The Generic Style Rules for Linguistics: Abridged LangSci version

August 23, 2022

Scientists have certain style rules for structural aspects of their research papers and monographs, which in the past were primarily set and enforced by the academic publishers. But in the 21st century, science is increasingly international and research papers spread easily even without the publishers' copy-editors and style watchers.

This does not mean that there is no need for style rules anymore. It makes our research and our publication activities easier if we agree on a common set of conventions for frequently recurring structural aspects of our writings, of the sort that are commonly prescribed in journal style sheets (such conventions are called TEXT-STRUCTURE style here). But it is inefficient if these rules are set by individual journal editors or publishers, because scientists usually publish in diverse venues, and being forced to apply different style rules in different papers is an unnecessary burden on the authors. If linguists could agree on a set of rules, then linguistics publishers would probably be happy to adopt them sooner or later, because they would no longer have to worry about enforcing their house styles.

For the specific case of formatting rules for bibliographical references, this has already happened: In 2007, a number of linguistics journal editors agreed on a "Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics",[1] and these rules for bibliographical reference style have been widely adopted, not just for journals, but also for linguistics books.

Another aspect of form style has been widely adopted: The Leipzig Glossing Rules for interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glosses.[2] Quite a few journals and publishers now recommend or prescribe their use, and many authors refer to them. The Leipzig Glossing Rules are now typically taught in linguistics classes, and more and more linguists find it normal that knowing them is part of their disciplinary competence.

The following style rules for formal aspects of linguistics papers were formulated in the same spirit. Linguistics papers have been converging in their text-structure style over the last 20 years anyway, and while there are still a number of things that are sometimes done differently, none of the following rules will be particularly controversial. In most cases, the rules reflect majority usage, and none of the rules represents an innovation. Where they do not appear to reflect majority usage, they are always simpler than the majority usage (e.g. eliminating poorly motivated exceptions to general rules). Text- structure style for scientific papers should primarily be practical and can often leave aside purely aesthetic considerations.

The present style rules focus on special conventions for linguistics-specific aspects like numbered example sentences and the representation of expressions from other languages, but also provide guidance for many other aspects of text-structure style

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[1]https://linguistlist.org/pubs/journals
[2]http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php

which should be uniform across a paper (or an edited volume), and probably also across the papers of a journal. The rules do not say anything about more specific notational conventions that are relevant only to certain subcommunities of linguists, e.g. for syntactic tree representation, transcription of spoken dialogue, optimality-theoretic tableaux, and so on. (More specific style documents would be needed for each of these.)

Nothing is said here about typographic features such as font type, font size, indentation and line spacing, let alone about margin and paper size. Traditional journal style sheets often specify these features as well, but such text-design features are aspects of typesetting, not of text structure. There is also nothing here about ("editorial style") matters such as English spelling (e.g. hyphenation), comma use, generic pronoun use or date format, as these are issues that are not specific to linguistics and rarely present problems in editing linguistics papers. The present rules are also different from journal style sheets in that they do not give instructions for submitting a paper for typesetting, but concern the form of a paper as it should look to the reader. The reason for this is that while submission rules will continue to depend on diverse typesetting technologies, there is no reason why linguists should not agree on the way certain formal aspects of their papers should appear to the reader (i.e. on text-structure style).

Occasionally the rules below make reference to some other prominent stylesheets, especially those of the journals *Journal of Linguistics* (Cambridge), *Language* (LSA), *Linguistic Inquiry* (MIT Press), and the "Stylesheet for De Gruyter Mouton journals".[3] There is no systematic comparison, but some cross-references seem useful to make readers aware of certain salient differences between styles.

The Generic Style Rules may be occasionally updated in the future. Readers are invited to send comments to Martin Haspelmath (haspelmath@eva.mpg.de). They are published with a CC-BY licence, so anyone is free to put them on their website.

1 Parts of the text

The text of an article begins with the title, followed by the name of the author.

Articles are preceded by an abstract of 100–300 words. About five keywords are given.

Articles are subdivided into sections. Sections have a heading and are usually numbered. The number 0 never occurs.

More than three levels of subsections should only be used in special circumstances. If this cannot be avoided, unnumbered subsection headings are possible.

The last numbered section may be followed by several optional sections (Sources, Acknowledgements, Abbreviations, in this order), and by one or more sections called Appendix (A, B, etc.).

The last part is the alphabetic list of bibliographical references (References). For the style of references, see §16 below.

If a (sub-)section has (sub-)subsections, there must be minimally two of them, and they must be exhaustive. This means that all text in a chapter must belong to some

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[3] *Journal of Linguistics*: http://assets.cambridge.org/LIN/LIN_ifc.pdf
Language: http://www.linguisticsociety.org/lsa-publications/language
Linguistic Inquiry: http://www.mitpressjournals.org/userimages/ContentEditor/1377619488121/LI_Style_Sheet_8.20.13.pdf
De Gruyter Mouton: http://www.degruyter.com/staticfiles/pdfs/mouton_journal_stylesheet.pdf

section, all text within a section must belong to some subsection, and so on. A short introductory paragraph is allowed by way of exception.

Section headings do not end with a period, and have no special capitalization (see §2).

For the parts of monographs and edited volumes, see §17.2 below.

2 Capitalization

Sentences, proper names and titles/headings/captions start with a capital letter, but there is no special capitalization ("title case") within English titles/headings neither in the article title nor in section headings, captions or table headers.[4] Book titles in the references do not have special capitalization either, regardless of the usage in the original publication (but English journal titles and series titles do, as these are treated as proper names). Thus, we have:

> 1.1 Overview of the issues
>> (NOT: Overview of the Issues)
>
> Figure 3. A schematic representation of the workflow
>> (NOT: A Schematic Representation of the Workflow)
>
> Anderson, Gregory. 2006. *Auxiliary verb constructions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
>> (NOT: *Auxiliary Verb Constructions*)

Capitalization is used only for parts of the article (chapters, figures, tables, appendixes) when they are numbered, e.g.

> as shown in Table 5
> more details are given in Chapter 3
> this is illustrated in Figure 17

Capitalization is also used after the colon in titles, i.e. for the beginning of subtitles:

> Clyne, Michael (ed.). 1991. *Pluricentric languages: Different norms in different nations.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

3 Italics

Italics are used in the following cases:

- For all object-language forms (letters, words, phrases, sentences) that are cited within the text or in numbered examples (see §10). Phonetic transcriptions or phonological representations are not object-language forms.

- For book titles, journal titles, and film titles.

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[4]Note that the title of the present document has special capitalization because the Generic Style Rules for Linguistics is a name.

- When a technical term is referred to metalinguistically (in such contexts, English technical terms are thus treated like object-language forms), e.g.

  the term *quotative* is not appropriate here

  I call this construction *quotative.*

- For emphasis of a particular word that is not a technical term, e.g.

  This is possible here, but *only* here.

- Italics are not used for commonly used loanwords such as ad hoc, façon de parler, e.g., et al., Sprachbund.

- For emphasis within a quotation, with the indication [emphasis mine] at the end of the quotation.

4 Small caps

Small caps are used to draw attention to an important term at its first use or definition,[5] e.g.

On this basis, the two main alignment types, namely NOMINATIVE-ACCUSATIVE and ERGATIVE-ABSOLUTIVE, are distinguished.

Small caps are also used for category abbreviations in interlinear glossing (see §8, §10), and they may be used to indicate stress or focusing in example sentences:

(1) *John called Mary a Republican and then* SHE *insulted* HIM.

5 Boldface and other highlighting

Boldface is generally not used. The only exception is to draw the reader's attention to particular aspects of a linguistic example, whether given within the text or as a numbered example. An illustration is the relative pronoun *dem* in (4) in §10 below.

ALLCAPS and underlining are not normally used for highlighting. Exceptionally, underlining may be used to highlight a single letter in an example word, and in other cases where other kinds of highlighting would not work.

6 Quotation marks

Single quotation marks are used exclusively for linguistic meanings (glosses, translations). Double quotation marks are used for all other cases (citations, scare quotes):

- When a passage from another work is cited in the text, e.g.[6]

  According to Takahashi (2009: 33), "quotatives were never used in subordinate clauses in Old Japanese".

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[5]This is in line with the Language stylesheet. The De Gruyter stylesheet requires italics for this purpose.
[6]But note that blockquotes do not have quotation marks.

- When a technical term or other expression is mentioned that the author does not want to adopt,[7] e.g.

  This is sometimes called "pseudo-conservatism", but I will not use this term here, as it could lead to confusion.

Single quotation marks are used exclusively for linguistic meanings,[8] e.g.

  Latin *habere* 'have' is not cognate with Old English *hafian* 'have'.

Quotes within quotes are not treated in a special way.

Note that quotations from other languages should be translated (inline if they are short, in a footnote if they are longer).

7 Other punctuation matters

The n-dash (–) surrounded by spaces is used for parenthetical remarks – as in this example – rather than the m-dash (—). The n-dash is also used for number ranges, but not surrounded by spaces (e.g. 1995–1997).

Ellipsis in a quotation is indicated by ....

Angle brackets are used for specific reference to written symbols, e.g. the letter ⟨q⟩.

8 Abbreviations

Abbreviations of uncommon expressions should be avoided in the text. Language names should not normally be abbreviated.

The use of abbreviations is desirable for grammatical category labels in interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme translations. (The Leipzig Glossing Rules include a standard list of frequently used and widely understood category label abbreviations.)

When a complex term that is not widely known is referred to frequently, it may be abbreviated (e.g. DOC for "double-object construction"). The abbreviation should be given both in the text when it is first used and at the end of the article in the *Abbreviations* section.

Abbreviations of uncommon expressions are not used in headings or captions, and they should be avoided at the beginning of a chapter or major section.

9 In-text citation

Please see the Unified Style Sheet:
https://www.linguisticsociety.org/resource/unified-style-sheet.

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[7] Alternatively, italics could be used here.

[8] The distinction between single and double quotation marks is not made by *Language* and *Journal of Linguistics*, but is very useful and is practiced widely (e.g. required by the *Linguistic Inquiry* and De Gruyter Mouton stylesheets).

10 Numbered examples

A hallmark of many linguistics articles is the use of numbered examples. Unless they are from English (or more generally, the language of the article), they must be glossed and translated. Glossing refers to the use of interlinear word-by-word or morpheme-by- morpheme translations, as described in detail in the Leipzig Glossing Rules.

Example numbers are enclosed in parentheses. When there are multiple examples ("sub-examples") under a single number, they are distinguished by the letters a, b, etc.

(2)   a.   *She saw him.*
      b.   *He saw her.*

But when a numbered example is not glossed and translated (i.e. in English works, when it is from English), it may be in roman (non-italic) type. Thus, (2a-b) could alternatively be printed in roman.

Cross-references to examples use numbers in parentheses as well,[9] but when a cross-reference occurs inside parentheses, the parentheses around the numbers can be omitted:

> As shown in (6) and (8-11), this generalization extends to transitive constructions, but (29b) below constitutes an exception.

> In all other environments, the stress is on the second syllable (see 15a-d).

When an example is from a language other than the language of the main text, it is provided with an interlinear gloss (with word-by-word alignment) in the second line, as well as with an idiomatic translation in the third line, e.g.

(3)   *Storm-ur-inn*   *rak*   *bát-inn*   *á land.*   (Icelandic)
      storm-NOM-DET drove boat.ACC-DET on land
      'The storm drove the boat ashore.'

The precise conventions for interlinear glossing are given in the Leipzig Glossing Rules, which have become a worldwide standard. The most important principle is that each element of the primary text corresponds to an element in the gloss line, and boundary symbols (especially the word-internal boundary symbol - and the clitic boundary symbol =) have to be present both in the primary text and in the gloss. Abbreviated category labels are set in small capitals, and the idiomatic translation is surrounded by single quotes. A list of abbreviations is provided at the end of the article (or at the beginning of a monograph).

Example sentences usually have normal capitalization at the beginning and normal punctuation (usually a period) at the end. The gloss line has no capitalization and no punctuation. The idiomatic translation again has normal capitalization and punctuation, as seen in (3) above. When the example is not a complete sentence, as in (4), there is no capitalization and no punctuation.

(4)   *das Kind,*   ***dem***   *du*   *geholfen hast*   (German)
      the child.NOM who.DAT you.NOM helped   have
      'the child that you helped'

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[9]This is the most widespread practice, although the Language stylesheet omits the parentheses in cross-references.

When the language is not normally used as a written language, the primary text may lack initial capitalization and normal punctuation, e.g.

(5) Hatam
a-yai   bi-dani mem di-ngat i
2SG-get to-me   for   1SG-see Q
'Would you give it to me so that I can see it?' (Reesink 1999: 69)

When multiple languages are mentioned in a single text, the name of the language may be given to the right of the example (as in 3-4), or in the line next to the example number, as in (5) and (6a-b).

(6) Sakha
   a. *En   bytaan buol-uoq-uŋ*
      you slow   be-FUT-2SG
     'You will be slow.' (Baker 2012: 7)
   b. * *En   bytaan-yaq-yŋ*
      you slow-FUT-2SG
     ('You will be slow.') (Baker 2012: 7)

Ungrammatical examples can be given a parenthesized idiomatic translation, as in (6b). A literal translation may be given in parentheses after the idiomatic translation, e.g.

(7) Japanese
Tsukue no   ue ni hon   ga aru.
table   GEN top at book SBJ be
'There is a book on the table.' (Lit. 'At the top of the table is a book.')

The object-language text may be given in two lines, one unanalyzed ("surface") line, and an analyzed line, which may contain a more abstract representation, e.g.

(8) Karbi
amatlo   la   kroikrelo
amāt=lo   là   krōi-Cē-lò
and.then=FOC this agree-NEG-RL
'And then, she disagreed.' (Konnerth 2014: 286)

Square brackets (e.g. to indicate constituents) are never set in italics, even when the text is in italics.

11   Source indications

All numbered examples should have a source with the exception of trivial sentences. These sources are standardly given directly after the idiomatic translation, as in the following examples (see also (5-6) and (8) above):

(9) Luganda
Maama a-wa-dde   taata ssente.
Mother she.PRS-give-PRF father money
'Mother has given father money.' (Ssekiryango 2006: 67)

(10) Jalonke

I sig-aa xon-ee ma.
2SG go-IPFV stranger-DET at
'You are going to the stranger.' [Mburee 097]

When the source is not a bibliographical reference, but is the name of a text or corpus (perhaps unpublished), as in (10), the source is given in square brackets and the article must contain a special section at the end where more information about the sources is given. (When the source indication is unique and quite long, it may of course alternatively be given in a footnote, e.g. when it is a long URL.)

12   Tables and figures

Tables and figures are numbered consecutively (Table 1, Table 2; Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.). Each table must be mentioned in the running text and identified by its number. They appear in the text as close as possible to the place where they are mentioned.

Each table and each figure has a caption. The caption precedes a table and follows a figure. If it is not a complete sentence, it is not followed by a period.

Tables generally have a top line and a bottom line plus a line below the column headers, e.g.

Table 1: Frequency of some English nouns (BNC)

SG		PL		% of SG
person	24671	persons	4034	86%
house	49295	houses	9840	83%
hare	488	hares	136	78%
bear	1182	bears	611	65%
feather	48 7	feathers	810	38%

Footnotes should not be used in Tables. There relevant information should be either given in the running text or in the caption.

13   Cross-references in the text

Cross-references to chapters, tables, figures or footnotes use the capitalized names for these items (e.g. Chapter 4, Section 5, Figure 3, Table 2, Footnote 17). Abbreviations like "Fig. 3", "Ch. 4", or "n. 17" are not used.

Cross-references to sections can optionally use the § character (e.g. §2.3).

14   Footnotes

Superscript footnote numbers follow punctuation, though exceptionally it may follow an individual word.

Footnote numbers start with 1. The acknowledgements are printed as a separate section following the body of the text, not as a footnote. Likewise, abbreviations and other notational conventions are given in a separate section (following the acknowledgements, see §1 above).

Numbered examples in footnotes have the numbers (i), (ii), etc. If there are sub-examples, they have the numbers (i.a), (i.b), etc.

15   Non-Latin scripts

All forms in languages that are not normally written with the Latin alphabet (such as Japanese or Armenian) should (additionally) be given in transcription or transliteration.

When the article is entirely about a particular language, the original script should not be omitted, at least in numbered examples.

Non-Latin forms need not be printed in italics.

16   List of references

The list of references at the end of an article has the heading References (or Bibliography at the end of a monograph). The entries are listed alphabetically.

16.1   General points

For the formatting, the Generic Style Rules follow the 2007 Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics in almost all respects.

It should be noted especially that

- the names of authors and editors should be given in their full form as in the publication, without truncation of given names (but note that some authors habitually use initials only, e.g. J. K. Rowling and R. M. W. Dixon; these count as full)

- page numbers are obligatory

- journal titles are not abbreviated

- main title and subtitle are separated by a colon, not by a period.

16.2   General formatting rules

Additional nonstandard parts may follow the reference in parentheses.

16.3   Optional parts

The book title may be followed by series information (series title plus series number), given in parentheses:

> Lahiri, Aditi (ed.). 2000. *Analogy, leveling, markedness: Principles of change in phonology and morphology* (Trends in Linguistics 127). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Series titles have special capitalization, like journal titles (see §2).

16.4   Author surnames and given names

Surnames with internal complexity are never treated in a special way. [10] Thus, Dutch or German surnames that begin with van or von (e.g. van Riemsdijk) or French and Dutch surnames that begin with with de (e.g. de Groot) are treated just like Belgian surnames (e.g. De Schutter) and Italian surnames (e.g. Da Milano) and are alphabetized under the first part, even though they begin with a lower-case letter. Thus, the following names are sorted alphabetically (i.e. mechanically) as indicated.

> Da Milano, Federica
> de Groot, Casper
> De Schutter, Georges
> de Saussure, Ferdinand
> …
> van der Auwera, Johan
> Van Langendonck, Willy
> van Riemsdijk, Henk
> von Humboldt, Wilhelm

When they occur in the prose text, they are not treated in a special way either, i.e. they have lower case unless they occur at the begining of a sentence (this is in line with the French and German practice,[11] but in contrast to the Dutch practice), e.g.

> as has been claimed by van Riemsdijk & Williams (1981)

Chinese and Korean names may be treated in a special way: As the surnames are often not very distinctive, the full name may be given in the in-text citation, e.g.

> the neutral negation *bù* is compatible with stative and activity verbs (cf. Teng Shou-hsin 1973; Hsieh Miao-Ling 2001; Lin Jo-wang 2003)

16.5   Internet publications

Regular publications that are available online are not treated in a special way, as this applies to more and more publications anyway.

When citing a web resource that is not a regular scientific publication, this should be treated like a book, to the extent that this is possible, e.g.

> Native Languages of the Americas. 1998–2014. *Vocabulary in Native American languages: Salish words.* (http://www.native-languages.org/salish_words.htm) (Accessed 2014-12-02.)

Internet publications should list the DOI if it is available. In these cases, the URL is not listed.

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[10]This is a simplification over the 2007 Unified Style Sheet, which treats "names with von, van, de, etc." in a special way.

[11]With classical authors such as de Saussure and von Humboldt, the first part of the name can be (and is often) omitted. But this is not possible with modern names (e.g. von Heusinger, never *Heusinger).

16.6 Miscellaneous

Books may include a volume number, separated from the book title by a comma:

> Rissanen, Matti. 1999. Syntax. In Lass, Roger (ed.), *Cambridge history of the English language*, vol. 3, 187–331. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

And there may be information about the edition, following the book title:

> Croft, William. 2003. *Typology and universals*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

If a publisher is associated with several cities, only the first one needs to be given, e.g. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, or Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Other nonstandard types of information may follow the standard parts in parentheses, e.g.

> Mayerthaler, Willi. 1988. *Morphological naturalness*. Ann Arbor: Karoma. (Translation of Mayerthaler 1981.)

Titles of works written in a language that readers cannot be expected to know may be accompanied by a translation, given in brackets:

> Haga, Yasushi. 1998. *Nihongo no shakai shinri* [Social psychology in the Japanese language]. Tokyo: Ningen no Kagaku Sha.

> Li, Rulong. 1999. *Minnan fangyan de daici* [Demonstrative and personal pronouns in Southern Min]. In Li, Rulong & Chang, Song-Hing (eds). Daici [Demonstrative and personal pronouns], 263–287. Guangzhou: Ji'nan University Press.

If the title is not only in a different language, but also in a different script, it may be given in the original script, in addition to the transliteration (following it in parentheses). Likewise, the name of the author may be given in the original script, as follows:

> Plungian, Vladimir A. (Плунгян, Владимир А.) 2000. *Obščaja morfologija: Vvedenie v problematiku* (Общая морфология: Введение в проблематику) [General morphology: Introduction to the issues]. Moskva: URSS.

> Chen, Shu-chuan (陳淑娟). 2013. Taibei Shezi fangyan de yuyin bianyi yu bianhua (台北社子方 言的語音變異與變化) [The sound variation and change of Shezi dialect in Taipei city]. *Language and Linguistics* 14(2). 371–408.

The place of publication is a city. Extra information about larger bodies (countries (Paris, France), states (Los Angeles, CA), provinces (Vancouver, BC)) is not given.

17 Rules for monographs and edited volumes

17.1 Parts of books

Books (as well as dissertations and other theses) consist of the following parts (with optional parts in parentheses): title page, colophon page, (dedication page,) contents, (acknowledgements or preface, abbreviations or notational conventions,) chapter 1, chapter 2, etc., appendix A, appendix B, etc., bibliography, name index, (language index,), subject index.

Books may also group the chapters into parts (Part I, Part II, etc). A new part does not start a new chapter numbering. Parts mainly serve to provide orientation in the table of contents.

17.2 Monographs vs. edited volumes

Chapters of edited books are preceded by an abstract, like journal articles, but chapters of monographs are not accompanied by an abstract.

Edited books are treated like a collection of journal articles, i.e. each article has its own list of references and abbreviations, so that the articles can be read and understood independently.

Chapters in edited volumes are numbered like chapters in monographs, but the chapter number is not contained in the section number, i.e. Section 2 of Chapter 5 is §2, not §5.2.

17.3 Table of contents

The table of contents (called Contents) lists the chapters, chapter sections and subsections (indented and preceded by their numbers) and gives the corresponding page numbers.

17.4 Cross-references

While articles (including articles in edited volumes) refer only to sections within the same article, monographs may refer to chapters and sections within the same book, and to sections within the same chapter. Note that when referring to parts of a book, §2.3 means §3 of Chapter 2.

17.5 Numbering tables and figures

In monographs, the numbers of tables and figures are preceded by the chapter number. Thus, the second table in Chapter 3 is Table 3.2.

This rule does not apply to chapters in edited volumes, as the chapter numbers are not salient here.

17.6 Bibliographical references

When a self-standing chapter in an edited book contains a reference to another chapter in the same book, the referred-to chapter is listed in the references in the normal way, as if it were published in a different place. However, the in-text citation may contain the additional comment [in this volume] in brackets, e.g.

As explained by Li & Kim (2015 [this volume]), it is often useful to...