

Guidelines for reviewers

The aims of a review

A review's aim is twofold. Firstly, the review should provide the editorial board with a well-argued judgement on the paper. This will help the editorial board with their decision on whether the paper is well fitted for publication. The second aim of the review is to give the author constructive criticism on how the paper can be improved. Note that the paper is confidential; please do not share or discuss the content of the paper without permission from the editorial board. This also holds for you as a reviewer; do not include personal remarks or details that can give away your identity.

Procedure

We have created two surveys for reviewers to facilitate the review process. In the first of these you will give detailed feedback on the paper that will be presented to the author. In the second survey you will write your comments to the editorial board. The structure of these surveys is outlined below. Make sure to read till the end; there is an important section with general suggestions you should consider while filling out the surveys.

Comments to the author (survey #1)

Your responses to the first survey will be presented to the author and serve as their primary source of feedback. This is most likely the author's first submission ever to a scientific journal, so we kindly ask you to be respectful in the way you phrase your comments. Also note that although the survey can be viewed in two languages (English or Dutch), you are to provide your feedback in the same language as the paper to ensure that the author will be able to understand your comments. If you do not feel comfortable writing in that language, please let us know (email: rutsjournal@let.ru.nl) so we can assign a different paper to you.

You will first be asked to fill in the title of the paper you are reviewing, so that your review can be sent to the right author. Before you can start your actual review, you then have to confirm that you do not know the identity of the author. If you have any idea as to who the author might be, you cannot review the paper. We kindly request you to let us know through email if this situation arises, so we can assign a different paper to you.

The actual review consists of several yes/no questions and agree/disagree statements about the content and text of the article, as outlined below. Whenever you answer "no" or disagree with a statement, you are expected to provide an explanation (e.g., your argumentation and representative examples from the author's text) and if possible, suggestions for improvement. Also remember that your purpose as a reviewer is to give constructive comments about the content and structure of the article, not to proofread the text. If it turns out that the paper contains a lot of spelling or grammar mistakes, make the author aware of the situation but do not bother to correct them or pinpoint individual mistakes. Please also do not edit the document itself; only your survey responses will be sent to the author.

Part I: Content

- 1) Title
 - o Is the title of a reasonable length? (max. 150 characters, including subtitle if present)
 - o Does the title mention the topic of the article?
 - o Does the title invite you to read the article?
- 2) Abstract
 - o Is the abstract of a reasonable length? (min. 100 words, max. 300 words)
 - o Does the abstract state the purpose of the conducted study, its basic procedures, main findings, and the principal conclusion(s)?
- 3) Keywords
 - o Did the author provide a reasonable number of keywords? (max. 5 keywords)
 - o Do the keywords match the content of the article?
- 4) Introduction (theory and literature review)
 - o Are the author's own research question and hypotheses clear from this section?
 - o Do subquestions logically follow from the main research question?
 - o Does the author discuss theories and/or prior studies that are relevant in the context of their own research question?
 - o Is the literature that the author discusses sufficiently scientific?
 - o Does the author incorporate information from external sources in their argumentation in a critical and verifiable way?
 - o Is relevant terminology properly introduced and clearly defined?
- 5) Methods
 - o Does the author give arguments for their choice of methodology?
 - o Does this section contain an exhaustive discussion of the methods that would allow another researcher to replicate the study?
(In the case of an experimental study, this section should contain all relevant information about participants, materials, procedure, design, and data analysis.)
- 6) Results
 - o Does this section present the (qualitative or quantitative) data in a coherent way?
 - o Do tables, figures, etc. effectively present relevant results?
 - o Has the author correctly analysed and interpreted the data?
- 7) Discussion
 - o Does the discussion fit the research question?
 - o Does the author effectively discuss (the meaning of) their own results in the context of the previously discussed theories and prior studies?
 - o Does this section contain a clear answer to the research question?

8) Conclusion

- o Is the conclusion of the article clear, concise and convincing?

Part II: Text

9) Structure

- o Does the article contain all required sections? (Title, abstract, keywords, introduction, methods, results, discussion, conclusion, bibliography)
- o Are all sections clearly indicated and separated from each other?
- o Do paragraphs within sections logically follow each other?

10) Lay-out and presentation

- o Is the article of a reasonable length? (max. 4000 words, excluding bibliography)
- o Is the lay-out of the text in accordance with our requirements? (See the authors' guidelines for lay-out requirements)
- o Is the text well-written? (no significant number of spelling or grammar mistakes?)
- o Is the author consistent in their use of terminology?
- o Has the author kept the use of footnotes to a minimum?
- o Has the author provided (only) relevant appendices?
- o Are citations, references and bibliography complete and in accordance with the APA style?

The survey concludes with your recommendation to the editorial board; there are three options:

- *Accept without revision*
- *Accept with revisions*
- *Reject*

Comments to the editorial board (survey #2)

In this second survey, you start by providing a brief summary of the paper and giving your general opinion. How does it contribute to the field? Is it suitable for the readers of RU:ts? Keep in mind that most readers will be students and that the same goes for the author. Please also give arguments for your recommendation for the editorial board. Note that this section is confidential and will not be shared with the author.

General suggestions for reviewers

- Consider the author guidelines of RU:ts and use these to review the article. The guidelines can be found on our website:
<http://ruts-journal.ruhosting.nl/en/guidelines-authors/>
- Do not forget to cite your sources for comments with respect to content.
- Do not let your opinion get in the way; the author is allowed to disagree with you when backed by a good argumentation or compelling data.

- When you write your comments, do not directly address the author. For example, instead of writing: "In section 2, you argue that *this* and *this*, but you forgot that *that*"; please consider instead: "In section 2, the author argues that *this* and *this*, but does not take *that* into account". Moreover, please mention the author in a gender-neutral way with "the author", "they", etc. You do not know the author's gender after all, so do not write "he" or "she".
- All of the authors are students, and most of them are submitting for the first time, so be constructive and understanding in your comments and respect the effort they are making.

Allow us to thank you in advance for your contribution to our journal,
The RU:ts editorial team