

Northwest Journal of Linguistics

Instructions for Referees

Review Criteria

Topic

Papers should deal with indigenous languages of Northwestern North America, including British Columbia, Alaska, the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Northwestern Montana. This definition is to be liberally interpreted. For example, papers dealing with contact languages may be appropriate even if they developed after European contact, as may be papers dealing with languages whose focus is elsewhere if there is some particular connection to the Northwest, e.g. a paper about Michif as used in British Columbia. Papers about languages spoken wholly outside of the region will generally not be appropriate but may be considered on the basis of some other connection, e.g. if the language is genetically related to a language of the region.

Papers on all aspects of linguistics are acceptable: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, diachronic, writing systems, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, language acquisition, etc. Papers may be descriptive, theoretical, or philological. Although we expect most papers to contain recent original research, we are interested in making available older unpublished material.

Papers that clearly fall outside the scope of the journal will be rejected by the editors without refereeing, but referees may be called upon to give an opinion in marginal cases. Referees should feel free to indicate that a paper would be more appropriate for another journal.

Quality

The criteria for evaluating papers depend to some extent on the type of paper. In the case of theoretically-oriented papers, does the paper present novel ideas, or new arguments or evidence for or against previous proposals? In the case of descriptive papers, do the generalizations conform to the available data? Is sufficient data presented? Are the data well organized and presented? In view of the fact that most of the languages of the region are endangered, we are more interested in solid descriptive work not of immediate theoretical interest than journals with a more general orientation may be.

Since the *Journal* is published only in electronic form, it is possible for large amounts of supporting data of almost any form to be attached to the paper. Referees should therefore consider whether the data submitted is sufficient and should feel free to request that authors provide additional data, audio recordings, etc.

In all cases, is the literature appropriately cited and discussed? Where quantitative arguments are made, are appropriate statistical measures used and are appropriate probabilities or confidence intervals computed?

Presentation of the review

Please begin with a summary stating whether the paper is: a) publishable as is, b) publishable with minor changes, c) publishable provided substantial changes are made, or d) not suitable for publication. Follow this with your comments on the paper, which should include explicit justification for your opinion as to whether it should be published. Please separate discussion of such significant points from purely editorial comments such as corrections of typographical errors, suggestions for clearer wording, and so forth. If you think that the paper requires changes, please specify clearly what changes are needed.

Please take into consideration the fact that one important function of the peer review process is the improvement of imperfect but viable papers. To this end, suggest improvements where possible and generally try to be constructive in your criticism. Also take into account that the authors may be young or inexperienced people who should be encouraged to improve rather than discouraged, and that even inferior work is rarely due to any moral defect in the author.

The Reviewing Process

The identity of referees is not revealed to authors, but the identity of authors is normally revealed to referees. Papers may be refereed double-blind at the discretion of the editors. A copy of your report will be made available to the author(s), so please do not identify yourself in the body of your report unless you are willing to reveal your identity.

For papers that require substantial revisions, we may ask your assistance in evaluating the new version.

We thank you for your service to your colleagues and for your efforts in assuring the quality of the papers published in *NWJL*.