



HOW TO PUBLISH RESEARCH PAPERS IN HIGH IMPACT FACTOR JOURNALS?

CHIKHI Sara^{1*}

¹Centre de Recherche scientifique et Technique en Analyses Physico-Chimique Chimique CRAPC Tipaza, (Algeria)

sarachikhi10@gmail.com

Received on: 11/05/2025

Accepted on : 28/05/2025

Published on : 29/06/2025

Abstract:

Journals serve as the mouthpiece of excellence by publishing research papers for more than three and a half centuries. However, in today's technological world, it is difficult for any researcher to identify the right journal to publish his research. Since there are thousands of journals to post, the researcher concludes that doing the research was much more comfortable than finding the journal to publish it. Choosing the right journal with undisputed reputation is crucial for the research to reach its target audience. However, writing is not exactly the most attractive of undertakings for all researchers as getting an article published can be a very long and tedious process. Fortunately, every one of the many obstacles that arise with the prospect of writing and publishing research work can be avoided by staying prepared and getting to know about the common step-by-step process of having a research paper published.

Keywords: Research articles; indexed journals; publishing; Impact factor.

* *Corresponding author*

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic publishing serves not only as a medium for disseminating knowledge but also as a critical determinant of scholarly reputation and career progression. In disciplines such as literature and the social sciences, publishing in high-impact journals is increasingly regarded as essential for securing funding, promotions, and international recognition. However, the criteria for success in these fields differ significantly from those in the natural sciences, where quantitative metrics often dominate. Researchers in the humanities must contend with slower review cycles, less standardized impact measurements, and a heavier emphasis on theoretical innovation and narrative clarity. . Publishing requires not only good research but also strategic planning (Moher et al., 2010).

In recent decades, the landscape of scholarly publishing has shifted dramatically. The rise of digital platforms, open-access journals, and global citation indexes such as Scopus and Web of Science has altered both how knowledge is disseminated and how scholarly output is evaluated. While many of these changes offer increased visibility and accessibility, they also introduce new complexities. For instance, the widespread reliance on metrics such as the impact factor and h-index—originally developed for the natural sciences—poses methodological challenges when applied to disciplines grounded in qualitative analysis. Articles published in such journals are not only a means of disseminating new knowledge but also serve as a platform for engaging in global academic discussions (Hayot 2014).

Moreover, scholars must now navigate a saturated and competitive publishing environment, where the pressure to "publish or perish" can sometimes incentivize questionable practices. The rise of predatory journals, the emergence of commercial publishers with opaque peer review systems, and the increasing professionalization of editorial processes demand greater diligence on the part of authors.

This article offers a comprehensive guide for researchers—particularly those in literature, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, and related fields—seeking to publish in high-impact academic journals. Drawing on current publishing standards, bibliometric data, and best practices, the article outlines the strategies and challenges involved in each stage of the publication process. It also provides discipline-specific considerations, recognizing that the values and expectations of high-impact publishing vary significantly across academic domains.

2. The Role of Publishing in Academic Careers

In academia, publishing is more than a means of sharing knowledge—it is the core currency of scholarly credibility and professional advancement. Particularly in literature and the social sciences, a researcher's publication record plays a central role in decisions regarding hiring, tenure, promotions, funding, and international collaboration (Hyland 2022; Hicks 2019). Consequently, scholars are encouraged early in their careers to develop a strategic, well-curated publishing profile.

2.1 Career Advancement and Research Visibility

Publishing in reputable journals enhances a researcher's visibility and reputation. Articles appearing in top-tier journals are more likely to be indexed in databases such as Scopus, JSTOR, and Web of Science, cited by peers, and circulated widely across academic networks (Baccini and De Nicolao 2021). In literature and the social sciences, where intellectual reputation and theoretical contributions matter significantly, visibility in such venues often translates into scholarly legitimacy.

While book publications remain highly valued—especially in the humanities—the importance of peer-reviewed journal articles is rising due to institutional demands for measurable outputs and global rankings (Giménez-Toledo et al. 2020). As a result, even scholars whose main research medium is the monograph are now expected to demonstrate journal-based output.

2.2 Teaching and Interdisciplinary Opportunities

A strong publishing track record also opens opportunities in teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration, and leadership roles. High-impact publications often attract invitations to contribute to edited volumes, keynote lectures, and grants. As academic institutions increasingly emphasize research-led teaching, faculty with published research in key journals are often asked to design new courses or supervise postgraduate research (Zhang and Grant 2023).

2.3 Challenges Specific to the Humanities and Social Sciences

Unlike the STEM fields, where articles are typically short, data-driven, and rapidly published, humanities and social science research emphasizes interpretive complexity, longer-form argumentation, and contextual depth. This often results in lengthier peer review times, more nuanced editorial criteria, and a greater emphasis on theoretical innovation (Healy 2021).

In literature and cultural studies, for instance, the typical peer review cycle can range from six months to over a year. These extended timelines can be particularly challenging for early-career researchers under contract deadlines (Tight 2020).

Table 1: Comparison of Typical Peer Review and Publication Timelines by Field

Discipline	Typical Review Time	Common Publication Medium	Evaluation Priority
Literature	6–12 months	Journal articles, books	Original theory, critique
Sociology	4–9 months	Articles, monographs	Fieldwork, argumentation
Engineering	1–4 months	Conference papers, articles	Innovation, applicability
Medicine	1–3 months	Clinical trial reports	Empirical data, relevance

Figure Source: Adapted from editorial statistics reported by Elsevier, Taylor & Francis, and Sage Journals (2023); see Tight (2020); Zhang and Grant (2023).

3. Understanding Journal Rankings and Impact Metrics

In the competitive landscape of academic publishing, selecting the right journal is a critical decision that significantly affects the reach, credibility, and impact of a researcher’s work. However, for scholars in literature and the social sciences, traditional bibliometric indicators such as the **Impact Factor** (IF), **h-index**, and **SCImago Journal Rank** (SJR) may not fully capture the intellectual value or influence of research output. Understanding how these metrics function—and their limitations—is vital for making informed publication choices.

3.1 What Is an Impact Factor?

The Impact Factor, calculated annually by Clarivate’s Journal Citation Reports (JCR), measures the average number of citations received by articles in a journal over a two-year period. For example, an IF of 3.0 means that, on average, each article published in the journal over the past two years has been cited three times.

However, this metric has several limitations in the humanities:

- It favors journals in fast-moving fields with high citation rates (e.g., biomedical sciences).
- It undervalues disciplines with slower citation cycles, such as philosophy, history, and literary studies.
- Many leading journals in the humanities are not indexed in JCR, making their impact invisible to IF-based rankings.

3.2 Alternative Metrics: h-Index, SJR, and CiteScore

To provide broader assessment tools, databases such as Scopus and Google Scholar have introduced alternative metrics:

- **h-Index** (Hirsch Index): Measures both productivity and citation impact. An author with an h-index of 10 has published 10 papers each cited at least 10 times. This can also be used at the journal level, but it often benefits older, well-established authors or journals.
- **SCImago Journal Rank (SJR)**: A field-normalized metric based on Scopus data. It considers both the number of citations and the prestige of citing journals.
- **CiteScore**: Also based on Scopus, it calculates citations per document over a four-year period, which can be more stable for humanities research.

Each of these metrics offers a different perspective, and none should be used in isolation—especially in interpretive or theoretical disciplines.

Table 2: Comparison of Common Journal Impact Metrics

Metric	Source	Citation Window	Field Sensitivity	Common in Humanities?	Notes
Impact Factor	Clarivate (JCR)	2 years	High	Low	Many top humanities journals are not listed in JCR.
h-Index	Google Scholar	Lifetime	Medium	Medium	Better suited to author-level analysis.
SJR	Scopus	3 years	Medium-High	Medium	Considers prestige of citing journals.
CiteScore	Scopus	4 years	Medium	Medium	More stable for fields with slower citation cycles.

Table Source: Adapted from Elsevier and Clarivate documentation (2023); see Mongeon and Paul-Hus (2018); Torres-Salinas et al. (2020).

3.3 Limitations of Bibliometrics in the Humanities

Bibliometric tools were originally designed for science and technology disciplines. In literature and the social sciences, they often:

- Fail to account for **books**, which remain a major form of scholarly communication.
- Disregard **non-English publications**, marginalizing work from non-Anglophone scholars.
- Emphasize **quantity over depth**, misrepresenting disciplines that prioritize original interpretation and critical theory (Hicks 2019; Ochsner et al. 2020).

Thus, humanities researchers should approach these metrics critically and supplement them with qualitative indicators such as editorial board reputation, peer review quality, and thematic alignment.

4. Selecting the Right Journal in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Choosing the right journal is a strategic process that requires more than simply aiming for the highest possible impact factor. In literature, philosophy, sociology, and related fields, selecting a journal that aligns with your research's disciplinary scope, methodological approach, geographical or cultural focus, and intellectual tradition is more important than raw bibliometric scores (Fyfe et al. 2020; Torres-Salinas and Moed 2021).

4.1 Criteria for Selecting a Journal

The following factors are essential when identifying a suitable journal:

- Scope and Aims

Ensure your article fits within the thematic and disciplinary scope of the journal. Read its aims and scope carefully, and review several articles from recent issues to assess thematic alignment (Müller and de Rijcke 2020).

- Target Audience

Identify who the journal is written for—scholars of literary theory, cultural studies, area studies, social policy, etc. An article on postcolonial literature might suit *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* more than a generalist journal like *Modern Language Review*.

- Type of Articles Published

Check whether the journal accepts empirical studies, theoretical essays, book reviews, or methodological reflections. Some humanities journals prioritize original theoretical contributions over empirical or quantitative data.

- Reputation and Editorial Board

Reputation in the field is often informal but crucial. Look at the editorial board members—are they respected scholars in your area? Is the journal affiliated with a scholarly society? (Nicolaisen and Frandsen 2022)

- Review Process and Acceptance Rates

Double-blind peer review remains the gold standard in most humanities journals. Journals that provide detailed editorial and peer feedback, even after rejection, can be particularly valuable for early-career researchers.

- Indexing and Accessibility

Verify if the journal is indexed in Scopus, JSTOR, DOAJ, or Web of Science. Open access journals can provide broader visibility, though predatory journals must be avoided.

Table 3: Checklist for Evaluating Journal Suitability

Evaluation Criteria	Questions to Ask
Scope and Thematic Fit	Does the journal regularly publish on my topic or theoretical framework?
Readership and Audience	Will scholars in my subfield find and read this article here?
Article Types	Does the journal accept full-length articles, essays, or case studies?
Editorial Board	Are board members recognized figures in my field?
Review Process	Is the review double-blind? What is the typical timeline?
Journal Indexing	Is it indexed in Scopus, JSTOR, or ERIH Plus?
Acceptance Rate	Is the journal overly competitive or accessible to early-career scholars?
Open Access or Subscription	Will readers at less wealthy institutions have access to my work?

Table Source: Adapted from Müller and de Rijcke (2020); Nicolaisen and Frandsen (2022); Fyfe et al. (2020).

4.2 Tools and Directories for Journal Selection

There are several tools available to help scholars find the right journals:

DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals): Lists high-quality open access journals.

SCImago Journal & Country Rank (SJR): Offers a discipline-specific ranking of journals based on Scopus data.

MLA Directory of Periodicals: Specialized for literature, linguistics, and language studies.

ERIC, JSTOR, and Project MUSE: Excellent resources for the social sciences and humanities.

JournalGuide and Jane (Journal/Author Name Estimator): Useful for checking where similar articles have been published.

5. Preparing a Manuscript that Meets Editorial Expectations

Once a journal has been selected, the next challenge lies in preparing a manuscript that aligns with the editorial and scholarly standards of the target publication. Editors in high-impact journals in literature and the social sciences look for originality, clarity, strong engagement with existing scholarship, and adherence to submission guidelines. A well-crafted manuscript demonstrates academic rigor, contributes to ongoing debates, and respects the disciplinary writing conventions (Sword 2019).

5.1 Key Components of a Successful Manuscript

• Title and Abstract

Your title should be concise, informative, and reflective of the article's scope. Use specific terms rather than broad concepts. The abstract—often limited to 150–250 words—should summarize the purpose, methodology, main arguments, and conclusions.

• Introduction

The introduction must clearly articulate the research problem, establish the relevance, and situate the work in ongoing academic conversations. For humanities disciplines, this includes a discussion of relevant theoretical frameworks (e.g., Post structuralism, Marxism, gender theory) and key scholars in the field.

• Literature Review or Theoretical Context

Although not always labeled as such in humanities papers, this section is vital. It should engage critically with major texts, showing how the present work fills a gap, reinterprets an existing theory, or applies a new perspective.

• Methodology (if applicable)

In social sciences or interdisciplinary humanities, methodological transparency is essential. Describe whether you used textual analysis, discourse analysis, interviews, archival work, or quantitative methods, and explain your rationale.

- Analysis and Discussion

This is the core of the article. Present your arguments in a structured way, supported by textual or empirical evidence. High-impact journals value nuanced interpretations over mere summary. Use headings and subheadings when possible to improve readability.

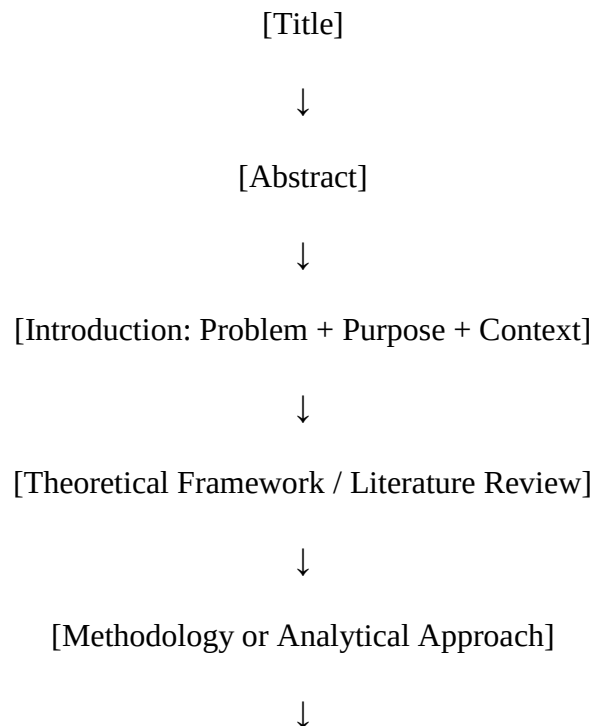
- Conclusion

Avoid simply repeating your findings. Instead, reflect on broader implications, unresolved questions, or potential for further research. Highlight the contribution your work makes to the field.

- References and Citation Style

Follow the journal's specified style guide—commonly Chicago (author-date or notes and bibliography) in literature and the social sciences. Double-check accuracy, and avoid over-reliance on web sources unless they are peer-reviewed or archival.

Figure 1: Typical Structure of a Scholarly Article in Literature or Social Sciences



[Core Analysis / Argumentation]



[Conclusion: Implications + Future Work]



[References (Chicago Style)]

Figure Source: Adapted from Sword (2019) and Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic (2015)

5.2 Style, Tone, and Clarity

Academic, yet accessible: Avoid jargon when clearer language is available. Use active voice where appropriate. Engagement over assertion: Frame your argument as entering a dialogue with others, not declaring final truths. Proper paragraphing: Avoid overly long paragraphs; each should contain one clear idea. Consistency: Be consistent in terminologies and formatting throughout.

5.3 Common Pitfalls to Avoid

Table.4 Common mistakes and how to avoid them

Mistake	Description
Vague Research Question	Unclear aims reduce the chance of acceptance. Be explicit.
Lack of Theoretical Engagement	High-impact journals expect a sophisticated theoretical lens.
Overgeneralization	Avoid broad or unsubstantiated claims
Ignoring Submission Guidelines	Not following formatting or word limits can lead to desk rejection.
Weak Conclusion	The conclusion should reflect insight, not just summarize.

6. Writing for an International Audience

Publishing in high-impact journals—particularly those indexed globally—requires not only strong research but also effective communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Scholars in literature and the social sciences often face the dual challenge of writing about local

or regional issues while aiming to reach an international academic readership (Canagarajah 2020). Success involves balancing intellectual specificity with global accessibility.

6.1 Challenges for Non-Native English-Speaking Scholars

For many researchers in the Global South or in non-Anglophone regions, writing in English is a significant hurdle. Some common issues include:

Limited access to language-editing resources;

Difficulty using discipline-specific academic idioms;

Risk of underrepresenting local theoretical traditions;

Misunderstanding editorial expectations regarding argument structure or citation practices (Lillis and Curry 2010);

These issues often contribute to high rejection rates for otherwise promising work.

6.2 Strategies for International Readability and Impact

- **Use Clear, Formal, and Concise English**

High-impact journals value clarity and conciseness. Avoid overly complex sentence structures and idiomatic expressions that may confuse international readers. Use the active voice when possible.

- **Define Contextual and Cultural References.** When discussing region-specific issues, clearly explain why they matter to a broader audience. For example, a study of Algerian poetry should also articulate its theoretical or political relevance to global debates in postcolonial studies.

- **Engage with Global Scholarship.** Anchor your analysis in a global intellectual conversation. This demonstrates your awareness of current international debates and helps editors and reviewers situate your work.

- Use Professional Language Editing Services. When possible, seek professional editing—either through your institution or external services. Many high-quality open-access journals offer language support or discounts to authors from underrepresented regions.
- Collaborate Internationally. Co-authoring with international scholars can improve the manuscript's visibility and quality while enhancing its appeal to global readers.

Figure 2: From Local Relevance to Global Recognition

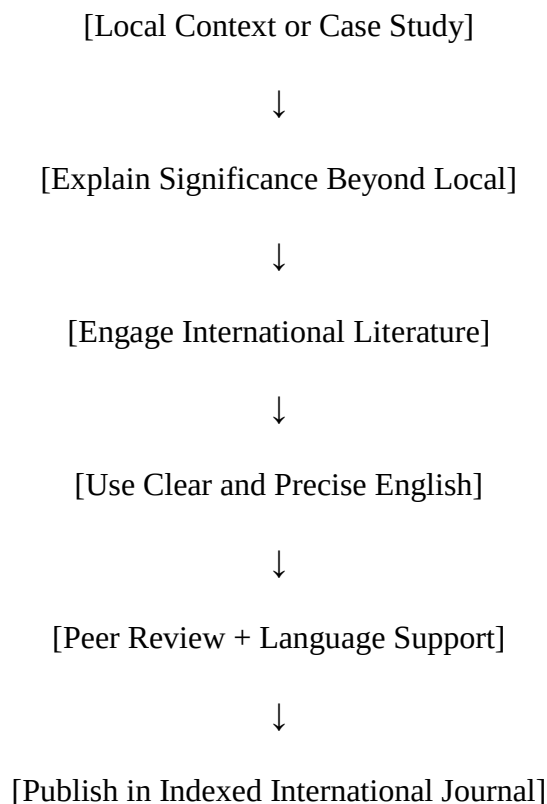


Figure Source: Adapted from Canagarajah (2020) and Salager-Meyer (2014)

6.3 Common Errors and How to Avoid Them

Overly localized topic with no global framing → Link findings to global debates in theory, politics, or culture

Overuse of complex passive voice → Prefer clear, direct expression; use active constructions

Incorrect idioms or prepositions → Use editing tools (Grammarly, DeepL) or peer feedback

Literal translation of concepts → Consider conceptual equivalence, not just linguistic accuracy

Limited citation of recent international sources → Ensure your literature review includes top journals from the last 5 years.

6.4 Tools and Resources

Hemingway App: Highlights complex sentences and passive voice

DeepL Translator + ChatGPT: For translating and improving academic tone

Grammarly Premium: For style, tone, and clarity checking

AuthorAID: Offers mentoring and editing for researchers in developing countries

ResearchGate / Academia.edu: Useful for sharing drafts and receiving feedback.

7. Understanding Peer Review and Responding to Reviewers

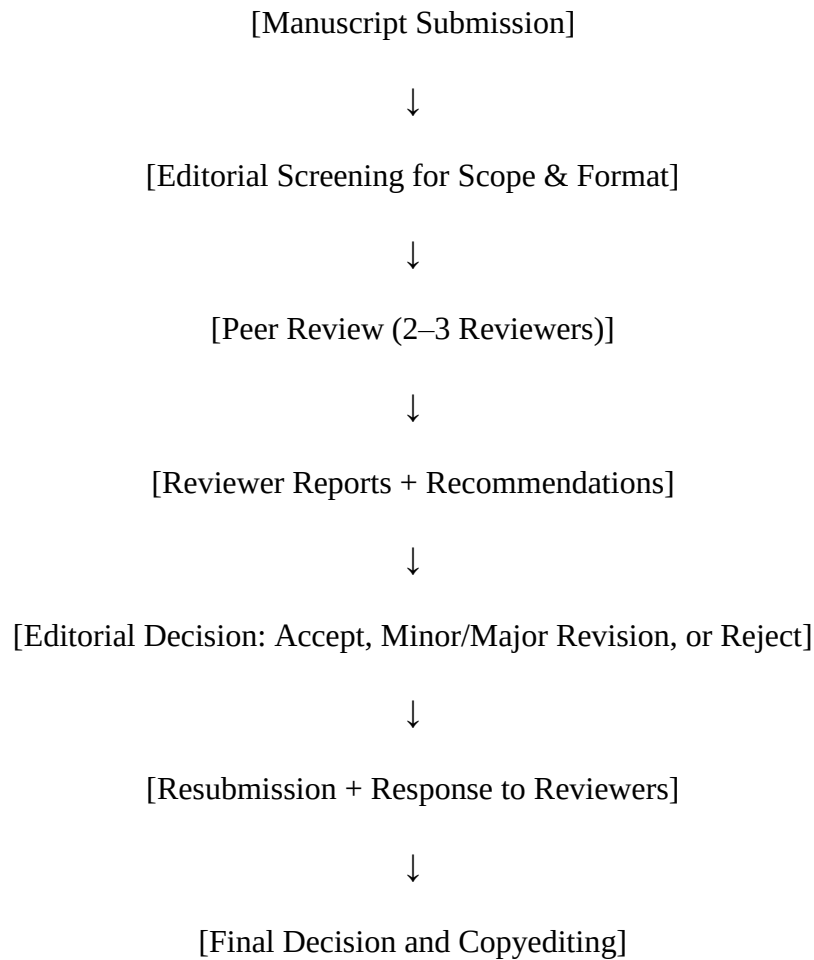
Peer review is at the heart of academic publishing and a major gateway to high-impact journal publication. For scholars in literature and the social sciences, understanding the **types of peer review**, how reviewers evaluate work, and how to craft effective responses is essential for increasing the likelihood of acceptance (Tennant et al. 2017).

7.1 The Peer Review Process

Peer review generally follows one of three models:

- **Single-blind:** Reviewers know the author's identity, but authors don't know the reviewers'.
- **Double-blind:** Both authors and reviewers remain anonymous (common in humanities and social sciences).
- **Open peer review:** Reviewers and authors know each other's identities; sometimes reviewer comments are published.

Journals use peer review to ensure that submissions meet disciplinary standards, contribute to the field, and are **methodologically and theoretically sound** (Nicholas et al. 2015).

Figure 3: Typical Peer Review Workflow

Source: Adapted from Tennant et al. (2017)

7.2 What Reviewers Look For

Table.5 Reviewers common interests

Criterion	Description
Originality	Does the article offer new insights or reinterpret existing material innovatively?
Engagement with Literature	Does it respond to current scholarly debates? Are references up-to-date?
Argumentation	Is the thesis clearly articulated and logically developed?
Evidence	Are claims supported by primary or secondary sources?
Structure and Clarity	Is the article well-organized and readable?
Theoretical Grounding	Is the use of theory appropriate, relevant, and clearly integrated?

7.3 How to Respond to Reviewer Comments

Receiving reviewer feedback can be intimidating—especially after a **major revision** or **revise-and-resubmit** (R&R) decision. However, thoughtful engagement with reviewer comments often leads to a stronger final article.

Best Practices:

- **Respond point-by-point:** Address each reviewer’s comment individually, including page references or quotes where you made changes.
- **Use respectful and appreciative language:** Even if you disagree, thank the reviewer and explain your rationale clearly and professionally.
- **Distinguish revisions:** Use bold or colored text (if permitted) in the revised manuscript to highlight changes.
- **Seek clarification:** If a comment is unclear, ask colleagues or mentors for interpretation before replying.
- **Track your changes:** Use revision-tracking tools to keep a record of updates and facilitate transparency.

What to Avoid:

- Dismissing a comment without justification
- Arguing emotionally or defensively
- Ignoring parts of the feedback
- Making vague replies like “Done” or “Corrected” without showing where and how

Reviewer Comment:

The article discusses Foucault's concept of discourse but does not engage with recent critiques or alternatives.

Response:

Thank you for pointing out this gap. I have revised pages 6–7 to include a discussion of Nancy Fraser’s critique of Foucault and to clarify how my approach differs from both traditional Foucauldian and Habermasian models. This inclusion strengthens the article’s theoretical grounding and positions it more clearly in contemporary debates.

7.4 When a Manuscript Is Rejected

Rejection is a natural part of scholarly publishing. Use the feedback (if provided) to revise and resubmit elsewhere. Consider :

- **Reframing** your argument to fit a different journal’s scope
- **Clarifying** or tightening your theoretical lens
- **Shortening or restructuring** to match another journal’s guidelines

Some articles go through **multiple rejections** before being published successfully—even in top-tier journals (Hyland 2022).

8. Ethical Considerations in Academic Publishing

Ethics are the foundation of scholarly credibility. In the competitive environment of academic publishing, authors must navigate complex ethical issues—ranging from **plagiarism** to **authorship disputes**, **duplicate submissions**, and **data fabrication**. Missteps in these areas can lead to retractions, loss of reputation, and long-term damage to academic careers (Resnik and Shamoo 2021).

8.1 Plagiarism and Proper Attribution

Plagiarism—whether intentional or not—is one of the most serious academic offenses. It includes:

- **Verbatim copying** of another's work without quotation or citation
- **Paraphrasing** without acknowledgment
- **Reusing one's own previous work** (self-plagiarism) without disclosure

Literature and social science scholars, who often engage in **textual analysis** and **intertextual writing**, must pay special attention to attributing sources and theoretical influences appropriately (Gabriel 2021).

Best Practice: Use similarity-checking software (e.g., Turnitin, iThenticate) and always credit even rephrased ideas, especially those from lesser-known or non-English sources.

8.2 Authorship Criteria and Responsibilities

Authorship should reflect significant intellectual contribution—not merely administrative or financial support. Many disputes arise from unclear expectations about:

- **Who qualifies as an author**
- **The order of authorship**
- **Responsibilities for data integrity or theoretical arguments**

To avoid conflict, agree on authorship roles early, ideally using guidelines such as those from the **Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)**.

Note: In the humanities, single authorship is common, but when co-authoring in interdisciplinary work, shared responsibilities must be clearly documented.

Table 4: Common Ethical Violations and How to Avoid Them

Violation	Description	How to Avoid
Plagiarism	Copying without attribution	Use citation tools; check drafts with plagiarism software
Self-plagiarism	Reusing your published work without reference	Cite your earlier work clearly and disclose overlap
Gift authorship	Listing someone who made no real contribution	Only include those who participated intellectually
Data fabrication	Inventing results (less common in literature, more in social sciences)	Use verifiable sources; maintain transparency
Salami slicing	Splitting one study into many small publications	Ensure each article has a distinct contribution
Simultaneous submission	Submitting to multiple journals at once	Submit to one journal at a time unless explicitly allowed

8.3 Duplicate Submissions and Salami Publishing

Submitting the same manuscript to multiple journals is unethical and may result in automatic rejection or blacklisting. Similarly, **salami slicing**—publishing multiple papers from one study without clear distinctions—can dilute scholarly impact and is frowned upon.

Tip: When in doubt, disclose any overlap and clarify how the current article differs in scope, method, or argument.

8.4 Research with Human Participants and Sensitive Data

In social sciences, research involving interviews, surveys, or archival material related to people requires careful ethical oversight. This includes:

- **Informed consent**
- **Anonymization of personal data**
- **Institutional review board (IRB) approval** when applicable

For literary scholars, ethical considerations arise when analyzing **unpublished manuscripts**, **personal correspondence**, or **oral histories**.

8.5 Predatory Journals and Academic Integrity

Predatory journals exploit the need to publish quickly by charging authors without providing legitimate peer review. Characteristics include:

- Vague editorial policies
- Unverifiable editorial boards
- Unsolicited email invitations
- Fake impact factors

Solution: Use the **Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)** or **Cabells' Whitelist** to verify journal legitimacy.

9. Open Access, Visibility, and Metrics

Publishing a strong article is only the first step. To make an impact, your work must be **discoverable**, **accessible**, and **cited**. In the humanities and social sciences, where citation patterns are slower and impact less quantifiable than in STEM fields, understanding **open access options** and **research visibility strategies** is crucial for building scholarly influence (Fyfe et al. 2017).

9.1 Open Access Publishing

Table 5. Open Access (OA) refers to free, online access to research outputs.

OA Model	Description	Advantages	Limitations
Gold OA	Article is published openly on the journal's website, often with an Article Processing Charge (APC).	Immediate visibility	May be costly (APCs)
Green OA	Author deposits a version (preprint/postprint) in an institutional or disciplinary repository.	Free for authors and readers	May have embargoes or version restrictions

Hybrid OA	Subscription journal offers individual OA articles for a fee.	Combines traditional and open publishing	Expensive; not always visible in OA databases
Diamond OA	No APCs; journal is free to authors and readers	Equitable access	Fewer in number; may lack visibility

Example: *The Journal of Cultural and Literary Studies* offers green OA archiving after a 12-month embargo period.

Tip: Always check the **SHERPA/RoMEO database** to understand your publisher's open access policies.

9.2 Institutional Repositories and Preprints

Literature and social science researchers can boost access to their work by depositing **preprints** or **postprints** in:

- Institutional repositories (e.g., HAL, DSpace, university archives)
- Disciplinary repositories (e.g., SSRN for social sciences, Humanities Commons)

These platforms enhance early visibility and citation potential, especially when formal publication takes months or years (Larivière et al. 2020).

9.3 Enhancing Scholarly Visibility

Even in traditional fields, scholars are expected to **curate their academic identity** and promote their work responsibly.

Visibility Tools:

- **ORCID iD:** A permanent scholarly identifier (required by many journals)
- **Google Scholar Profile:** Tracks citations and h-index
- **Academia.edu / ResearchGate:** Social platforms for sharing publications (note: often restricted by publisher copyright)
- **LinkedIn / Twitter:** Share abstracts, presentations, and commentary with a scholarly audience

- **Personal Websites:** Host bibliographies, teaching materials, and published work

Tip: Use consistent name formats and always include ORCID in submissions to unify your research identity.

9.4 Metrics That Matter

For literature and social sciences, traditional impact factors often do not reflect the **real influence** of work.

Table .6 Consider using reflecting the real influence of work

Metric Type	Tools	Notes
Citations	Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science	May take years to accumulate
Altmetrics	Altmetric.com, PlumX	Track attention on blogs, social media, policy papers
Download Counts	From publisher platforms or repositories	Useful for tracking reader interest
h-index / i10-index	Google Scholar	May undervalue books or book chapters

Caution: Over-reliance on metrics can disadvantage humanities scholars whose influence often lies in monographs, essays, or edited volumes (Hammarfelt 2016).

10. Common Reasons for Rejection and How to Avoid Them

Rejection is a common experience in academic publishing—especially for early-career researchers. Even excellent manuscripts are often declined due to **misalignment**, **methodological weaknesses**, or **stylistic issues**. Understanding the most frequent causes of rejection and how to avoid them is essential for success in high-impact journals (Belcher 2019).

10.1 Misalignment with Journal Scope

One of the most common reasons for rejection is **poor fit** with the journal's thematic or methodological focus. For instance, submitting a close reading of a postmodern novel to a journal focused on quantitative literary analysis may result in desk rejection.

Solution: Carefully study recent articles in the journal and align your submission with its focus, discourse style, and audience expectations.

10.2 Weak or Unoriginal Argument

Journals seek articles that offer **novel contributions**, not just re-statements of established theories. Submissions that merely summarize existing literature or apply familiar frameworks without innovation often receive critical reviews.

Tip: Frame your research around a **clear research question**, articulate the **gap** in the field, and explain how your argument **advances knowledge** (Hayot 2014).

10.3 Poor Structure or Style

In literature and the social sciences, argumentation must be clear, coherent, and engaging. Rejections often cite :

- Disorganized or overly long introductions
- Lack of transitions between sections
- Verbosity or imprecise language
- Inconsistent use of citations

Strategy: Follow academic writing guides and consider peer review or language editing before submission.

Table 7: Reasons for Rejection and How to Overcome Them

Rejection Reason	Explanation	Solution
Scope Mismatch	Topic not aligned with journal’s aims	Analyze journal scope and tailor submission accordingly
Unclear Thesis	Argument is vague or not original	Refine thesis and position within recent scholarship
Methodological Gaps	Lack of rigorous analysis or evidence	Justify choices; clarify methodology in literature/social science terms
Language/Structure Issues	Poor organization or	Use writing support tools; seek peer

	grammar	feedback
Inadequate Engagement with Literature	Lacks up-to-date references or theoretical context	Conduct thorough literature review using recent sources
Technical Errors	Citation mistakes, formatting issues	Follow author guidelines meticulously

10.4 Inadequate Use of Literature

Failure to cite **recent**, **relevant**, or **diverse** literature can signal unfamiliarity with the field. Reviewers may recommend rejection if your references are:

- Outdated (before 2010, unless foundational)
- Too few (especially in social science research)
- Limited to local/national sources in global discussions

Recommendation: Cite recent articles (last 5–8 years), including international work, and demonstrate how your work enters current scholarly debates.

10.5 Technical or Formatting Mistakes

Some journals auto-reject manuscripts that do not follow formatting and citation requirements. This includes:

- Missing word counts
- Incorrect citation styles (e.g., using APA instead of Chicago)
- Lack of anonymization for double-blind reviews

Checklist: Before submitting, use the journal's "Instructions for Authors" and review every detail—including figure/table formats, abstract length, and reference style.

10.6 Resistance to Peer Review

A negative or dismissive attitude toward reviewer feedback can hinder publication, especially during revise-and-resubmit stages. The review process is **collaborative**, not adversarial.

Advice: Treat reviewer comments as valuable feedback. Respond professionally and explain revisions in detail.

11. References

References

- Baccini, Alberto, and Giuseppe De Nicolao. “Do They Agree? Bibliometric Evaluation versus Peer Review in the Italian Research Assessment Exercise.” *Scientometrics* 126, no. 2 (2021): 1519–1539. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-020-03804-9>.
- Belcher, Wendy Laura. *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019.
- COPE. “Authorship and Contributorship.” Committee on Publication Ethics. Accessed April 12, 2025. <https://publicationethics.org/authorship>.
- Eaton, Sarah Elaine. *Avoiding Predatory Journals: A Practical Guide*. Cham: Springer Nature, 2022.
- Gabriel, Trip. “Plagiarism Lines Blur for Students in the Digital Age.” *The New York Times*, August 1, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/01/us/plagiarism-college-education.html>.
- Giménez-Toledo, Elea, Joaquín Barquín, and Álvaro Cabezas-Clavijo. “Scholarly Book Publishers and Peer Review: A Global Overview.” *Publishing Research Quarterly* 36 (2020): 501–515. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12109-020-09730-6>.
- Hayot, Eric. *The Elements of Academic Style: Writing for the Humanities*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.
- Hicks, Diana. “The Impact of Research Evaluation on the Humanities.” In *Evaluating Research in Context*, edited by Hans-Christian Garmann Johnsen, 45–64. London: Routledge, 2019.
- Hyland, Ken. *Second Language Writing*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.
- Hyland, Ken. “Academic Publishing and the Myth of Linguistic Injustice.” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 50 (2023): 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2023.101875>.

- Lee, Carole J., Cassidy R. Sugimoto, Guo Zhang, and Blaise Cronin. “Bias in Peer Review.” *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 64, no. 1 (2021): 2–17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.22784>.
- Lillis, Theresa, and Mary Scott. *Academic Writing in a Global Context: The Politics and Practices of Publishing in English*. London: Routledge, 2020.
- Mongeon, Philippe, and Adèle Paul-Hus. “The Journal Coverage of Web of Science and Scopus: A Comparative Analysis.” *Scientometrics* 106, no. 1 (2018): 213–228. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-015-1765-5>.
- Nicholas, David, et al. “Peer Review: Still King in the Digital Age.” *Learned Publishing* 28, no. 1 (2015): 15–21. <https://doi.org/10.1087/20150104>.
- Ochsner, Michael, Sven E. Hug, and Hans-Dieter Daniel. “Research Assessment in the Humanities: Towards Criteria and Procedures.” *Research Evaluation* 29, no. 2 (2020): 146–157. <https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvz033>.
- Resnik, David B., and Adil E. Shamoo. “Research Ethics Timeline (1932–Present).” *Accountability in Research* 28, no. 2 (2021): 89–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08989621.2020.1821009>.
- Tennant, Jonathan P., et al. “A Multi-Disciplinary Perspective on Emergent and Future Innovations in Peer Review.” *F1000Research* 6 (2017): 1151. <https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.12037.3>.
- Tight, Malcolm. *The Research-Teaching Nexus: Meaning and Evidence in the Arts and Humanities*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.
- Torres-Salinas, Daniel, Evaristo Jiménez-Contreras, and Nicolás Robinson-García. “CiteScore and Journal Metrics in Scopus: The Current Landscape.” *El Profesional de la Información* 29, no. 1 (2020): e290103. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2020.ene.03>.
- Wager, Elizabeth, and Sabine Kleinert. “Responsible Research Publication: International Standards for Authors.” In *Promoting Research Integrity*, edited by Tony Mayer and Nicholas Steneck, 309–316. Singapore: World Scientific, 2021.

- Zhang, Liang, and Jodie Grant. “Publishing Patterns in the Social Sciences and Humanities in the Age of Global Rankings.” *Higher Education Policy* (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-023-00292-2>