Academic Writing

Joshua Booth

joshua.booth@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk

Faculty of Linguistics, Philology & Phonetics

University of Oxford

Academic Writing

- Academic English
- Plagiarism
- Exam & tutorial essays
- Presentations
- Abstracts
- Posters
- Journal articles & publication

New, good habits

- Develop good habits now to help you later
- Keep notes in an organized way
- Make a summary of every article/book/chapter you read
- Keep bibliographic information (and page numbers especially!) as you go (preferably in a file on your computer)
- Use a reference management system!
- Explore word-processing software and think critically about the way you have always done things. Is it time to try LaTeX?
- Do not manually number example, figures, tables, sections, chapters etc.
- Use an IPA keyboard

Plagiarism

University definition of plagiarism:

‘Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence.’

All tutors are happy to offer their students advice on appropriate methods of referencing. There is excellent guidance on plagiarism awareness and avoidance available on the Plagiarism page on the Oxford students 'Study skills and training' website.

AI: LLMs & ChatGPT

‘The unauthorised use of AI tools in exams and other assessed work is a serious disciplinary offence. University websites and materials are being updated to underline that unauthorised use of AI for exams or submitted work is not permitted, and further guidance to students will be issued soon.’

Springer’s two principles for ethical use:

- First, no LLM tool will be accepted as a credited author on a research paper. That is because any attribution of authorship carries with it accountability for the work, and AI tools cannot take such responsibility.
- Second, researchers using LLM tools should document this use in the methods or acknowledgements sections. If a paper does not include these sections, the introduction or another appropriate section can be used to document the use of the LLM.

https://www.springer.com/journal/418/updates/26075202

AI: LLMs & ChatGPT

Wiley offer the following guidance:
‘Artificial Intelligence Generated Content (AIGC) tools—such as ChatGPT and others based on large language models (LLMs)—cannot be considered capable of initiating an original piece of research without direction by human authors. They also cannot be accountable for a published work or for research design, which is a generally held requirement of authorship (as discussed in the previous section), nor do they have legal standing or the ability to hold or assign copyright. Therefore—in accordance with COPE’s position statement on AI tools—these tools cannot fulfill the role of, nor be listed as, an author of an article. If an author has used this kind of tool to develop any portion of a manuscript, its use must be described, transparently and in detail, in the Methods or Acknowledgements section. The author is fully responsible for the accuracy of any information provided by the tool and for correctly referencing any supporting work on which that information depends. Tools that are used to improve spelling, grammar, and general editing are not included in the scope of these guidelines.’ The final decision about whether use of an AIGC tool is appropriate or permissible in the circumstances of a submitted manuscript or a published article lies with the journal’s editor or other party responsible for the publication’s editorial policy.

https://authorservices.wiley.com/ethics-guidelines/index.html#

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https://authorservices.wiley.com/ethics-guidelines/index.html#

Academic English

- Clear
- Concise
- Formal
- Focused
- Structured
- ALWAYS PLAN

Academic English

Bad habit: Hiding things in footnotes or using footnotes to avoid structuring your argument properly!

Avoid:

- Verbosity & purple prose
- Adverbs and gerunds (which are often unnecessary)
- Directional language (‘the argument above’, ‘see below’ etc.)
- Too many transition phrases (‘furthermore’, ‘additionally’ &c.) and starting every paragraph the same way
- Over-reliance on quotes
- Words such as ‘clearly’ or ‘obviously’
- Too many dashes (other forms of punctuation will often serve you better, e.g. brackets, semicolons, colons or even a simple full-stop)
- The first person is best avoided. If necessary, only use the singular ‘I’
- Be wary of the passive voice

Academic English

For linguistics:
Always provide a gloss & IPA for foreign examples

Good practice:

- Correct punctuation
- Consistent spelling (British or American English is fine, but stick to it)
- Sections (and subsections) can help to structure your work
- Keep it short and sweet: don’t say in five sentences what you could say in one
- Vary your sentence structure
- Be reflective: what are your particular weaknesses or bad habits?
- Be confident (don’t hedge)
- Make all quotes, examples and figures work hard for you
- ALWAYS discuss examples, graphs & tables. What do they demonstrate?
- Use the conventions of your field for glossing and examples

Exam and tutorial essays

- Say what you’re going to say, say it, say that you’ve said it
- PEE in every paragraph:
  - Point
  - Evidence
  - Evaluation
- Have an essay ‘thesis’
- Structure
- Examples, examples, examples!
- Analysis is crucial
- Make connections
- Link every paragraph back to the question

Exam and tutorial essays

- Introduction
  - Hook > Thesis > Outline (structure/roadmap)
- *Definitions?*
  - *Word/concept 1 > Word/concept 2*
- Paragraph 1
  - Point > Evidence > Evaluation/analysis > Connection
- Paragraph 2
  - Point > Evidence > Evaluation/analysis > Connection
- Paragraph 3
  - This paragraph might be the same as P1–2, or it could be a case study, evaluation of the arguments (if P1–2 were ‘pro’ and ‘contra’) or a rebuttal.
- Conclusion
  - Summarise the arguments and draw it all together. Try to be conclusive, but always end on a strong note! (Don’t go out with a damp fizzle)

Key skills:

- Define
- Outline
- Contextualise
- Compare
- Connect

Exam and tutorial essays

Vowels and consonants are described and classified in different parts of the IPA chart. Different labels are used to reflect the features of vowels and consonants, which leads to different classification on the surface. While there are similarities between the classification of vowels and consonants at the same time.

In a discussion of the implications which phonetics has for sound change and the relationship of this to the phonological view of sound change, it makes sense to begin at the very beginning, as it were, with the initiation of sound change, namely the phonetic mechanism for such, before moving on to the matters of the transmission and spread of innovation, which is more specific to a given language and culture. The mechanism of sound change is firmly placed within the domain of phonetics, primarily involving the listener, whereas the mechanism of transmission is more often held to be phonological, although a phonetic treatment of sound change can offer rewarding analysis when viewed in tandem with phonological language change. After all, phonetics is the mirror through which one can observe the intangible nature of phonology.

Exam and tutorial essays

The term prosody refers to elements of the speech signal which are not inherent to a single segment. This may include linguistic, paralinguistic or extralinguistic features, although this essay will not discuss non-linguistic phenomena. Whilst prosodic features are often termed 'suprasegmental', implying that they are overlaid on the speech signal, this is misleading, as prosodic features can be as discrete as vowels and consonants and are an essential part of production and phonological structure. A major aspect of prosody is stress, but tone or segmental quantity are also inherently prosodic phenomena, as are aspects of higher-level phonological organisation, such as phrasing and information structuring. In this essay, the three main articulatory correlates of stress—pitch, loudness and duration—will be discussed in turn, but the importance of other features will also be mentioned.

Presentation

Make use of travel grants!
Exploit hybrid/online conferences.

Attend conferences before you submit for your first

- Usually 20 minutes + 10 minutes questions
- DO NOT OVERRUN
- Handout OR powerpoint (not both)
- Come up with a clear story (it's like an article summary)
- Use examples, but don't bamboozle or overwhelm
- Practise public speaking (and timing)
- Use prompts or a loose script if necessary
- Answer questions concisely (and think before opening your mouth)
- 'Look at me' questions: be polite and answer, but move on quickly
- Don't get drawn into a back-and-forth
- Don't panic if it goes wrong
- Network! (But be selective)

Abstracts

- Articles

Abstract
Despite a long history of scholarly interest, the relative chronologies (and even origins) of open syllable lengthening (OSL) and the diphthongisation of the Middle High German (MHG) high vowels /iː,yː,uː/ remain unclear. This paper, drawing on orthographic evidence from a thirteenth-century *Parzival* MS, *St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 857*, provides new insights into these two key changes. The changes either maintained or increased the quantity of stressed vowels, leading to a net increase in the quantity of stressed syllables in MHG. Diphthongisation simply altered the segmental quality of already long monophthongs; only OSL increased the quantity of the vowels it affected. This paper argues that OSL was not a feature of the South Bavarian dialect of Cod. 857's Hand III, although his dialect had certainly undergone diphthongisation. It is difficult to reconcile this picture with claims by Penzl, Kranzmayer and Wiesinger that OSL was present throughout the Bavarian dialect area by 1200. This paper challenges claims that diphthongisation was triggered by OSL via a phonological push-chain, maintaining that the two changes were independent. It is furthermore suggested that the scribe is uninterested in marking vocalic quantity, which—in the absence of OSL—was still consistent across inflexional paradigms. Instead, he uses the circumflex "length marker" to indicate diphthongal quality. The scribes' dialect thus represents a key turning point: diphthongisation was well progressed, but OSL had yet to occur.

Keywords Phonology · Middle High German · Vowel quantity · Open syllable lengthening · Diphthongisation

Abstracts

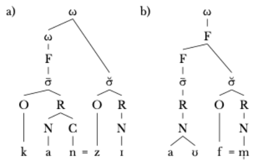
- Articles
- Conferences

Prosodic asymmetries between simple and special clitics in German

Joshua Booth, University of Oxford, joshua.booth@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk

The distinction between 'simple' and 'special' clitics (Zwicky 1977)—the former productive and phonologically transparent and the latter more restricted and phonologically opaque—has a long history, but attempts to differentiate the two often focus on syntactic, rather than phonological structure. This paper provides a formal account of their phonology, arguing that the distinction results from differing prosodification. Simple clitics attach at the postlexical level, resulting in nested prosodic words (ω), e.g. (1a). However, as their more affix-like behaviour suggests, special clitics are lexically stored and attach at the lexical level, e.g. (1b).

(1) Prosodic representation of (a) [kanzɪ] (< *kann=sie* 'can she') and (b) [aʊ̯fm̩] (< *auf=dem* 'on the')



The need for recursion within the prosodic hierarchy is increasingly recognised (cf. Gussenhoven 1986; Zec & Inkelas 1991; McCarthy 1993; Booij 1995; Selkirk 1996; Wiese 2000) and this paper assumes default cliticisation in German to be left-leaning, producing a single ω comprising a lexical host and one or more unstressed function words (cf. Lahiri & Wheeldon 1997; Lahiri & Plank 2010). This is reflected in the behaviour of enclitic pronouns (see Bögel 2021 for similar findings for Swabian), which freely alternate with their full forms and—especially in colloquial speech—produce full paradigms: [habɪçs] (< *habe=ich=es* 'I have it'), [hastəs] (< *hast=du=es* 'you have it'), [hatɐs] (< *hat=er=es* 'he has it') etc. (Nübling 2010). Furthermore, simple clitics often fail to conform to phonological generalisations applying to ωs, such as the constraint against final full lax vowels. This leads Hall (1999) to assume such clitics attach directly to the phonological phrase. However, these constraints in fact appear to take the F rather than the ω as their domain; reduced forms such as [dʊ] (< /duː/ 'you') are thus accounted for by this analysis, as they are dominated by a ω, not by a F.

In contrast, special clitics *are* constrained by foot structure and are not synchronically derivable from their full forms, such as *Verschmelzungsformen* (VFn, 'fused forms'), where definite articles encliticise to prepositions (e.g. [t͡sʊm] < *zu=dem* 'to the'). Although much of the literature takes a syntactic approach (cf. Nübling 2005; Hinrichs 1986), Wiese (1988) suggests that these articles attach at the lexical level, implicitly referring to a disyllabic (i.e. quantity-insensitive) trochee in describing the maximal VF. However, this is at odds with the German metrical system, which constructs weight-sensitive (moraic) trochees (Jessen 1999). Assuming that German permits a minimally recursive F, incorporating a light syllable into a F with a monosyllabic F as its sister (cf. Booij 1995; Kager & Martínez-Paricio 2018 for Dutch), one can account for the behaviour of VFn without abandoning weight sensitivity (1b). Full VFn must comprise a prosodically well-formed F, with a preference for a heavy stressed syllable; monosyllabic [H]$_F$ forms, e.g. [am], are preferable to disyllabic [[H]$_F$L]$_F$ forms, e.g. [[aʊ̯f]$_F$m̩]$_F$. [LL]$_F$ forms, e.g. [anə]$_F$ (< *an=die*) are less desirable and trisyllabic [[H]$_F$L]$_F$L forms are ungrammatical, e.g. */hɪntəʁɐ̩ / (< *hinter=der*), */t͡svɪʃənə/ (< *zwischen=die*).

This preference scale is reflected in the degree of integration of such forms into the dialects and written standard language, with [H]$_F$ forms the most lexicalised (and mostly obligatory); [[H]$_F$L]$_F$ forms are an optional, colloquial feature and [LL]$_F$ forms are restricted to rapid speech. The present analysis accounts for this in formal terms: whether or not VFn truly represent grammaticalisation in action (Nübling 2005), they must synchronically be accounted for in phonological terms. The present analysis explains their special phonological behaviour and their apparent reference to syllabic trochees, despite the language's weight-sensitivity. In addition, it formally accounts for the asymmetries between simple and special clitics, including the failure of certain phonological constraints to apply to simple clitics.

Abstracts

- Articles
- Conferences
- Dphil theses

Abstract

This thesis explores the prosodic phonology of Middle High German (MHG), aiming to provide a thorough account of its structure as a system and consider its role in accounting for key sound changes. It highlights the pertinacity of certain prosodic structures, despite the sometimes quite substantially different surface output between MHG and Modern Standard German (NHG). Much of the complexity of the NHG phonological system has its roots in the mediaeval period and the high level of language contact at this time, notably with Romance languages (and Old French in particular). I argue that much of the modern phonological system's surface complexity results from the interaction of large-scale Romance borrowing (invariably with right-edge prominence and final superheavy syllables) and pertinacity within the phonological grammar, particularly in relation to the uneven trochee, Prokosch's Law and the leftward prosodic incorporation of affixes and clitics. Standard accounts of MHG typically provide a phonemic inventory and traditional grammar, neglecting suprasegmental prosody and rarely providing a detailed treatment of the phonological system as a whole. This research takes a holistic approach, aiming to address this gap and provide a focused discussion of a range of prosodic phenomena. It explores not only segmental quantity, but its relationship to higher prosodic structures, including the syllable, foot and prosodic word. This raises implications for phonological theory more generally—including the role of recursivity within the prosodic hierarchy and the lack of isomorphism between surface syntax and phonological phrasing—and provides new insights into lexical stress and cliticisation. *Parzival*, a sprawling grail romance from the early thirteenth century, is central to this analysis; it represents a large corpus of real poetic data from a single source, enabling a closer, more nuanced analysis of a particular synchronic snapshot of MHG (at a time when diphthongisation was present, but open syllable lengthening and degemination were yet to occur).

Abstracts

- Articles
- Conferences
- Dphil theses
- There are conventions to all three. The best thing to do is read a lot of them (stick to good journals, conferences etc.)
- Articles: past volumes of the relevant journal
- Conferences: usually a booklet of presenters' abstracts is produced for each year's conference (and past years' are often still available online)
- Theses: all past Oxford theses are available via ORA (ProQuest is also useful)
- Whoever is asking you to write one will have specific requirements, e.g. word count, references etc. Check these and take them seriously!
- Academics like to self-promote: check their personal websites for past abstracts!

Posters

- Conference posters are a very specific form of academic writing. We do not have time to explore this today, but there is plenty of advice available from the university.
- Keep an eye out for university courses on designing and presenting posters and read other people’s!
- Visit conferences (even if you aren’t presenting) and attend a poster session.

Journal Article

- First things first: come up with your topic and write the paper.
- Journal articles are typically 9,000–12,000 words (do not submit anything much shorter or any longer), but check the individual journal’s guidelines.
- If you are hoping to publish material from your thesis or a conference, be aware that it will probably need adapting.
- Find the right journal. It’s a lot of work, so make sure you’re investing your time wisely.
- Check their website & read the instructions for submission carefully. Make sure it’s anonymised!
- Get pre-submission feedback

Journal Article

- Think carefully about the title
- Follow the principles of academic English already outlined
- Use sections wisely to structure & ‘chunk’ your work (but within reason: don’t have too many sub-levels)
- Theory: not too much, not too little
- Use references to strengthen or illustrate your argument (don’t cite for the sake of showing how widely you’ve read)
- The same goes for graphs and tables
- However, tables work very well to summarise the main points of a section (particularly where the ideas are complex)

Journal Article

Typical route:

- Submission: write to the general editor or use the journal's submission portal
- General editor's initial decision (usually pretty quick): desk reject or send out for review
- Peer review round 1 (double-blind & typically 2–3 reviewers)
- Reviewers report back to the editor (usually ~3–4 months)
- Accept, revise & resubmit (minor revisions), revise & resubmit (major revisions), reject
- Complete the revisions & resubmit (usually with a list of changes)
- Final review
- (Hopefully) acceptance!
- Copy editing & proofs (you do not have long to check the proofs!!)
- Publication (usually online first, then print, if the journal still prints)

Journal Article

Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics
(17 months)
April 2022 I submit
June 2022 Reviewer's Decision
August 2022 I return revised manuscript
October 2022 Accepted
September 2023 Published

The Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics (2023) 26:5
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10828-023-09145-3

ORIGINAL PAPER

Check for updates

Open syllable lengthening and diphthongisation in Upper Middle High German: evidence from verse

Joshua Booth[1]

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Transactions of the Philological Society
PhilSoc The Philological Society
Transactions of the Philological Society Volume 121:1 (2023) 91–116 doi: 10.1111/1467-968X.12257

Check for up

RETHINKING THE METRE OF *PARZIVAL*: IAMBIC VERSE FOR A TROCHAIC LANGUAGE

By Joshua J. Booth
University of Oxford

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Transactions of the Philological Society
(12 months)
March 2022 I submit
August 2022 Reviewer's Decision
September 2022 I return revised manuscript
January 2023 Accepted
March 2023 Published

Journal Article

- Publish in a reputable & respected journal and **beware predatory journals**!
- Getting an article published is a long process. Be prepared to wait and factor this in.
- **Do not submit to multiple journals!**
- Think about the best fit for your work.
- Look at recent articles in the journal.
- Save yourself time and read submission guidelines **thoroughly**.
- Don’t be disheartened by rejections or reviewers’ feedback.
- Be polite and professional.
- Do actually resubmit!

Open access & APCs

- Do not pay for open access!
- ‘University policy asks academics, researchers and research students to provide open access to their research outputs by depositing accepted manuscripts into our institutional repository Oxford University Research Archive (ORA).’
- For most journals, you will be able to publish open access for free, either because:
  - (i) the journal does not charge (so-called ‘diamond/platinum open access journals’)
  - (ii) the fees are covered by a University of Oxford publisher agreement (but this is not true of every journal!)
- If neither is the case, depositing in ORA still counts as ‘green’ open access.
- The university has an agreement to pay all APCs for a number of publishers, including Wiley and Springer, but definitely check before you submit: you don’t want to be saddled with a bill once all the hard work is done!
- N.B. Additional fees may still apply, e.g. some print journals charge a fee for colour printing (so make sure your graphics work in black & white!)

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