

Guidelines for Written Papers

5th edition

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Table of contents

1. Overview	4
1.1. Where and how to hand in your paper	4
1.2. Length	4
1.3. What to hand in and what your paper consists of	4
1.4. Layout	5
1.5. Plagiarism & use of AI	5
2. Structure	6
2.1. Title page	6
2.2. Table of Contents	6
2.3. Introduction (about 1 page)	6
2.4. Theoretical background (about 4 pages)	7
2.5. Methodology (about 2 pages)	7
2.6. Analysis and results (3-4 pages)	7
2.7. Discussion (3-4 pages)	8
2.8. Conclusion (about 1 page)	8
2.9. References	8
2.10. Appendix	8
3. References	9
3.1. General information	9
3.2. Citation templates for print and online sources	10
3.2.1. Monographs	10
3.2.2. Edited volumes	10
3.2.3. Chapters in edited volumes	10
3.2.4. Journals and periodicals: Conventional and online only	10
3.2.5. Dissertations and theses	11
3.2.6. Corpora	11
3.2.7. Electronic books	12
3.2.8. Full websites, articles and texts from a website	12
3.2.9. Online encyclopaedias and dictionaries	13
3.2.10. Songs	13
3.2.11. Film	14
3.2.12. TV series episode	14
3.2.13. Video from an online platform (e.g., YouTube)	14
3.3. In-text citation guidelines	15
3.3.1. In-text references	15
3.3.2. Incorporation of direct quotations	16
3.3.3. Second-hand quoting/referencing	17
3.4. Final remarks	17

4. Style/accuracy.....	18
4.1. Academic English	18
4.2. Use of “I”	18
4.3. Readership	18
4.4. Objectivity	18
4.5. Paragraphing.....	18
4.6. Vagueness.....	18
4.7. Dictionary/encyclopaedia entries	19
4.8. Numbers and percentages	19
4.9. Abbreviations.....	19
4.10. Spelling and punctuation	19
4.11. Citing e-books and other sources found online	19
4.12. Further recommendations	19
5. Appendix.....	20
5.1. Sample Introduction.....	20
5.2. Sample Conclusion	21
5.3. Sample title page	23

1. Overview

1.1. Where and how to hand in your paper

- There is a **fixed deadline** which you will be told about in your courses. There are no exceptions!
- **Printed version:** to be handed in at the office of the student helpers (Hilfskraftzimmer, 5 E 24), or to be sent by post (date of postmark counts). There is no need for term papers to be bound. You can simply tack your pages together with a paperclip or put them in a folder.
- **Electronic version:** as word document and pdf to sprawi.hausarbeit@uni-wuerzburg.de
- Please send both documents as one file each (i.e., ONE pdf-file and ONE word document). Don't send appendices and forms separately but include them in the respective file.
- Please label your files in the following way: "name of course_your last name_last name of lecturer".
- Make sure to confirm that you received [information about plagiarism](#) and sign your "[Selbstständigkeitserklärung](#)".
- Include the **confirmation of registration** from WueStudy.

1.2. Length

Please note that we are counting the words (NOT pages) of the written text of term papers. Tables and figures are excluded, as are overly used direct quotes. When handing in your term paper, please indicate the number of words at the end of the text body of your electronic version – be aware that we may countercheck your numbers.

BACHELOR UND LEHRAMT	NUMBER OF WORDS	NUMBER OF PAGES
Hausarbeit	4000 - 6000	10 - 15
BA Thesis/Zulassungsarbeit		max. 40

MA ENGLISH-SPEAKING CULTURES 45/120	NUMBER OF WORDS	NUMBER OF PAGES
Module	ca. 8000	ca. 20
MA Thesis		min. 80
MA ALLG. UND ANGEW. SPRACHWISSENSCHAFT 45/120	NUMBER OF WORDS	NUMBER OF PAGES
Module	6000	15
MA Thesis		ca. 70

1.3. What to hand in and what your paper consists of

Please make sure to hand in every component of your paper. Note that you alone are responsible for the completeness of your paper and cannot rely on your lecturer getting back to you if there is something missing.

- a) Confirmation of registration from WueStudy
- b) Title page (see appendix of this document)
- c) Table of Contents
- d) Running text
- e) References (according to the *American Psychological Association Publication Manual* (7th ed.))
- f) Appendix
- g) Selbstständigkeitserklärung (see [template](#) on the homepage of the English department)

1.4. Layout

- margins: 2.5 cm at top and bottom and on both sides of the sheet
- spacing: 1.5 line spacing
- font: e.g., Times New Roman in 12 pt
- use justification (Blocksatz)
- number your pages (start with “1” on the first page of your “Introduction”; if you don’t know how to do this in *Microsoft Word* or *Open Office* there is a number of tutorials on *YouTube*)
- use italics for words or phrases that you include as examples in the text, e.g., “The word *representation* is a noun.”
- use footnotes only for additional information, not for your sources

1.5. Plagiarism & use of AI

Plagiarism is a serious offence. If your term paper contains plagiarised material, you will fail the course. **Any form of plagiarism means you fail. No mercy.**

Please read the “[Merkblatt Plagiat](#)” for further information. You will have to confirm on your [Selbständigkeitserklärung](#) (a) that you have read and understood the information on plagiarism and (b) that your term paper does not contain any plagiarised material. Without your signature your term paper will not be accepted.

Please pay attention to the section on artificial intelligence (AI):

- Do not use any AI tools unless your lecturer has allowed it. Using them without previous authorization is considered cheating and results in failing the exam. Again, please note that you have to sign and submit the [Selbständigkeitserklärung](#), in which you declare this.
- If your lecturer allows the use of AI, make sure to disclose how exactly you used AI in your paper, for instance by adding a footnote at the beginning of the written text.

2. Structure

2.1. Title page

Have a look at the template (see appendix of this document).

2.2. Table of Contents

- Put your table of contents on a separate sheet and number all sections and subsections. Page reference has to be given. The first page of your “Introduction” receives page number “1”.
- Make sure that your table of contents mirrors the general structure of your term paper. You can either integrate the standard chapter titles into more individual headings (see example below) or use them on their own.
- The heading of a chapter starts with a capital initial letter and continues in small letters.

Example of a term paper on *Requests by German Learners of English – The British English or American English Way?*

Table of contents	
1. Introduction	1
2. Variational pragmatics and requests: Theoretical background	2
2.1. Speech acts from a cross-cultural and variational pragmatics point of view	2
2.2. Requests as face-threatening: Insights from politeness research	3
2.3. Previous research on American English and British English requests	4
2.4. Variation in learner requests	5
3. Methodology: Using a DCT to elicit learner requests	5
4. Requests by German learners of English	7
4.1. Head acts	8
4.2. Internal and external modification	10
5. Discussion: Does American English or British English serve as a model for requests by German learners of English?	12
6. Conclusion	15
References	16
Appendix	

2.3. Introduction (about 1 page)¹

- Tell your reader what your paper is about and outline your motivation for writing this paper.
 - Identify a research gap and provide justifications for the relevance of your work.
Nota Bene: Make sure to clearly illustrate what your paper is about from the beginning! Your introduction should not contain very general statements, such as “Language is one of the most important tools of human communication, especially in times of globalisation.”, and your motivation is not about personal interest in the topic but should be developed on the basis of a literature review (part of the section "[Theoretical background \(about 4 pages\)](#)".)
 - Introduce/state your research question(s) and hypotheses.
 - Give a brief account of your approach; more details should be given in the methodology section.
 - Briefly outline the structure of your paper to guide your reader through the chapters.
- What do you intend to investigate and why?
- How are you going to deal with the topic?
- What is the structure of your term paper?

¹ Number of pages per section relates to the length of a 15-page term paper.

2.4. Theoretical background (about 4 pages)

- Give detailed background information on your topic.
e.g., a study on the spread of the progressive in Late Modern English → give some information on language change in Late Modern English; give some information on the progressive aspect in English
e.g., a study on apologies in Australian English and German → give some information on cross-cultural pragmatics, give some information on apologies
- Define terms and concepts that are vital to discuss/answer your research question.
- Explain theories and models that help to understand the language use you want to describe (and that you will use in your analysis).
- Define your linguistic variable. What are you exactly looking at, which aspects does that include/exclude?
- Describe previous findings (literature review). What have other researchers found out about your variable? For instance, what has been published about apologies in Australian English and/or German? Summarise the results.

2.5. Methodology (about 2 pages)

Remember that your methods are supposed to help answering your research question(s) and that certain methods suit particular research question(s) better than others. Therefore, justify your choice! In your methodology section, you must give a detailed account of your:

- Data collection
 - Did you collect your data yourself or use a pre-existing corpus?
Nota Bene: If you collect your data yourself, it is absolutely necessary to obtain informed consent from your participants. In case of underage participants, obtain consent from a parent or guardian.
 - What type of data do you use, e.g., questionnaire responses, audio recordings, TV series, etc.?
 - How did you collect your data?
 - Is the data naturally-occurring/elicited?
 - Where and under which circumstances have the data been collected?
 - How many informants were involved? What are their characteristics, e.g., age, gender, place of residence, educational and linguistic background, etc.? Is your sample homogeneous?
- Data analysis
 - According to which criteria did you categorise your data?
 - Did you use/adapt a pre-existing coding scheme?
 - Did you use any statistical tests?

Also mention potential limitations of your approach.

2.6. Analysis and results (3-4 pages)

- Present the results of your analysis in a clear and comprehensive manner.
- Use tables and figures, but do not let the numbers speak for themselves; you have to explain what they mean and how they relate to your research question(s). Remember to number your tables and figures, and label them clearly.
- Employ examples from your data to illustrate your findings. Examples taking the form of sentences should start on a new line; they should be indented, and they should be numbered. Ask your lecturer for further formal requirements and whether you need to provide a translation of the examples.

2.7. Discussion (3-4 pages)

- Discuss the results with regard to your research question(s) and outline tendencies that you found in your data.
- Compare your results with findings from previous research and provide potential reasons for discrepancies.
- Show awareness of the limitations of your study.

2.8. Conclusion (about 1 page)

- Summarise your research question(s), approach and findings in a concise way and do not introduce any new aspects. Do not worry about repeating what you have already discussed in more detail before. Imagine someone only reads the conclusion – they should already get a good overview of what your paper is about.
- Put your findings in a wider context and give an outlook on future research.

2.9. References

- Include all of your references in alphabetical order. You find a detailed account of how to design a reference list below.

2.10. Appendix

- Include material that enables the reader to reconstruct your data collection and/or analysis. Depending on your paper, this refers to questionnaires, questionnaire responses, transcripts, tables, spreadsheets etc. Ask your lecturer what exactly is needed.
- In case your appendix is very long, or your data includes audio or video files, talk to your lecturer about the necessity to attach them. In that case, you may also provide the appendix on a CD-ROM or USB flash drive.

3. References

The following guidelines are based on the recommendation by the *American Psychological Association* (APA). This is the style most commonly used in linguistics, but also in social sciences and psychology.

3.1. General information

From the beginning of your writing process, you should take notes of the sources you used for your paper. This is important, as it will prevent you from accidentally forgetting one of your sources.

You may use various techniques to keep track of your sources. The most important thing is that the technique works for you, whether it be a simple Word file in which you save your sources, or a more elaborate software. There are multiple ways to keep track of your sources using software designed for scientific writing:

- **Citavi**, **EndNote**, and **Zotero** are examples of software to manage your sources. They can help you with importing and organizing your literature, as well as with the bibliography (see [website](#) of the university library). Consider trying this for your seminar paper. Once you get used to it, it can help make your writing process faster and more efficient.
- Another option (albeit with fewer functions) is using the 'References' function in **Microsoft Word**. You can download *Microsoft Word* for free via the *Studisoft* portal of the University of Würzburg. This allows you to enter all necessary information in a template. Once you are finished, simply choose the 'Create reference list' option, and Word will generate your sources for you in any format you wish.

If you are interested in learning about literature management software, check out the homepage of the library at the University of Würzburg. Apart from various resources (videos and handbooks), the library also hosts courses for beginners (see the [library calendar](#))

Checklist:

- ✓ **Start collecting your references from the beginning.** Do not wait until the day before the deadline.
- ✓ **Include all works you have used.** Do not include works you have not used for direct or indirect citations.
- ✓ **Please use the APA (American Psychological Association) citation style** (see below for templates), 7th edition
- ✓ **Do not use footnotes or endnotes for references.**
- ✓ **Be consistent.** Check your references to make sure all of them follow the same conventions. If you are uncertain about the conventions you use, check with your lecturer.
- ✓ **Seek help early on.** The library offers a large variety of courses on correct citations and citation management.

3.2. Citation templates for print and online sources²

3.2.1. Monographs

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Publisher.

Monographs are single works of research. For references, you thus simply include the full publication title – no individual chapters.

For example:

Aitchinson, J. (2012). *Words in the mind: An introduction to the mental lexicon*. Oxford University Press.

3.2.2. Edited volumes

Editor, A. A., Editor, B. B., & Editor, C. C. (Eds.). (Year). *Title of work*. Publisher.

Edited volumes are collections in which contributions by multiple authors are featured. Volumes can be edited by multiple editors: Use (Ed.) if there is only one editor, and (Eds.) if there is more than one editor.

For example:

Kasper, G., & Blum-Kulka, S. (Eds.). (1993). *Interlanguage pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

3.2.3. Chapters in edited volumes

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of chapter or entry. In A. Editor & B. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book: Capital letter also for subtitle* (pp. xxx-xxx). Publisher.

If you want to cite an individual article from an edited volume, you need to list the chapter's author and title, followed by the information on the edited volume.

For example:

Kecskes, I., & Papp, T. (2000). Metaphorical competence in trilingual language production. In J. Cenoz & U. Jessner (Eds.), *Acquisition of English as a third language* (pp. 99-120). Multilingual Matters.

3.2.4. Journals and periodicals: Conventional and online only

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, volume number(issue number), xxx-xxx. <https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyyy>

If a volume is published regularly, either online or in print, it is a journal/periodical. The style is

² The templates below have been adapted from *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.) (2020). American Psychological Association. Supplements have been adapted from the APA Style Blog (<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog>).

similar to edited volumes, with one crucial difference: You do not add editor information in your references. In the template above, the URL is a placeholder for the DOI (or, if not provided, a link to the publication).

For example:

Jongman, A., Wayland, R., & Wong, S. (2000). Acoustic characteristics of English fricatives. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 108(3), 1252-1263. <https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1288413>

3.2.5. Dissertations and theses

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of dissertation/thesis* [Doctoral dissertation/Master's thesis, Name of Institution]. Database/Archive Name. <http://xxxxx.yy>

For example:

Neumaier, T. (2019). *Patterns of Conversational Interaction in Varieties of English* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Regensburg]. Publikationsserver der Universität Regensburg. <https://pub.uni-regensburg.de/40436/>

3.2.6. Corpora

Corpora are large electronic collections of data. If you are using a corpus available online, use the template below. Please make sure to include all affiliated authors (if any). For corpora with authors, use the following:

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of corpus*. Name of institution. <http://xxxxx.yy>

A reference of a corpus to which an author is attributed would look like this:

Davies, M. (2019). *The TV Corpus*. English Corpora. <https://www.english-corpora.org/tv/>

If no author is listed, use this instead:

Title of corpus (Year). Name of institution. <http://xxxxx.yy>

Also, make absolutely sure to check the website of the corpus for additional information on citations. Some corpora have additional guidelines. For instance, the *British National Corpus* includes the following text as a proper in-text reference:

Data cited herein have been extracted from the British National Corpus, distributed by the University of Oxford on behalf of the BNC Consortium. All rights in the texts cited are reserved.

The entry in your reference list should look like this:

The British National Corpus, version 3 (BNC XML Edition). (2007). Distributed by Oxford University Computing Services on behalf of the BNC Consortium. <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>

Some corpora, such as ICE-GB or ICLE, already include software for the retrieval and analysis of

the data. For other corpora, you can use software programmes which will assist you with your corpus analysis. Note that, in this case, you also need to cite this software. For the most commonly used tools, *WordSmith* and *AntConc*, the reference would look like this:

Scott, M. (2012). *WordSmith Tools* (Version 6). Stroud: Lexical Analysis Software.

Anthony, L. (2014). *AntConc* (Version 3.4.3). Waseda University.
<http://www.laurenceanthony.net/>

Note that these references refer to version 6.0 of *WordSmith* and version 3.4.3 of *AntConc* which are available in the CIP-Pools of the University of Würzburg. If you use different versions, make sure to adjust this detail and the year of publication in your references.

3.2.7. Electronic books

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Publisher.
<http://xxxxx.yy>

For example:

Kortmann, B. (2020). *English Linguistics: Essentials*. J. B. Metzler.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-476-05678-8>

3.2.8. Full websites, articles and texts from a website

Citing individual articles from websites (e.g., an online newspaper article) is very similar to monographs. Here, you **do not insert links into your text** – instead, you cite author and date as you would for a print publication. The link only appears in your references:

Author, A. (year, month day). *Title of page*. Site name. <http://xxxxxxxxx>

For example:

Bartsch, G. (2021, February 18). *From melody to language*. Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg. <https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/en/news-and-events/news/detail/news/aus-der-melodie-waechst-die-sprache/>

A format description is only necessary if you are using an unusual format, for example lecture notes posted online.

If **no author** can be found, use this template:

Title of document [Format description]. (year, month day). <http://xxxxxxxxx>

For example:

Teen posed as doctor at West Palm Beach Hospital: Police. (2015, January 16).
<http://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/Teen-Posed-as-Doctor-at-West-Palm-Beach-Hospital-Police-288810831.html>

For in-text citations, use the title (shortened if necessary) and the date:

Political discourse on Twitter seems to be independent of recent political events (“Politics on Twitter”, 2015).

If you want to cite a **full website** in your text, it is sufficient to **insert the URL in brackets**, for example:

In order to investigate argumentation strategies on social media, a corpus of comments was extracted from *Instagram* (www.instagram.com).

Please make sure that your URL is not a hyperlink (blue and underlined) as this will be visible when you print your paper! If the URL appears to be a hyperlink, remove the link function and make sure that the font and size of the URL matches your text.

3.2.9. Online encyclopaedias and dictionaries

Author, A. (year). Entry name. In *Title of encyclopaedia/dictionary*. Retrieved month day, year, from <http://xxxxxxxxx>

For example:

Oxford University Press. (2013). Linguistic. In *Oxford English Dictionary*. Retrieved April 15, 2025, from https://www.oed.com/dictionary/linguistic_adj?tab=factsheet#39241119

Please read the Style/accuracy section on “Dictionary/encyclopaedia entries” for important information!

3.2.10. Songs

Recording artist (Year of release). Title of song [Song]. On *title of album* [Medium of recording]. Label.

Make sure that you include both the songwriter and the artist when you are working with music. Additionally, it is important that you use names consistently. If you use the songwriter’s or artist’s real name in your references, make sure to also use this name for in-text citations. If you are using the songwriter’s or artist’s pseudonym in your references, then this is also what you should use in your text.

For example:

Dacus, L. (2018). Night Shift [Song]. On *Historian*. Matador Records.

An in-text citation would look like this:

In their song *Night Shift* (Dacus, 2018), various features are used that can be found in regional varieties of British English.

3.2.11. Film

Director, D. D. (Director). (Date of publication). *Title of motion picture* [Film].
Production company.

Use this template when you cite a full-length movie. If you need to include exact times of a sentence of the film, please make sure not to include commercial break times.

For example:

Tarantino, Q. (Director). (1994). *Pulp fiction* [Film]. Miramax.

3.2.12. TV series episode

Writer, W. W. (Writer), & Director, D. D. (Director). (Original air date). Title of episode
(Season number, Episode number) [TV series episode]. In P. Executive Producer
(Executive Producer), *Series title*. Production company(s).

When you are dealing with a TV series (and thus with multiple episodes), use the template above. Here, the medium is not relevant (Blu-ray or others) and does not need to be included. If you need to include exact times of a sentence of the episode in your paper, please make sure not to include commercial break times.

For example:

Kosh, A. (Writer & Director). (2019, September 25). One last con (Season 9, Episode 10) [TV series episode]. In D. Liman, & D. Bartis (Executive Producers), *Suits*. Untitled Korsh Company; Universal Content Productions; Open 4 Business Productions.

3.2.13. Video from an online platform (e.g., YouTube)

Person or group who uploaded video. (Date of publication). *Title of Video* [Video].
Website host. <http://xxxxxx>

For online videos, use the name of the video as the title. It is important here that you distinguish the actual name of the author from his or her screen name. If you cannot find a real name anywhere, simply use the screen name only.

For example:

Tasty. (2018, March 7). *7 recipes you can make in 5 minutes* [Video]. YouTube.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_5wHw6l1lo

3.3. In-text citation guidelines

Remember that you need to reference all sources you have used in your text – both for word-for-word citations as well as for any ideas, concepts or theories that are not your own. **If you do not reference the appropriate source, this is a case of plagiarism. Additionally, the mandatory (!) Selbstständigkeitserklärung is considered a legal document by which you declare (among other things) that you have correctly referenced all sources used. Thus, you may be held legally responsible if you fail to declare all your references correctly, including AI tools you used.**

3.3.1. In-text references

3.3.1.1. General

Your in-text references should include the following information:

- Last name of the author(s)
- Year of publication
- Page range

You should *not* include the following:

- Title of the publication
- First name of the author
- Location or publisher
- Links to online publications

The template for in-text references thus is:

(Author, date, page number)

When referring to a passage that stretches over several pages, use “pp.” instead of “p.” and give the page range.

In text, it would look like this:

The discussion of politics on Twitter has had “a fundamental effect on how we view modern political discourse” (Smith, 2002, p. 36).

Do not use the abbreviations “f.” / “ff.” to refer to subsequent pages from the same source. If you cite multiple pages, provide the exact page range, introduced with “pp.”. Note that if you are making reference to an entire book, article or other work, you only have to provide the author and year of publication and not the page number. Do not use “cf.” for indirect quotes. This abbreviation means “compare” and is used to indicate that the following source constitutes an alternative to the claim that you have just made.

3.3.1.2. In-text references with multiple authors

Stick to the following guidelines for in-text references with multiple authors:

- **Two authors:** Use both author names throughout the paper, e.g., (Roy & Smith, 2008, p. 16)
- **Three or more authors:** The author list is abbreviated using “et al.” throughout the paper, e.g., (Roy et al., 2009, p. 31)

You must include all authors in the reference list, even if you use “et al.” in the text!

3.3.2. Incorporation of direct quotations

3.3.2.1. Quotations less than three lines in length

Quotations must be put in quotation marks. Reference information either follows the direct quotation or can be (partially) included in the text. An example for references following the direct quotation is the following:

Language usage on social media platforms “is a play-ground for linguistic analysis, especially, but not exclusively, in the field of discourse studies” (McNamara, 2004, p. 56).

An example of including the reference information in the text is:

McNamara (2004) remarks that “social media is a play-ground for linguistic analysis, especially, but not exclusively, in the field of discourse studies” (p. 56).

3.3.2.2. Quotations more than three lines in length

If your direct quotations exceed three lines in total length, you must change the formatting of the quote according to the following guidelines:

- Indented on the left
- Do not use quotation marks (the formatting already makes clear that it is a quotation).

References may be included in the previous text or in brackets directly following the quotation as in the following examples:

Following the direct quotation:

Grice argues that because speakers are rational individuals and share common goals, conversations are governed by a co-operative principle:

We might then formulate a rough general principle which participants will be expected (*ceteris paribus*) to observe, namely: Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice, 1975, p. 45)

Associated with this principle are four maxims – the maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner – which are observed in effective conversation....

Or in-text:

For the purpose of the present study, I will take as a working definition of pragmatics that proposed by Crystal (1985, p. 240). He defines pragmatics as:

the study of LANGUAGE from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the CONSTRAINTS they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication (original emphasis).

The reference to 'choices' and 'constraints' in this definition reflects...

3.3.3. Second-hand quoting/referencing

In general, you should read all sources yourself. Try to avoid quotations from authors you found in other publications. In some cases, this cannot be avoided, for example if the book has gone out of print and cannot be ordered in any way. In these cases, stick to the following guidelines:

In your reference list, you only list the secondary source, not the original one. In the example below, you would list Smith (2006), but not Roy (1926).

In text citations thus look like this:

([Author of unavailable source], date, as cited in [author of available source], date, page number)

- **In brackets:** (Roy, 1926, as cited in Smith, 2006, p. 56), if Roy is cited in Smith, and you want to use Roy's idea.
- **In text:** Roy (as cited in Smith, 2006, p. 56) states that a basic knowledge of phonology is an asset to every linguist.

3.4. Final remarks

The list above is not exhaustive, but keep in mind that every publication format can be cited using APA. If you encounter a publication format not described above, please try to develop a correct reference on the basis of the patterns described above first, and have your tutor or lecturer check it for correctness. You will also find help on the [APA Style Guide](#) and other online resources, e.g., [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\) at Purdue University](#).

4. Style/accuracy

4.1. Academic English

Academic English (or indeed academic German) involves the use of a broad range of appropriate vocabulary and a wide variety of relatively complex sentence structures – i.e., avoid overuse of high frequency vocabulary and repetitiveness. Colloquial language, which includes contractions, such as *don't* or *get-passives* (“The research team got a study done”), is not acceptable in academic writing. Your task is to communicate your ideas and results to your reader in a clear, explicit and straightforward manner. Your use of language should facilitate this aim. So, while it is important that you use high standard academic English, you need to make sure that the language you use helps to get your point across instead of concealing it. So, when in doubt, it is often better to form a number of shorter sentences (with fewer clauses) in place of that one page-long sentence you could have formed (which would have been so much more difficult to understand). There is a fine line between adequate complexity and showing off.

4.2. Use of “I”

When referring to yourself in the paper, you should try to avoid an overly use of “I”. While it is generally okay to use “I” when talking about research motivation and research methods (e.g., “I distributed the questionnaire to 30 informants”), you should favour passive constructions in the theoretical part as well as in the analysis section. Never use “we” in your paper if referring to yourself. You will find this frequently in volumes on linguistic research, but this is because many papers are co-authored, i.e., they have more than one author, and thus “we” refers to the whole research team.

4.3. Readership

Remember that you are writing a paper that will be read only by your lecturer (or by two or three at most when you are writing a BA or MA thesis). You are not writing a textbook, so you should not employ didactic techniques or witty humour. While you should phrase your thoughts as clearly as possible, you are not writing to teach. Be as factual as you can, and do not explicitly address any reader. In terms of content, the reader you should have in mind is a second-year student of linguistics – someone who knows the basic terms and concepts in linguistics but who needs you to explain the terms, concepts and theories relevant to your topic. Do not start leaving out vital explanations because your lecturer knows about these anyway. That would defeat the purpose of a term paper.

4.4. Objectivity

You need to be objective since this is what scientific writing is all about. In your conclusion, you are free to give your view on a topic/a certain argument as long as you can back your claims with conclusive and objective scientific evidence.

4.5. Paragraphing

Do not start a new paragraph for individual sentences. Instead, use paragraphs as a means to make your chain of thought and your line of argumentation visible, i.e., start a new paragraph whenever you introduce a new idea or concept.

4.6. Vagueness

Do not make vague statements, such as “it is a widely known fact” or “many clever people believe”. Make sure instead to mention sources. If something is “widely known”, someone must have written a paper or book chapter on it.

4.7. Dictionary/encyclopaedia entries

You do not have to indicate a reference to dictionary entries of words you looked up while writing; only definitions of terminology need to be referenced. However, when defining central terms or concepts, you should rather use glossaries than general dictionaries. In any case, when using an online dictionary or encyclopaedia, never insert the links to the entry into your text but use the template above.

4.8. Numbers and percentages

When including numbers in your paper, note that the numbers up to ten should be written out (e.g., "five magazines" but "20 newspapers"). Remember that in English the comma is used differently than in German (so, 20,5% in German would be 20.5% in English)!

4.9. Abbreviations

All abbreviations used have to be introduced, by first stating the full wording with the abbreviation in brackets, e.g., "American English (AmE)". If you are going to use a number of abbreviations, a list of these should be included on a separate page following the table of contents.

4.10. Spelling and punctuation

Ensure you have no spelling mistakes or typing errors in the paper. The spell checker included in word processing packages will be of some help. However, do not rely exclusively on spell checkers. Sometimes Word simply tries to incorporate language preferences of Microsoft (as an American company). Instead, read through your paper yourself or preferably ask someone else to read it through for you. Ensure in particular that all key terms and names of the authors are spelled correctly. Since you are writing your term paper in English, you may ask a native speaker to read your paper before submission. In that case, you need to add the line "proof-read by XY" onto your title page. Punctuation errors are also common. If unsure, consult a reference book. A search for blank spaces is also worthwhile, as these prove quite annoying to readers. This is easily done with a simple search (rather than searching for a word, search for two blank spaces).

4.11. Citing e-books and other sources found online

In times of digitisation, you will find many sources online that have also been published in print. You can, of course, access these works via platforms, such as Cambridge Core, JSTORE, Google Books, ResearchGate, Academia.edu, etc. However, it is not appropriate to provide links to these platforms in your reference list. Instead, you must find the original publication information of the monograph/chapter/journal article and cite the work as if you had access to the printed version. For sources that are only available online, have a look at the respective templates in the References section.

4.12. Further recommendations

If you have questions concerning the content of your paper, you should contact your lecturer. If you have general problems concerning the writing process, how to structure a paper, or if you are not sure about how to cite/reference sources, there is a number of options for you:

- The library offers courses and workshops, including courses on computer programmes that can help you organize the writing phase, e.g., *Citavi*.
- There are workshops offered by the Writing Center.

5. Appendix

5.1. Sample Introduction

Taken from: Barron, A. (2008). The structure of requests in Irish English and English English. In K. P. Schneider & A. Barron (Eds.), *Variational pragmatics. A focus on regional variation in pluricentric languages* (pp. 35-67). John Benjamins.

1. Introduction

Ireland and England, neighbours on the western edge of Europe, share a common language and enjoy extensive contact on a business, cultural and social level. Not surprisingly, therefore, they are frequently grouped together and seen as one broadly similar culture. Yet, as Keating & Martin (2007: 367), writing on leadership and culture, note: "... the inhabitants of these countries would recognize that there are fundamental differences in their outlook on life and the conduct of business." Indeed, recent research has highlighted a number of key cultural values on which Ireland and England do differ (cf. Ashkanasy et al. 2002, Keating & Martin 2007). The question posed in the present paper is whether, given these cultural differences, and given the close ties between language and culture (cf., e.g., Blum-Kulka et al. 1989a), Irish English differs from English English on the level of language use.

general
introduction

research
question

In contrast to the comparatively plentiful research on Irish English relative to Standard British English on the phonological, syntactic and lexical levels of language (cf. Hickey 2005 for an overview), research on the level of polite language in (inter)action in Irish English, or indeed between the varieties of English spoken in Ireland and Britain (or England – the focus of this study), is only very recent, and consequently, rather limited (cf. Barron & Schneider 2005a). Indeed, this situation is in keeping with the overall dearth of intralingual pragmatic research on the effect of macro-social factors, such as region, ethnic background, age, socio-economic status and gender, on intralingual pragmatic conventions (cf. Schneider 2001, Barron 2005a, Barron & Schneider 2005a: 12, Schneider & Barron 2005, this volume). The unhappy consequence of this is that Irish English is still generally believed to be broadly similar to English English on the level of language use (cf., e.g., Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 2006: 101 on the general lack of awareness of differences on the level of language use within one society). Indeed, this belief may be particularly detrimental for communication given that different usage norms are frequently interpreted as instances of impoliteness by the interactants involved. They may, thus, lead to frequent breakdowns in communication, conflict and also the establishment of negative stereotypes. [endnote]

previous
research
research gap

(further)
motivation for
the study

This paper takes the case of requests as an instance of language use in Irish English (IrE) and English English (EngE). [endnote] As such, the study is situated in the field of variational pragmatics (VP), an area of research dedicated to systematically investigating the effect of macro-social pragmatic variation on language in (inter)action (cf. Schneider & Barron this volume, cf. also Barron 2005a, Schneider & Barron 2005). The analysis

overview of
study

focuses on the head act strategies employed and on the amount and types of internal and external modification found in English English and Irish English requests. The data for the study were elicited from 27 Irish and 27 English students using a production questionnaire. Findings are interpreted against the background of linguistic, ethnographic and commerce-focused research on communication in these neighbouring national cultures, and also within the framework of variational pragmatics. outline of approach

The paper begins with a brief overview of research findings on cultural differences between England and Ireland. Following this, the nature of requests is outlined and an overview is given of previous research on requesting in Irish English and English English. The methodology underlying the present study is then introduced and the findings presented and discussed. outline of structure

5.2. Sample Conclusion

Taken from: Barron, A. (2008). The structure of requests in Irish English and English English. In K. P. Schneider & A. Barron (Eds.), *Variational pragmatics. A focus on regional variation in pluricentric languages* (pp. 35-67). John Benjamins.

5. Irish English and English English in contrast

The present analysis shows Irish English and English English requests to be remarkably similar on the level of the strategy chosen. In both the standard and non-standard situations analysed, the query preparatory strategy was the preferred strategy, although situational differences were found, with levels of conventional indirectness higher in the more non-standard notes and lift situations and lower in the most standard police situation – in line with previous research (cf. Blum-Kulka & House 1989, House 1989). [...] Summary of findings

Overall, therefore, the extensive use of a conventionally indirect strategy and also the considerable use of modification points to a high degree of indirectness in Irish requests. This general indirectness in Irish English supports previous studies which have shown Irish English to be generally indirect and indeed, it would seem, based on these data, that not only does the high level of collectivism in Irish society have explanatory value here, but also the lower level of assertiveness in Ireland, or what Kallen (2005a) terms silence (cf. Section 2.1 above). In addition, the higher degree of indirectness in the Irish requests relative to the English English requests in the standard situations and also the higher degree of indirectness in the internal modification used in the nonstandard situations in Irish English point to a higher degree of indirectness in requesting in Irish English relative to English English. This general indirectness in Irish English supports those few previous studies which have shown Irish English to be generally more indirect relative to English English (cf. Section 2.1 above). Again, here the higher degree of collectivism found in Irish society relative to English society would seem relevant here, as well as the lower level of assertiveness. On the other hand, however, the analysis of the non-standard situations clearly reveals that it cannot be simply stated generally that Irish English is more indirect than English English. Rather, an assessment of the relative directness/indirectness of the externally and internally modified requests elicited would be necessary before such statements could be made. Specifically, the analysis of the non-standard situations revealed that English informants prefer to invest in external rather than in internal Summarising discussion of research question with regard to previous studies.

modification while the Irish informants show a preference for internal modification. This was seen in the larger number of external mitigators used in the most non-standard lift situation and the more extensive use of more highly mitigating pre-grounders in both of the more non-standard situations. In addition, disarmers, mitigators with a high mitigating force which serves to weaken or invalidate any possible arguments which the hearer might introduce in order to refuse the request, were used in the lift situation in the English data only. The analysis, thus, underlines the necessity of investigating language use at the level of the speech act rather than at the level of the linguistic form, and also cautions against generalised comparative statements of language use across cultures. [...]

6. Future perspectives

The present analysis focuses on the request realisations of three situations in Irish English and English English. As has been pointed out, more research is needed before generalisations can be made about the nature of Irish English and English English. Such research includes the elicitation of assessment data relating to the relative level of politeness associated with external and internal mitigation. In addition, analyses of data from different areas of Ireland and England are necessary since the present analysis concentrates only on data from South-West England and South-East Ireland. Finally, triangulation of data is needed. The production questionnaire data elicited for the present analyses should be triangulated, ideally with naturally-occurring data. Recent developments in this area are encouraging for the analysis of Irish English. The Irish Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-Ireland) is currently under development (cf. Kallen & Kirk 2001 and Kallen 2005b). This corpus already exists for British English.¹⁷ Despite the lack of pragmatic coding, its stable composition across cultures will aid in confirming or rejecting a number of the suggestions put forward in this chapter. Finally, the Limerick Corpus of Irish English (LCIE), a corpus which follows the design of the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE) (cf. Carter 1998), is also under construction. When it is finished, cross-varietal analyses using both the LCIE and the CANCODE will also be possible (cf. O'Keeffe & Adolphs this volume for an example).

Finally, the current study of language use in Irish English and English English adds to the research on variational pragmatics (cf. also Barron forthcoming for a more in-depth analysis). On a general level, as highlighted in Barron (2006), the finding that the choice of realisation strategies employed in Irish English and English English requests was similar in both varieties confirms previous research in variational pragmatics which suggests that, in contrast to interlingual variation, intralingual variation in the choice and distribution of strategy does not usually occur on such a general level of description in realisations of requests and offers (cf. Barron 2005a, cf. also Márquez Reiter 2002, 2003, Barron 2005b). In addition, the differences found on the levels of internal and external modification employed by both cultures was also in line with Barron's (2005a) finding that macro-social variation may be recorded in the use of modification in intralingual analyses. Needless to say, further research is needed to confirm or refute these generalised tendencies

Summary of approach and outlook on future research with regard to methodology.

General outlook on future research within the field.

5.3. Sample title page

Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg

Neuphilologisches Institut

Lehrstuhl für Englische Sprachwissenschaft

Course Title

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Semester

Title of the Paper:

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Module