

General submission information

Article types. The journal has three article types: regular articles, registered reports and results-redacted articles. No type of article has any word limit. Beyond this distinction, we do not specify article types, since regular articles may be of any form (e.g., experimental study, analysis of naturalistic data, literature review, meta-analysis, description of a new research or analysis tool, theoretical article, response to a previous article, book review, etc.) provided that they are relevant to the remit of the journal. Registered reports are a specialized format for empirical studies, in which peer review is conducted, on the basis of the Introduction and Methods (including data-collection and statistical-analysis plans) before the data are collected. Results-redacted articles are similar to registered reports in that peer review is conducted on the basis of the Introduction and Methods, but differ in that the data have already been collected and analyzed, but are redacted for the purposes of review. The aim of this format is to reduce a potential bias whereby “null” results cause reviewers to be more critical with regard to methodology and rationale than they would have been had the same study yielded “positive” results. Detailed guidelines for registered reports and results-redacted articles will be made available in separate documents. For empirical papers, the journal suggests that authors strive to meet the American Psychological Association’s *Journal Article Reporting Standards* (<https://apastyle.apa.org/jars>), which are available for quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods research (though this is a recommendation rather than a requirement).

Data, code and materials availability statement. Sharing of data, analysis code and experimental materials is mandatory, unless authors have agreed an exemption with the journal at the point of submission. **In order to proceed to peer review, submitted articles must include a “Data, code and materials availability statement”** which includes links to permanent repositories (with Digital Object Identifiers [DOIs] wherever possible) and details of any exemptions agreed (for more details, see “Open Science” below).

References. References must follow the format set out in the current edition of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association. Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) are encouraged. No limits are placed on the number or types of references permitted.

Formatting. Initial submissions can be in any format or style, but authors may wish to use the journal’s supplied templates for published articles which are mandatory once articles have been accepted. The journal encourages the use of reproducible formats (e.g., TeX, Rmd/Jupyter). All articles must be written in English: American or British English may be used, but authors are encouraged to strive for consistency throughout the manuscript.

(Non-)Anonymization. The journal operates a single-anonymous review policy and an optional double-anonymous review policy. That is, reviewers are anonymous to authors, unless they waive anonymity by clearly signing their review (we will not remove the names of reviewers who have signed their review). **By default, authors are not anonymous to reviewers**, since the journal encourages public posting and sharing of submitted preprints, via both academic sites such as Psyarxiv and OSF, which allow for anonymization, and public-facing social-media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, which do not. However, authors may opt for double-anonymous review, in which they are additionally anonymous to reviewers. In this case, it is the authors’ own responsibility to remove any identifying information from the manuscript and any posted preprints, data archives etc. The journal does not employ editorial administration staff, and will perform no anonymization checks.

Ethics statement. Any research including human or participants must include an ethics statement detailing any necessary approvals obtained from an Institutional Review Board or University Ethics Committee. If approvals were not necessary (for example because the research uses previously-collected publicly-available data, or was conducted in a country which does not require approval for the type of research in question), this should be detailed in the ethics statement.

Authorship and contributorship. Any article with more than one author must include an authorship and contributorship statement that details the contributions made by each author or contributor. The journal follows the [policy of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#), such that all listed authors should meet all of the four following criteria: (a) Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; (b) Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; (c) Final approval of the version to be published; (d) Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved. Colleagues that contribute to the work but do not qualify for authorship should be listed as contributors in the authorship and contributorship statement.

Abstract(s). In addition to an English abstract, authors may optionally submit translated abstracts in one or more additional languages. This option is available for any article type, but is particularly encouraged when the focus of the article is one or more languages other than English. Authors are wholly responsible for supplying, and ensuring the accuracy of, the translations of their abstract.

Reviewers. Authors are strongly encouraged to suggest both proposed and opposed reviewers. The journal does not guarantee to invite proposed reviewers, but guarantees not to invite opposed reviewers.

Preprints and conference presentations. The journal accepts submissions of manuscripts previously posted on preprint servers such as Psyarxiv and the Open Science Framework and manuscripts previously presented at conferences, **provided** that manuscripts submitted to the journal do not contain copyright material. For example, if a manuscript has previously been published as part of a conference proceedings volume, the authors may have assigned copyright to the publisher of that volume, meaning that an identical or even substantially edited manuscript may not be submitted to the journal.

Plagiarism. The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) defines plagiarism as “rang[ing] from the unreferenced use of others’ published and unpublished ideas, including research grant applications to submission under “new” authorship of a complete paper, sometimes in a different language”. Papers submitted to the journal will be manually checked for plagiarism, scanned through Turnitin/iThenticate databases at the editors’ discretion, and articles with large chunks of unattributed text from other published sources (including authors’ own previous publications) will be rejected without review. Authors including long quotations from previous publications (including their own) must take particular care to check that they are compliant with copyright law, as set out in the Author Agreement. Any person wishing to make an allegation of plagiarism in a published article should follow the journal’s complaints procedures for making an allegation of misconduct and/or a request for correction, revision or retraction.

Data analysis and reporting standards

Quantitative research. Authors should follow the reporting standards set out in *Journal Article Reporting Standards for Quantitative Research in Psychology: The APA Publications and Communications Board Task Force Report*:

<https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/amp-amp0000191.pdf>. The journal's statistics consultant maintains [detailed guidelines for best practices in quantitative data analysis](#), which can be accessed via the journal website. These guidelines should be closely followed by authors, reviewers and Action Editors. Randomized control trials should follow the CONSORT guidelines: <https://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/consort/>.

Qualitative research. Authors should follow the reporting standards set out in *Journal Article Reporting Standards for Qualitative Primary, Qualitative Meta-Analytic, and Mixed Methods Research in Psychology: The APA Publications and Communications Board Task Force Report* <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/amp-amp0000151.pdf>. For health-related qualitative research, authors should follow the SRQR guidelines <https://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/srqr/>

Systematic review and meta analyses. All systematic reviews and meta-analyses should follow the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) checklist (<http://www.prisma-statement.org/documents/PRISMA%202009%20checklist.pdf>) and flow diagram (<http://www.prisma-statement.org/PRISMAStatement/FlowDiagram.aspx>, which together constitute the PRISMA Statement (<http://www.prisma-statement.org/PRISMAStatement/>). **Systematic reviews with health implications** should be pre-registered with the Campbell Collaboration (<https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/>), the Cochrane Collaboration (<https://www.cochrane.org/>) or PROSPERO (<https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/prospero/>).

Data analysis: Authors must not engage in **p-hacking** (i.e., cherry-picking analyses to yield a desired result) or **selective reporting** (<https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.1002106>; http://www.stat.columbia.edu/~gelman/research/unpublished/p_hacking.pdf). All studies that were conducted as part of a particular project should be reported, regardless of the outcome. The reporting of null results is crucial in order to avoid publication bias (<http://www.p-curve.com/>; <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0956797614557866>).

Data analysis: Under-studied languages/populations. Work on under-studied languages/populations is particularly encouraged, and the journal recognizes that, when studying such languages/populations, it may be more difficult to meet best practices regarding factors such as sample size. Nevertheless, this recognition represents a lower standard for publication, not a lower standard of evidence: These limitations must be flagged up prominently in the Abstract and Discussion, and conclusions should be appropriately tentative. Two useful papers that set out these considerations are https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/10125/24731/gawne_et_al.pdf and <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0142723715602350>.

Open Science

The overriding principle of the journal’s open science policy is that everything that can reasonably be publicly shared must be publicly shared. On the one hand, the journal has no desire to reject - or discourage submission of - studies for which sharing is genuinely impossible or infeasible. On the other hand, the journal takes the view that, in normal circumstances, the scientific community has the right to scrutinize the data, analysis code and materials on which a published study is based.

Open science. Sharing of preprints and the accepted article is highly recommended. Sharing of data, analysis code and experimental materials is mandatory, unless authors have agreed an exemption with the journal at the point of submission. In order to proceed to peer review, submitted articles must include a “Data, code and materials availability statement” which includes links to permanent repositories (with Digital Object Identifiers [DOIs] wherever possible) and details of any exemptions agreed. Authors applying for an exemption should submit their article in the usual way, setting out the reason for their application in the “Comments to Editor” box. Exemptions are granted by the Editor, but for complex cases, the Editor may first discuss the proposed exemption with the Editorial Board. Generally, exemptions to data/code/materials sharing will be granted only where it is impossible or infeasible (e.g., prohibitively expensive) due to insurmountable concerns regarding participant confidentiality or restrictions imposed by an ethics committee, institutional review board, funder, or local rules, regulations or laws. Each application will be considered on its own merits, but some examples of applications that are likely to be successful are as follows:

Exemption likely to be granted	Exemption unlikely to be granted
Data sharing is expressly prohibited by an ethics committee, institutional review board, funder, or local rules, regulations or laws.	The authors did not mention data sharing in their application to an ethics committee, IRB or funder (if such permission is required, it is the authors’ responsibility to obtain it).
The copyright in the data/code/materials is held by a third party (e.g., the authors used a standardized test as part of their materials, created a corpus of copyright children’s books, or used a paywalled dataset).	The authors wish to retain copyright in the data/code/materials, and/or retain the exclusive right to conduct subsequent studies or analyses.
The nature of the population (e.g., small / hard to reach / clinical sample) is such that there is a risk of de-anonymization.	The authors did not request explicit permission from participants to share anonymized data. (In most jurisdictions, permission is not required for sharing fully anonymized data; If such permission is required, it is the authors’ responsibility to obtain it).
Anonymization, while possible in principle, is infeasible in terms of cost and/or researcher time (e.g., full	

transcription/coding of day-long audio recordings; video recordings of signed languages).	
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Prior availability. If data/code/materials are already publicly available (e.g., CHILDES corpora, many government datasets), with or without a free application process, researchers should provide the relevant permanent links in their “Data, code and materials availability statement”, and do not need to duplicate the material in their own project repository.

“As open as possible”. Where full sharing is not possible for one of the reasons above, authors should, when applying for the relevant exemption, set out the steps that they will take to make the data/code/materials as open as possible. One option, for example, is to deposit data with a service such as the UK Data Service which has separate categories for (in addition to Open Data) Safeguarded and Controlled Data, and separate application procedures for each. Any such arrangements must be documented in the paper’s “Data, code and materials availability statement”. The principle of “as open as possible” will also apply when the journal considers exemption requests. For example, if an exemption is granted on the basis of confidential data, authors will still be required (unless separate exemptions are granted) to share materials and analysis code. Where one or more exemption is agreed, the authors must ensure that it would be possible for a third party to verify the veracity of their findings should a question arise, and their “Data, code and materials availability statement” should clearly articulate a plan for making the necessary data/code/materials available.

Data sharing. Following the principle of “as open as possible”, data should be shared at as raw a level as possible without compromising participant anonymity. For example, if authors created new audio or video recordings which they then transcribed and coded, they should share the transcriptions, and the coded data (unless relevant exemptions have been granted), but not the actual recordings (unless they have explicit permission from the participants to do so). In normal circumstances, data aggregated at the participant or item level, rather than individual participant-by-participant and trial-by-trial data, would not meet the journal’s requirements.

Code sharing. Unless an exemption has been granted, authors are required to share all the analysis code that would be required for a colleague to reproduce all summaries (e.g., figures/tables) and analyses reported in the paper. Code must be included not just for the final analyses, but for any preprocessing/data-cleaning steps. Note that many point-and-click statistics packages (including SPSS and Stata) can additionally generate analysis code (syntax) files for sharing. If authors used a package (e.g., JASP) or website that does not generate shareable code, they should instead share a screen grab video of the analysis, or a document setting out point-by-point the steps taken. In either case, authors must double check that following the video/document yields the same output as the analysis reported in the paper.

Sharing of experimental materials. Unless an exemption has been granted, authors are required to share all materials that would be required for a colleague to replicate the study (e.g., questionnaires, ratings-scales, pictures, animations or videos, audio recordings, visually-presented sentences etc.). In particular, if the authors used software such as PsychoPy,

jsPsych, PEBL, etc. they should be sure to share the code needed to run the experiment and, for online platforms such as Gorilla, links to the online experiment.

Hosting. The journal itself does not offer hosting for data/code/materials. Instead, authors should use websites such as the Open Science Framework (<https://www.osf.io/>) Figshare (<https://figshare.com/>), TalkBank (<https://talkbank.org>), Databrary (<https://nyu.databrary.org/>) or Github (<https://github.com/>), providing the relevant links in their “Data, code and materials availability statement”. Other sites may be used, but authors must use permanent repositories, not personal/institutional websites, or folders on platforms such as Dropbox, Google Drives etc. *Language Development Research* is the official journal of the Talkbank system <https://talkbank.org/>, and, as such, the journal requests that any new corpora reported in LDR papers be posted to the relevant TalkBank site: CHILDES (Child Language Data Exchange System), PhonBank, Homebank, or one of the dedicated Multilingualism, Clinical or Adult Conversation banks.

Review. As part of the peer-review process, reviewers are requested to verify compliance with the journal’s Open Science policies by - to the extent that they feel competent to do so - replicating the statistical analyses reported in the article, and verifying that the experimental materials that have been made available are sufficient to replicate the study. The journal aspires, if a team of suitable volunteers can be put together, to instigate a formal process of full data, code and materials review for each accepted empirical paper. In the meantime, informal checks will be made by the peer-reviewers, the Action Editor handling the paper and the Editor.

Disclaimer. Notwithstanding all of the Open Science policies set out above, authors are wholly responsible for fully complying with all laws and regulations in the jurisdictions in which the data are collected, hosted and published (e.g., copyright and data-protection regulations) and for fully complying with all regulations and protocols put in place by an ethics committee, institutional review board, funder, University or other institution.

Review Process

Screening. The Editor screens each submission for (a) relevance to the scope of the journal, (b) compliance with the policies and procedures set out here (e.g., adherence to data-sharing policy), (c) possible plagiarism, (d) quality of the written English and (e) scientific quality of the work. Manuscripts that do not pass this screening check are returned to authors with feedback and do not proceed to peer review. Manuscripts are not screened for perceived novelty, potential impact or importance of the findings; nor may Action Editors use such criteria when taking editorial decisions. Neither are manuscripts, **at this stage**, screened for formatting (since no particular format is required until an article has been accepted). However, because the journal employs no staff, it is crucial that for accepted articles, authors undertake their own spell checks, bibliography checking, grammar checking and typesetting (see “Accepted Papers” section below).

A **conflict of interest** arises when the Editor, an Action Editor, or a reviewer is an author on the submitted manuscript, or shares any of the following relationships with an author on the submitted manuscript: (a) works at the same institution, (b) has been a mentor/mentee (e.g., PhD or postdoctoral supervisor/mentor), (c) has published together within the past three years, (d) joint investigators on a grant or grant proposal or (e) personal relationship (e.g., spouse, parent, sibling etc.). Selection of Action Editors and invitation of reviewers, as described in the following two sections, must avoid such a conflict of interest. This constraint may be relaxed for papers published by large consortia with tens or hundreds of authors if this is unavoidable in the interests of securing sufficiently qualified reviewers. A conflict of interest also arises when the Editor, an Action Editor, reviewer or author has any commercial interest in any of the work described in the submitted manuscript (e.g., the study uses a questionnaire instrument published by a company in which the individual has shares, or from which they receive royalty payments). Selection of Action Editors and invitation of reviewers, as described in the following two sections, must avoid such a conflict of interest. If an author has any commercial interest in any of the work described in the submitted manuscript, they must include a **declaration of conflict of interests** statement in the manuscript. Such a statement is not required if no conflict of interests exists. Any conflict of interest identified after publication of the manuscript should be raised using the **allegations of misconduct procedure**.

Selection of Action Editor. If the manuscript passes the screening check, the Editor assigns the paper to an Action Editor, taking care to avoid a conflict of interest (see previous section for definition). In cases where the Editor has a conflict of interests, the Editor will not assign the manuscript to an Action Editor. Instead, the Editor will notify all Action Editors, who will agree amongst themselves who should (a) conduct the initial screening check and (b) serve as Action Editor (either a single AE performing both tasks, or one conducting the initial screening check and another serving as AE).

Invitation of reviewers. The Action Editor sequentially invites reviewers, taking care to avoid a conflict of interest until two have agreed to review the manuscript. In special circumstances (e.g., the two reviewers are diametrically opposed, or indicate that the opinion of a reviewer with particular statistical or methodological expertise is required), the Action Editor may invite additional reviewers as required

Criteria for reviewers. The Action Editor may not invite individuals designated by the authors as opposed reviewers. The Action Editor is not obliged to invite individuals

designated by the authors as proposed reviewers, though in practice will usually invite at least one. The Action Editor may not invite as a reviewer any individual who has a conflict of interests with an author (see the **Conflict of Interest** section for definition). In order to qualify as a potential reviewer, an individual must have recently published at least one first-author article in a relevant journal. No requirement with regard to seniority or employment status is imposed (e.g., a graduate student who meets the first-author publication requirement may serve as a reviewer).

Delegation of reviews. In normal circumstances, reviewers who have agreed to review a manuscript must review the manuscript themselves. However, reviewers may, with the advance permission of the Action Editor, involve a trainee (e.g., PhD student) in the reviewing processes, provided that they are willing to certify that they have carefully reviewed both the manuscript and the review, and will take responsibility for the final content of reviews.

Deadline for reviews. Reviewers are asked to complete their review within 30 days, with automatic reminders sent at 23, 30 and 50 days. If a reviewer has not submitted their review, or contacted the journal to request an extension, within 60 days, the reviewer is deemed to have withdrawn, and the Action Editor will invite a replacement.

Copyright in reviews. Reviewers own the copyright in their own reviews and are not required to transfer copyright to the journal, or to publish them under a CC-BY license. Consequently, authors of submitted manuscripts may not publish the reviews they receive, and may be in violation of copyright law if they do so.

Action Editor decisions. When an Action Editor has received the required reviews (in normal circumstances, two reviews), they will make an editorial decision from the following four options (a) accept, (b) revise and resubmit: minor revisions, (c) revise and resubmit: major revisions, (d) reject outright. The Action Editor will (via the editorial system) email this decision to the corresponding author along with the reviews and an Action Editor's decision letter which summarizes the reviews and any suggested/required changes. Note that editorial decisions are taken by the Action Editor responsible for the manuscript, not the Editor, though the Action Editor may seek advice from the Editor, particularly in cases where a concern exists over the extent to which an article complies with the policies and procedures set out here.

Appeals. Authors whose manuscripts have been rejected outright may appeal to the Editor, who will ask a new Action Editor to look at the manuscript and the reviews. If the new Action Editor agrees with the first, the decision stands. If the new Action Editor disagrees with the first, the Editor will take the publication decision. Authors who feel that the Editor has acted improperly or unfairly when dealing with their appeal should contact the Editorial Board via the published complaints procedures.

Revise-and-resubmit papers. Authors receiving a revise-and-resubmit decision should – if they choose to do so – resubmit their paper via the editorial website, including a detailed cover letter in which they respond to the points raised, and flag any changes made to the manuscript as a result. The journal does not impose any deadline for submitting a resubmission (since months or even years may be required if additional experimental work is suggested and undertaken). However, authors who decide to withdraw their paper should do so (via the editorial website) as soon as possible.

Re-review. Resubmitted revise-and-resubmit papers will be re-reviewed by the original reviewers wherever possible, though the Action Editor may invite an alternative if both original reviewers decline. The Action Editor will determine the number of re-reviews required to make a decision: zero (e.g., if the changes requested are very minor), one (e.g., if the paper is re-reviewed by the more critical of two reviewers, who now recommends acceptance), two (e.g., if the changes requested are major) or – exceptionally – three or more (e.g., in cases of continuing disagreement between reviewers).

Revise-and-resubmit rounds. There is no formal limit to the number of revise-and-resubmit rounds that a paper may undergo, but – in the interests of not unduly taking up reviewers’ time – the Action Editor has discretion to reject outright a paper that appears to be making little progress in addressing any problems raised by the reviewers.

Accepted papers. When a paper has been accepted, the corresponding author will be notified via email, and asked to upload the final publication version of the article, typeset and formatted according to the published template, which is compulsory for accepted articles. Authors are entirely responsible for proofreading and typesetting their articles (including placing all figures and tables in the required location), providing alternative text for figures (for accessibility) and for correctly formatting and checking all references (the journal recommends the use of EndNote, Zotero, or Mendeley to manage citations). Authors are entirely responsible for spell-checking (the journal recommends the use of automatic spell-checking in Word or other software). In order to remain free of charge to both authors and readers, the journal does not employ any staff to conduct proofreading or typesetting; this model relies on authors taking full responsibility for these tasks. Accepted papers that do not conform to the published template will be returned to authors for reformatting.

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