How to Write a Paper for (International) Publication

David Levey
Universidad de Cádiz
david.levey@uca.es
Why write a paper?

- Leave your mark
- Share your ideas
- If you don’t write it you ain’t done it!
- If you don’t someone else will!
- Writing helps you develop
- Feedback is important for development
- For your CV
Why write a paper in *English*?

- English is International Language
- To publish in high impact journals
- To reach a greater public
- To open doors and horizons
- For your CV
To write...or not to write (in English) ...that is the question!
¡No puedo, no puedo, no puedo…!
English paper production possibilities

- Full Monty: DIY
- Half Monty: write in English & get/pay expert to check/improve your text
- Write in Spanish and pay a translator
...a Word or Warning

- DON’T TRUST Computer Translations
- A bad translation = a bad paper
- Collaborate with your translator
Where do I start?
...the basic idea (the basic product)
5 basic steps

1. Target the Market
2. Develop the Idea or Concept
3. The first outline & draft
4. Plan, construct & organize
5. Correct, Fine Tune and Package the final product
1. Target the Market

Target Marketing Process:
Linking Customer Needs to Marketing Action

1. Segmentation
   Identify and describe market segments

2. Targeting
   Evaluate segments and decide which to go after

3. Positioning
   Design a product or service to meet a segment's needs and develop a marketing mix that will create a competitive advantage in the minds of the selected target market
...i.e. Who is going to read your paper?
Types of Papers

- A thesis/dissertation
- A paper for a congress
- A paper for a journal
- A research proposal
- A popular article
Who is going to read your thesis?
Who is going to read your thesis?

- Your examiners

- your family…*maybe*
What do the examiners want to find?

- Original research in a recognizable academic framework
- Relevant details of your research
- Clear structure and argument
- Why you chose to write it
- The background
- Your thinking
- What you did
- Your findings and conclusions
- Future direction
What DON’T they want to find?

- Irrelevant details
- What we all know
- Bad writing
- Unclear arguments
- Unclear tables & diagrams
- Bad grammar & spelling
- Unstructured work
- plagiarism
# 1. Papers & their Readership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of paper</th>
<th>Who will read it?</th>
<th>Why will the read it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis</strong></td>
<td><em>Supervisor</em></td>
<td>- to judge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Referees</em></td>
<td>- to mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Examiners</em></td>
<td>- to rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paper (Journal, book, proceedings)</strong></td>
<td><em>Referees</em></td>
<td>Judge originality, quality &amp; suitability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Experts</em></td>
<td>- Extract information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Proposal</strong></td>
<td><em>Funding body</em></td>
<td>Judge aims/potencial Appropriateness of proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Referees</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Popular articles</strong></td>
<td><em>Intelligent uninformed public</em></td>
<td>Learn a new field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To be entertained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 basic steps (2)

1. Target the Market
2. Develop the Idea or Concept
3. The first outline & draft
4. Plan, construct & organize
5. Correct, Fine Tune and Package the final product
How do ideas come and develop?

- Thinking
- Observing
- Talking
- Reading
- Reading
- Reading
- ...Reading
Why do you need to read a lot?

- to get the tone and style of the journal you are going to submit to
- to be able to cite & refer to others
- to help you learn what is known about the topic
- this literature will form basis of your Introduction and Discussion.
Before writing...ask yourself

- Who is going to read it?
- Is there a gap in the market?
- Why am I writing?
- Have I anything new to say?
- Is what I am saying “earthshattering”?
- Do I want to make a splash or a ripple?
Do you want to make a ripple? ...or a splash?
Before you start

- Organization
- Make a plan
- Brainstorm – points you want to say
- Make list of sections

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- Lots of coffee/cigarettes etc
- Changes of environment
The outline

- Write outline for each section
- In one or two sentence summarize what you want to say in each paragraph
- Add references & ideas as you go along
- If you are using tables write a line about what you want to demonstrate before making pretty diagrams
- Don’t start writing until the outline is complete. This will save you time!
# Planning & Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract (+ Title)</td>
<td>What I did (in a nutshell)</td>
<td>5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>What’s the problem?</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods &amp; Experiment</td>
<td>How did I try to solve the problem</td>
<td>2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>What did I find out?</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion/Discussion</td>
<td>What does it mean?</td>
<td>4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments (optional)</td>
<td>Who helped me?</td>
<td>Last</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature cited</td>
<td>Whose work did I refer to?</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Most Important Elements

- The title
- Abstract
- Introduction
- The conclusion
- The bibliography
- The sections & organization
- The graphs & tables
- Overall style
- Layout
Conference Route

CALL FOR PAPERS

- SUBMIT ABSTRACT
  - ACCEPTED / (PAY INSCRIPTION)
    - TALK
      - ACCEPTED POSSIBLE PUBLICATION
        - SUBMIT FULL WRITTEN VERSION
          - PEER REVIEWED
            - RESUBMITTED WITH MODIFICATIONS
              - ACCEPTED + PUBLISHED
The Title ***

- Meaningful
- Brief (avoid long titles)
- Memorable
The Abstract

- 150 words
- Motive
- Method
- Key findings
- Conclusions
- ------
- No waffle
- No extra details
10 Abstract acceptance guidelines

Does it...

1. capture the interest of a potential reader?
2. say what the paper is about; Does the title reflect the content?
3. use appropriate terminology and is it well written?
4. clearly state the topic of the paper and the research question?
5. say how the research was undertaken?
6. indicate the value of the findings and to whom it will be of use?
7. describe the work to be discussed in the paper?
8. give a concise summary of the findings?
9. conform to the word limit (150-250 words)?
10. have 5-10 keywords/phrases reflecting the content of the paper?
Be concise (7% /350 words)
Memorable: Seduce the reader
Use a good first sentence
Show authority & instil confidence
Show you understand issues & will provide answers and information
Show intentions, structure and plan, main ideas
Show you have carried out research
Quotable line
Introduction (Typical Mistakes)

- Too long/too short
- Unappealing & Unrevealing
- Gives too much away too soon
- Loses/bores reader
Conclusion/Discussion ***

- (10% / 500 words)
- Memorable: draw everything together
- Don’t simply repeat...it is NOT a summary
- Authorative & convincing
- Quotable lines
- Show confidence in your statements
- ...but don’t overstate
Tables & Graphs

- Make sure they are clear
- Don’t put in too much information
- Keep statistic language to a minimum
Broadband Speeds (OfCom survey chart reported by BBC 28 July 2009)

Because the measured speeds varied so much, a simple league table of ISP speeds is difficult to make.

However, Ofcom released a table which shows comparisons for nine major ISPs, showing which are faster and slower.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW UK ISPs COMPARE</th>
<th>...is slower than...</th>
<th>...is faster than...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AOL</td>
<td>O2, Orange, Plusnet, Sky, Talktalk, Virgin Media</td>
<td>Tiscali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT</td>
<td>O2, Virgin Media</td>
<td>Tiscali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Virgin Media</td>
<td>AOL, BT, O2, Orange, Plusnet, Sky, Talktalk, Tiscali</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All services at 8Mbit/s except Virgin Media at 10Mbps

Source: Ofcom
References & Bibliography

SHOW
- You have read a lot
- You have read the important works
- You have read recent works
- You have read your referees’ works

- Always provide source for citations
- Only include works you have cited in your paper
Citing authors in your paper

- According to Smith (2010: 72), “the rain in Spain is a pain”.

OR

- ...“the rain in Spain is a pain” (Smith, 2010: 72)

- It is widely believed that the weather is changing (Jones, 2011: 336; Dylan, 2012: 63-64; Lewis, 2013: 101-6)
Bibliography

a) Books

b) Articles in books / Book chapters

c) Articles in journals

d) Congresses and conferences

e) Internet sources
Well-written papers are...

- Read
- Remembered
- Cited
Badly written papers...

...are not!
Academic English Style

- Writing is Communication
- Make it easy to read and follow
- Use short words rather than long ones
- Use familiar words not obscure ones
- Simple and concise constructions
- Use appropriate terminology
- Be clear don’t be ambiguous
- Don’t waffle – get to the point
- Make figures, tables & graphs clear
- Avoid repetition
Academic style Do NOTs

- use contractions
- phrasal verbs
- colloquial language
- overstate and overemphasize
- undermine reader’s judgement in you
- condescend to your readers
- be “immodest” (use passives or “we believe”)
Checking and Rewriting

- Take breaks
- Change places
- Check on printed paper
- Don’t always check from the beginning
- Read & Reread
- Ask second opinions
- Check publishers norms
- Make it look nice: 1st impressions count
Final Checklist

- Is the title effective?
- Does the paper look organized and clear?
- Is my Introduction clear and effective?
- Is the conclusion/discussion convincing?
- Does my bibliography show I have read?
- Have I cited the relevant authorities?
- Is it readable?
- Is it in the style of other articles in the journal?
- Have I followed the style guide?
- Is my paper in the style of the journal?
- Have I checked my grammar and spelling?
- Have I said anything new?
Rejection and Criticism

- Criticism may not be agreeable, but it is necessary. It fulfills the same function as pain in the human body. It calls attention to an unhealthy state of things. (Winston Churchill)
- To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing. (Elbert Hubbard)
- The better a work is, the more it attracts criticism; it is like the fleas who rush to jump on clean white sheets. (Gustave Flaubert)
GOOD LUCK

David Levey
Universidad de Cádiz
david.levey@uca.es