims and scope to determine whether or not their manuscript is a good fit before submitting.

Author Publication Charge (APC): A fee charged by some journals to publish an article, most commonly in open access or hybrid journals. APCs are typically paid by the author's institution or research funder and are intended to cover publication costs when articles are made freely available.

Author guidelines (or Submission guidelines): Instructions provided by a journal describing how manuscripts should be prepared and submitted. These typically include requirements regarding formatting, word count limits, referencing style, figures, and the submission process.

Desk-rejection: A decision made by a journal editor to reject the paper rather than send it to external peer reviewers. This decision often occurs when the paper is judged not to fit the journal's scope

Double-blind peer review: A peer review process in which both the authors and the reviewers remain anonymous to each other. This system aims to reduce bias by ensuring that reviewers evaluate the manuscript without knowing the identity or institutional affiliation of the author(s).

H-index: A metric used to measure the research impact of an individual scholar. A researcher has an H-index of h if they have published h papers that have each been cited at least h times. It is commonly calculated through databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus or Web of Science.

Impact Factor: A metric used to estimate the average number of citations received by articles published in a journal over a defined period, usually two years. It is often used as a proxy for journal prestige, although it is widely criticised as an imperfect measure of research quality.

Keywords: A small set of terms (usually five or six) provided in addition to the abstract of the article that describe its main topics, themes or concepts. Keywords help readers locate articles through search engines and journal databases.

Minor revisions: A decision from journal editors indicating that a manuscript is broadly acceptable but requires relatively small changes before it can be published. These revisions might involve clarifying arguments, improving structure, correcting references or addressing specific reviewer comments.

Major revisions: A decision indicating that a manuscript has potential but requires substantial changes before it can be reconsidered for publication. This may involve reworking arguments, expanding analysis, strengthening engagement with literature or providing additional evidence.

Open access: A publishing model in which articles are freely available online without subscription barriers. Some open access journals charge authors an Article Processing Charge (APC), while others are funded by institutions, associations or public bodies.

Referee: An expert scholar invited by a journal editor to review and evaluate a manuscript submitted for publication. Referees assess the quality, originality, clarity and suitability of the paper and provide recommendations to the editor.

Referee/reviewer report: The written evaluation provided by a referee during the peer review process. Reviewer reports typically include comments on the manuscript's strengths and weaknesses and recommendations for acceptance, revision or rejection.

Special issue: A collection of journal articles organised around a specific theme or topic and usually coordinated by guest editors. Articles in special issues normally go through the same peer review process as regular submissions.

Turnaround time: The average time between submission of a manuscript and receiving the first editorial decision. Journals sometimes report typical turnaround times on their websites.



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