eLife assessments

Survey Flow

Standard: information (1 Question)

Standard: consent (1 Question)

Standard: instructions (3 Questions)

BlockRandomizer: 4 - Evenly Present Elements

Standard: elife\_signif (6 Questions)

Standard: elife\_support (7 Questions)

Standard: alt\_import (6 Questions)

Standard: alt\_support (6 Questions)

Standard: attention\_checking (2 Questions)

Standard: debriefing (1 Question)

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| Page Break |  |

Start of Block: information

information\_sheet

Please read through the information below and then click 'next' at the bottom of the page.  
   
 **Plain language summary  
   
 Project**: Finding the right words to describe scientific studies  
   
 **Responsible Researcher**: Dr. Tom Hardwicke  
 **Tel**: +61383444000  
 **Email**: tom.hardwicke@unimelb.edu.au  
   
 **Additional Researcher**: Prof. Simine Vazire  
 **Email**: simine.vazire@unimelb.edu.au   
 **Introduction** Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following page will provide you with further information about the project, so that you can decide if you would like to take part in this research.  
   
 Please take the time to read this information carefully. You may ask questions (tom.hardwicke@unimelb.edu.au) about anything you don’t understand or want to know more about.  
   
 Your participation is voluntary. If you don’t wish to take part, you don’t have to. If you begin participating, you can also stop at any time.

**What is this research about?** We are studying how people perceive words used to describe scientific studies so we can improve communication of research to the general public.

**What will I be asked to do?** Should you agree to participate, you will be shown words or short paragraphs that describe scientific studies. You will then be asked to tell us about your perception of those studies, for example, how significant you think the findings are or how strong you think the findings are.

**What are the possible benefits?** The research may help to improve the communication of scientific research. In compensation for your time, you will receive £2.60 upon completion of the study.

**What are the possible risks?** There are no anticipated risks involved in this research.

**Do I have to take part?** No. Participation is completely voluntary. You can withdraw at any time. Note that if you decided to withdraw after completing the study, it will not be possible to delete the response data you have contributed. This is because we are not collecting any identifying information, so we cannot link individuals to the data they contributed.

**Will I hear about the results of this project?** Upon completion, a report describing this study will be released on a publicly accessible preprint server (<https://osf.io/preprints/metaarxiv/>) and submitted to a suitable academic journal for publication. Updates on the status of the project can be requested from Dr. Tom Hardwicke (tom.hardwicke@unimelb.edu.au).

**What will happen to information about me?** None of your personal data (such as name, address, or e-mail address) will be collected. To assess whether you are eligible to take part in the study, we have used your previous responses to Prolific's screening questions which establish whether you speak fluent English, whether you are aged between 18–70 years, and whether you have completed your high school diploma / A-levels, or equivalent qualification. We will also record your responses to the word perception task described above. After study completion, the anonymous data collected during this study will be made publicly available in a secure online data repository (the Open Science Framework) and stored in perpetuity in order to facilitate reuse and verification by other scientists.

**Who is funding this project?** The project is supported by internal funds ($AUD 1400) provided by the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences.

**Where can I get further information?** If you would like more information about the project, please contact the researchers: Dr. Tom Hardwicke (tom.hardwicke@unimelb.edu.au) or Prof. Simine Vazire (simine.vazire@unimelb.edu.au).

**Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?** This project has human research ethics approval from The University of Melbourne (Ethics ID number 26411). If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Research Integrity Administrator, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 8344 1376 or Email: [research-integrity@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:research-integrity@unimelb.edu.au). All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team and/or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

End of Block: information

Start of Block: consent

consent\_form

Please read through the information below and then click 'next' at the bottom of the page to provide consent for your participation in the study.  
   
   
   
   
 **Consent form  
   
 Project**: Finding the right words to describe scientific studies  
   
 **Responsible Researcher**: Dr. Tom Hardwicke  
 **Tel**: +61383444000  
 **Email**: tom.hardwicke@unimelb.edu.au  
   
 **Additional Researcher**: Prof. Simine Vazire  
 **Email**: simine.vazire@unimelb.edu.au  
   
 1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.  
   
 2. I understand that the purpose of this research is to investigate how short descriptions of scientific studies are perceived by readers.  
   
 3. I understand that my participation in this project is for research purposes only.  
   
 4. I acknowledge that the possible effects of participating in this research project have been explained to my satisfaction.  
   
 5. In this project I will be required to read short descriptions of scientific studies and share my opinion about them.  
   
 6. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from this project anytime without explanation or prejudice.  
   
 7. I understand that none of my personal data (such as names, addresses or e-mail addresses) will be collected, and this means the data I provide cannot be identified or deleted after the data collection has been completed.  
   
 8. I understand that after completion, the anonymous data collected during this study will be made publicly available in an online data repository in order to facilitate reuse and verification by other scientists.

End of Block: consent

Start of Block: instructions

instructions\_1

Thank you for your participation in this study.   
  
Please ensure you are in a quiet, distraction-free environment before starting the task.   
  
Please give the task your full attention, it will only take about 10 minutes of your time.   
  
Click next to continue.

instructions\_2

Imagine that you visit the website of a scientific journal to read some articles reporting scientific studies. You see that each article is accompanied by a short summary statement expressing the editor’s opinion of the study reported in the article.   
  
We are going to show you 22 statements describing the editor’s opinion of 22 different research studies. For each statement, we’d like you to tell us what you think about a particular aspect of the study using a slider on a scale ranging from 0 to 100%.

practice

Here’s an example before we start. The editor’s summary appears in blue. In this example, your task is to rate how **clearly written** you think the article is based on the editor’s summary statement. You can click and drag the slider to choose your response.   
  
Practice using the slider now and then click next when you are ready to start the study. If you are having technical problems or anything is unclear, please contact tom.hardwicke@unimelb.edu.au  
   
 **Editor's summary**  
   
 This article is very clearly written.  
   
 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
   
 How **clearly written** is the article, according to the editor’s summary?

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End of Block: instructions

Start of Block: elife\_signif

intro\_elife\_signif

You will now see statements about the **significance** of 5 different research studies. These statements represent the journal editor’s opinion about the **significance** of each of the study’s main claims.

landmark\_signif

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This is a landmark study.  
   
 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
   
 How **significant** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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fundamental\_signif

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This is a fundamental study.  
   
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important\_signif

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This is an important study.  
   
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 How **significant** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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valuable\_signif

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This is a valuable study.  
   
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 How **significant** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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useful\_signif

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This is a useful study.  
   
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 How **significant** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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End of Block: elife\_signif

Start of Block: elife\_support

intro\_elife\_support

You will now see statements about the **strength of support** offered by 6 different research studies. These statements represent the journal editor’s opinion about the **strength of support**each study offers towards its main claims.

exceptional\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides exceptional support.  
   
 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
   
 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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compelling\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides compelling support.  
   
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 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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convincing\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides convincing support.  
   
 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
   
 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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solid\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides solid support.  
   
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 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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incomplete\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides incomplete support.  
   
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 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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inadequate\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides inadequate support.  
   
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 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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End of Block: elife\_support

Start of Block: alt\_import

intro\_alt\_import

You will now see statements about the **importance** of 5 different research studies. These statements represent the journal editor’s opinion about the **importance** of each of the study’s main claims.

very\_high\_importance

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study has very high importance.  
   
 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
   
 How **important** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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high\_importance

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study has high importance.  
   
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 How **important** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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moderate\_importance

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study has moderate importance.  
   
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 How **important** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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low\_importance

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study has low importance.  
   
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 How **important** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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very\_low\_importance

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study has very low importance.  
   
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 How **important** is the study, according to the editor’s summary?

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End of Block: alt\_import

Start of Block: alt\_support

intro\_alt\_support

You will now see statements about the **strength of support** offered by 5 different research studies. These statements represent the journal editor’s opinion about the **strength of support** each study offers towards its main claims.

very\_strong\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides very strong support.  
   
 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
   
 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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strong\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides strong support.  
   
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 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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moderate\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides moderate support.  
   
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 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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weak\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides weak support.  
   
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 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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very\_weak\_support

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This study provides very weak support.  
   
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 How much **strength of support** does the study provide, according to the editor’s summary?

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End of Block: alt\_support

Start of Block: attention\_checking

intro\_attention\_chec

You will now see one statement about the **writing clarity** of one research article. This statement represents the journal editor’s opinion about the **writing clarity** of the article.

attention\_check

**Editor's summary**  
   
 This article is poorly written.  
   
 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
   
Please respond with "80%" to indicate that you are paying attention.

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End of Block: attention\_checking

Start of Block: debriefing

debrief

Great job! That's the end of the study. Below you can find more information about the purpose of the study.  
   
   
 **Debriefing**  
   
 **Project**: Finding the right words to describe scientific studies  
   
 **Responsible Researcher**: Dr. Tom Hardwicke  
 **Tel**: +61383444000  
 **Email**: tom.hardwicke@unimelb.edu.au  
   
 **Additional Researchers**: Prof. Simine Vazire  
 **Email**: simine.vazire@unimelb.edu.au  
   
 Thank you for participating in this study investigating how people perceive words used to describe scientific studies. Previous research has found that people tend to perceive the same words in different ways. To avoid miscommunication, its important that we find the right words to describe scientific studies that are interpreted in the same way by different people.  
   
 In the study, we collected your interpretations of a set of words that are currently being used to describe scientific studies by an academic journal called eLife. We also presented you with a different set of words developed by our research team that we think will encourage more consistent interpretations. Ultimately, your contribution will help us to improve the communication of scientific research to the general public.  
   
 This research has been cleared by the Human Research Ethics Committee (ID: 26411). If you have any concerns about this project please contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, The University of Melbourne (Tel: 8344 2073; Fax: 9347 6739).

End of Block: debriefing