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Reviewing Natural Language Processing Research

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This tutorial will cover the goals, processes, and evaluation of reviewing research in natural language processing. As has been pointed out for years by leading figures in our community (Webber, 2007), researchers in the ACL community face a heavy—and growing—reviewing burden. Simultaneously, notable "false negatives"—rejection by our conferences of work that was later shown to be tremendously important after acceptance by *other* conferences (Church, 2005)—have raised awareness of the fact that our reviewing practices leave something to be desired...and we do not often talk about "false positives" with respect to conference papers, but conversations in the hallways at *ACL meetings suggest that we have a publication bias towards papers that report high performance, with perhaps not much else of interest in them (Manning, 2015).

It need not be this way. Reviewing is a learnable skill (Basford, 1990; Paice, 2001; Benos et al., 2003; Koike et al., 2009; Shukla, 2010; Tandon, 2014; Spyns and Vidal, 2015; Stahel and Moore, 2016; Kohnen, 2017; McFadden et al., 2017; Hill, 2018).

Type: Introductory
Prerequisites: Proficiency in English

Reading List

- Kenneth Church. 2005. Last words: Reviewing the reviewers. *Computational Linguistics*, 31(4):575–578
- Button K. S., Bal L., Clark A., and Shipley T. 2016. Preventing the ends from justifying the means: withholding results to address publication bias in peer-review. *BMC Psychol.*, 4(1)
- Leif Engqvist and Joachim Frommen. 2008. Double-blind peer review and gender publication bias. *Animal Behaviour*, 76:e1–e2

- Michael J. Mahoney. 1977. Publication prejudices: An experimental study of confirmatory bias in the peer review system. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 1(2):161–175
- Mark Steedman. 2008. Last words: On becoming a discipline. *Computational Linguistics*, 34(1):137–144
- Bonnie Webber. 2007. Breaking news: Changing attitudes and practices. *Computational Linguistics*, 33(4):607–611

0.1 Presenters (in alphabetical order)

Kevin Bretonnel Cohen has written, overseen, and received hundreds of reviews.

Karën Fort is an associate professor at Sorbonne Université. Besides being a reviewer for most major NLP conferences, she has been editor in chief for a *Traitement automatique des langues* journal special issue on ethics and acted as Area Chair for ACL in 2017 and 2018 (as senior AC). She co-authored the report on the EMNLP reviewer survey (Névéol et al., 2017).

Margot Mieskes is a professor at the Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences. She has written and received reviews for numerous conferences and journals. She is a member of the ACL Professional Conduct Committee and an active member of the Widening NLP efforts. She co-authored the report on EMNLP reviewer survey (Névéol et al., 2017).

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Satish K Shukla. 2010. How to review an article. *Indian Journal of Surgery*, 72(2):93–96.

Peter Spyns and María-Esther Vidal. 2015. *Scientific Peer Reviewing: Practical Hints and Best Practices*. Springer.

Philip F Stahel and Ernest E Moore. 2016. How to review a surgical paper: a guide for junior referees. *BMC medicine*, 14(1):29.

Mark Steedman. 2008. Last words: On becoming a discipline. *Computational Linguistics*, 34(1):137–144.

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