

# **Publishing in the JOI: Guidelines and Recommendations**

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## **Abstract**

This article is intended to supplement the *Journal of Interpreting (JOI)* Author Guidelines and presents recommendations from the editors on preparing manuscripts for publication. A summary of APA style and an overview of ethical academic writing are provided. The *JOI* editors provide tips for upgrading your work to a scholarly standard required by the *JOI* and guide you through the publication process.

## **Introduction to the Publishing Process**

Sharing your work through publication is critical to the growth of our profession and the *Journal of Interpreting (JOI)* is an excellent outlet for us to present ideas that inspire and inform each other. With RID membership at an all-time high of 15,000, the *JOI*'s range is far-reaching. New authors and experienced ones are encouraged to submit their work to *JOI* for consideration. The publishing process begins with a manuscript that the author determines is complete and ready for publication. "Publication ready" means that the author has logically developed a topic (whether research based or an innovative practice), clearly written the information, and followed the guidelines set out by the journal. It also means that the manuscript has been proofread carefully so that all grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are accurate and that the organization of ideas is logical and easy to follow. Authors who are interested in publishing their work in *JOI* can find submission guidelines online at the RID website under "Publications." By reviewing these *Author Guidelines*, authors gain an understanding of the scope of *JOI* and can make a determination if their manuscripts are good matches to the journal. The term "scope" refers to the mission of the journal, which, in the case of *JOI*, is to publish "...scholarly manuscripts, research reports, and practitioner essays and letters relevant to effective practices in the signed language

interpreting profession” (<http://rid.org/publications/joi/index.cfm/AID/112>).

Once a *match to scope* has been made, the author will proceed with preparing a manuscript that meets the journal’s guidelines for style, format, length, citations, and academic writing, in general. *JOI’s Author Guidelines* specify the criteria by which a manuscript will be reviewed and aid the reviewers in making a recommendation of whether or not to publish it. Generally speaking, if a topic holds potential interest for the interpreting practitioner or consumers of interpreting services, it is eligible for review by the *JOI* Board of Editors.

When the *JOI* editors receive a manuscript, they vet, or screen, it for appropriateness and general academic style before sending it to reviewers. If they determine that it is eligible for review, any identifying information about the author or the author’s affiliation is removed from the manuscript and it is sent to two reviewers. This identifying information includes the title page and any reference to self or home institution within the text. Interestingly, many writers are unaware that some word processing software embeds identifying information about the document and the author (i.e., author’s name, initials, company name). As standard practice, the *JOI* editors block this information so that reviewers cannot determine the author’s identity. If you are interested in doing this yourself, you can look at the document’s *Properties*, which are found in the Microsoft Word *File* menu. Taking into consideration the topic and the expertise of individual reviewers, the editors attempt to match the paper to reviewers who can evaluate the content as well as the form. This is called a “peer review” process, and specifically, the editors follow a double-blind review process whereby the reviewers are not aware of the author’s identity or the identity of other reviewers. Likewise, the author is unaware of who provided the reviews of the manuscript.

The editors provide reviewers with general guidelines for conducting the review as well as a series of questions and rubrics to guide their examination of the manuscript. As part of the review process, reviewers respond to questions designed to confirm that the manuscript fits within the scope of the *JOI*, is scholarly in nature, and presents a topic that is current. Following a careful reading of the manuscript, reviewers rate its appropriateness for publication by responding to questions that address relevance of the work, the author’s literary

style, the manuscript’s overall organization, the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript and specific recommendations to the author that would improve the overall quality of the manuscript. The final reviewer report is a holistic overview of the piece. Table 1 provides a sample of the rubric that reviewers use to evaluate a manuscript.

Table 1

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Overall Quality					
Writing Form					
APA 6th Style					
Literature Review					
Research Design					
Description of Methods					
Results Report					
Discussion (Limitations)					

Table 1. Reviewer rubric

### Outcome of the review process

Typically, reviewers are given approximately 4 weeks to review a manuscript. If the two reviewers and the editors are in agreement that the manuscript should be published, the editors prepare a summary of the reviewers’ recommendations for improving the manuscript and work with the author to address them. At this point, the editors provide authors with: (1) a table listing all the reviewers’ suggestions for revisions (if any), and (2) a copy of their manuscript with suggestions imbedded. It is the author’s prerogative to follow through with revising the manuscript or to withdraw it from publication consideration. If the author decides to revise and re-submit (usually within a short window of revision time), he or she designates beside each suggestion listed in the table where the changes were made in the manuscript. If the author disagrees with a reviewer’s comment or suggestion and decides not to make the requested change, there is a column in the table to provide a rationale for the decision. These tools are intended

assist authors in their revision process and assure that all of the reviewers' concerns have been addressed before proceeding to publication.

If the two reviewers are not in agreement about recommending publication or if they have distinctly different evaluations of a manuscript, it is sent to a third reviewer before the editors make the final decision whether or not to publish it. In most cases, a manuscript that needs to be sent to a third reviewer is returned to the author for revisions, and it will be accepted for publication once the author makes those revisions. Sometimes, extensive revisions are necessary, either for content or form reasons, in which case, the editors will encourage the author to rework the manuscript (possibly with the help of a methodology or writing mentor) according to the reviewers' suggestions and resubmit the manuscript for the next issue of *JOI*. Once a manuscript has been revised and re-submitted, the editors determine if the changes adequately prepare the manuscript for publication. At this point, the editors and author will work closely together, usually in a very short turn-around time, to review the work with a critical eye for detail so that the final publication is clean, professional, logically developed, and clearly articulated.

#### **Who are the reviewers?**

A call for reviewers went out to the RID membership in Spring 2010 and from those applicants, the editors recommended the current slate of reviewers to the RID Board of Directors, who appointed them to a four-year term of service. In the event that the editors need additional reviewers for a given issue (whether due to high volume of submissions or a need for specialized content expertise), guest reviewers are recruited to join the review team for a short-term commitment. The current *JOI* Board of Editors represents interpreters, deaf community members, linguists, consultants, scholars, administrators, researchers, practitioners, and interpreter educators, all of whom have academic writing experience. The board includes domestic as well as international reviewers who represent the spoken and signed language interpreting profession. Collectively, this board brings vast experience to journal editorship, volunteering large amounts of time to review manuscripts during the months preceding publication.

The role of a reviewer is to determine whether or not a

manuscript meets the standards of the journal for publication. Reviewers spend many hours evaluating papers for content appropriateness, sound research design, appropriate analysis (in the case of research reports), ethical foundations for research, writing style (logic and coherency), and citation accuracy to ensure academic integrity. It is the role of the editors to consider the recommendations of the reviewers in making a final decision about publishing or rejecting a manuscript. The typical recommendations that reviewers make are *accept without revision*, *accept with revisions*, *reject*, or *reject but resubmit for next issue following major revisions*. In most cases, a manuscript that has been vetted and sent to reviewers is returned with an *accept with revisions* or *reject but resubmit for next issue following major revisions* decision. Manuscripts that do not meet the journal's standards for scope and academic rigor may be recommended to the RID Communications Department for publication in the *VIEWS* as a more appropriate outlet for dissemination.

#### **The publication timeline**

The time that lapses from submission to actual print publication varies with different journals. *JOI*'s timeline is to publish the journal approximately 6 -8 months from the submission deadline, which was June 1, 2010 for this issue. Future issues will have an earlier submission deadline, March 1, given the amount of time that reviewers must devote to each manuscript, the final edits that editors must complete, and the need to coordinate publication with the schedules of RID's national office personnel. Once a manuscript is returned to an author for revisions, the author has a few weeks to address the concerns of the reviewers before returning it for final editing. The editors conduct one final edit of the manuscript and then submit the final manuscript to the RID National Office. The very end of the process involves the RID national office personnel who copy-edit and format the manuscripts for printing.

Prior to submitting a manuscript, there are numerous steps that an author can take to strengthen it and increase its likelihood of publication (Webber, 2001). First and foremost, the manuscript must satisfy all the submission guidelines, be an original piece of work (not published elsewhere), and focus on either research or innovative practices in interpreting (for a

detailed discussion of ethically refraining from self-plagiarism and submitting work previously published, see Davis, 2005). Generally speaking, if a topic holds potential interest for the readership, it is eligible for review by the *JOI* Board of Editors. The following sections will address specific components of academic writing and provide additional sections for producing a manuscript that is publishable in *JOI*.

### **Ethical practices and academic integrity**

There are basic ethical practices and standards of academic integrity that govern any publication of original work. When an author submits a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal for consideration, it is unethical to submit it simultaneously to another journal (APA, 2010; Davis, 2005). The process requires that an author either wait for a journal's decision to publish (or not to publish) the work before submitting it to a different journal, or the author can withdraw a submission from consideration if he or she so desires. The important premise is that the manuscript is in review by only one journal at a time. If any part of the manuscript has been previously published (as in conference proceedings), either in its entirety or in part, the author has the responsibility to disclose this to the editors at the time of submission. The journal editors then determine whether or not to proceed with the review process, and if a decision is made to proceed, the author may be requested to obtain copyright clearance to publish "borrowed" material.

When it comes to academic integrity, a general rule is to err on the side of caution and obtain the necessary permissions prior to submitting your manuscript to *JOI*. Permission to use another author's figures, pictures, charts, graphs, or other visual images must be obtained by the original author, even if those materials are adapted and original versions were not used. Permission for such use can be obtained from the copyright owner, which may be another journal. When you obtain permission, it is helpful if you provide this to the *JOI* editors at the time you submit your manuscript. On rare occasions, articles that have been published elsewhere may be reprinted in the *JOI*, but these submissions are required to undergo the same review process as other submissions and must have the written permission from the original journal or publication.

In addition to the requirement of a manuscript to be

original, a key aspect of academic integrity is the proper citation of sources. Naturally, direct quotes are sourced to their originator, but citation is also necessary when expanding upon the ideas of another person or paraphrasing another person's work. Assertions, or statements presented as fact, should either be common knowledge or be cited to the appropriate source. In addition to being unethical, blanket statements of fact without substantiation from reliable sources cause the author to lose credibility with the readers and affect the degree to which the assertions can be trusted as truth (Harris, 2001, 2011).

Citation of information sources cannot be stressed enough. The *JOI* adheres closely to the most recently published Publication Manual (6<sup>th</sup> edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2010). This source is very precise about how to avoid plagiarism (not properly citing an information source) and all authors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the protocol for proper citation. The APA's general recommendation is to "cite the work of those individuals whose ideas, theories, or research have directly influenced your work" (p. 169). Incorporating the work of others is a good way to create a context for your subject matter and show the reader where your topic fits into the bigger picture of the interpreting profession. In fact, it is necessary in order for readers to gain clear understanding of your work's foundation. Through proper citation, the readers can follow the "breadcrumb trail" to other works that they might be interested in reading. One of the most common comments that reviewers make on a manuscript is "source" beside an assertion that requires a citation. Properly crediting the ideas of others is central to ethical reporting and the *JOI* editorial team is committed to making sure that authors comply with these standards. A "clean" manuscript refers to a lack of errors in reporting, citation, and articulation of ideas in proper English. According to Hughes, Qnwuegbuzie, Daniel, and Slate (2010), manuscripts that contain more than three citation errors are four times more likely to be rejected for publication. The final edit of a manuscript can be minimized if authors initially pay close attention to APA headings, table and figure construction, accuracy of websites cited, and other mechanical details.

Harris (2011) provides a comprehensive list of intellectual property that needs to be cited. The list includes someone else's words that the author summarizes or paraphrases,

ideas, opinions, conclusions, unique concepts, examples, unique concepts, solutions to problems, and “the structure or sequencing of facts, ideas, or arguments” (p. 85). Harris goes on to emphasize that information location or format are irrelevant (such as something you have located on the internet, vlog, or DVD) and all sources of information must be cited. The exception to citation is in the use of “common knowledge.” This means that if you discuss information that is easily observed by the public (e.g. Interpreters process information quickly), comes from common facts (e.g., current certification is the NIC), or is a common saying, the information does not require citation. The best rule of thumb to follow is if there is any doubt where the information originated, it needs to be cited. It is better to over-cite than under-cite, and the editors will be able to remove citations that are not necessary (this is seldom the case, since under-citing is far more common).

### Reporting guidelines

The *JOI* accepts three types of submissions: *Research and Application*, *Innovative Practices*, and *Reviews*. The reviews are invited by the editors and will usually focus on new materials, books, or media resources for skill development or CEUs. Research submissions can be based upon quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research. They must be accompanied by a statement that the project was undertaken with the understanding and written consent of each participant and was approved by the local ethics committee (e.g., an Institutional Review Board). In most cases, this means that a statement within the text indicates that the Institutional Review Board at the author’s university affiliation approved participant recruitment and engagement. If the author is not affiliated with a university, he or she must provide evidence that informed consent was obtained prior to collecting data. The *JOI* editors reserve the right to reject a paper if there is doubt regarding appropriate protocol for collecting data from human subjects.

Authors who intend to submit a manuscript for the research category may focus on recent original research, replication of research, or reviews of research. Guidelines for writing a research report can be found in the resources provided at the end of this article or in the APA manual (6<sup>th</sup> edition). The typical sections of a research report are *Abstract*, *Introduction*

(without heading), *Method*, *Results*, *Discussion*, and *References*. It is important for the *Introduction* to state the problem near the beginning and discuss why the problem is important and deserves to be studied. It also outlines and informs the reader about the objectives of the study and existing literature on the subject (or the lack thereof) (APA, 2010). The *Methods* section presents such details as participant characteristics (and recruitment efforts to select the sample), research design, instruments used, and data collection. This report should provide readers with enough information to replicate the study, so it should be comprehensive about the details of everything the researcher did. The *Results* section presents the data in its analyzed form and not raw data. Sometimes, it is helpful for the author to construct tables or figures that provide a visual representation of the data, especially when a narrative would be complicated and difficult to follow. While it is important to report results according to APA format, the editors strongly encourage authors to elaborate on statistical procedures, as the general readership may not be familiar with terms and tests. Acronyms (e.g. ANOVA, MANOVA) require an accompanying explanation of the purpose of the test, and other terms, such as post-hoc, confidence interval, effect size, and independent variable should be used sparingly or with adequate explanation so as to be beneficial to all readers. In addition to research reports, the *JOI* welcomes practitioner essays related to, but not limited to, business practices, interpreting with diverse populations, ethical decision-making, development and growth of the profession, mentorship, contemporary issues in interpreting, and certification.

### Conclusion

RID is committed to publishing the *JOI* so that accounts of the latest evidence and innovative practices are readily available to its membership. If you are considering submitting a manuscript for publication, you are encouraged to contact the editors with any questions you have about the publication process and at any time during your manuscript development. Keep in mind that ultimate goal of publishing your work is information sharing so that others can benefit from your discoveries and ideas. Our profession is fortunate to have several venues for publishing, and we hope that *JOI* meets your standard for a streamlined and comprehensive editorial

process, a nurturing of new writers, and an acceptable timeline for review and publication.

## References and Resources for Manuscript Development

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