**An Analysis of the Pre-print Policies of the Communication Disorders Journals**

**Abstract**

Publicly disseminating scholarly papers as preprints has gained momentum in every subject field. The recent pandemic demonstrated the importance of the preprint as a channel of scientific communication. The preprints are getting recognized as the formal component of the publication process. Hence, the publishers must announce a clear policy regarding the preprints to the authors. Communication disorders is a combined discipline of audiology and speech-language pathology that deals with speech, hearing, and language sciences and disabilities. There are several journals on communication disorders publishing research from across the world. The publishers in the field include non-profit organizations, learned societies, and commercial publishing companies. Understanding the preprint policies of communication disorders journals will help the professionals in the area quickly disseminate their research results. The present study aims to analyze the preprint policies of the major communication disorders journals. The journals indexed in the Web of Science under the subject category 'Audiology & Speech-Langauge Pathology' have been selected as the dataset for the study. Thirty journals are listed in the Web of Science database under the above category. A descriptive analysis of the preprint policies of these journals will be performed by collecting relevant information from their official websites.

**Introduction**

From the manuscript you first submit to a journal, through peer review and revisions, to the final article that’s published on the website, there can be several versions of your paper.

The AOM is defined by the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) as:“Any version of a journal article that is considered by the author to be of sufficient quality to be submitted for formal peer review.”

A preprint is any “complete written description of a body of scientific work that has yet to be published in a journal” (Bourne et al., 2017). This can include data, poster presentations, or even completed manuscripts that haven’t been submitted for peer review.

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The preprints are often not indexed by mainstream

bibliographic services.

there is a strong imperative for the

palaeontology research community to ensure that

there is broad-scale access to the research that

they produce

medRxiv

One of the first in this new wave was the discipline-based server, bioRxiv – set up by the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in 2013 to cover the life sciences

RePec

arXiv,

SSRN

Preprints are also increasingly indexed in large scholarly databases and search engines (*e.g.*, PubMed, Crossref, Lens, Dimensions, Microsoft Academic), and major manual referencing

styles have issued guidance on how preprints should be cited in scholarly papers

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a large increase in the posting of preprints, as well as scrutiny and the number of comments they received on both social media platforms

NIH only changed their policy to allow preprints to be cited in grant applications in

March of 2017; and some journals only very recently allowed preprints to be cited in articles

Recognizing the growing interest in preprints, NLM is today launching the first phase of the [NIH Preprint Pilot](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/about/nihpreprints/), which will test the viability of making preprints searchable in [PubMed Central (PMC)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/) and, by extension, discoverable in [PubMed](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/), starting with COVID-19 preprints reporting NIH-supported research on [June 9, 2020](https://nlmdirector.nlm.nih.gov/2020/06/09/the-nih-preprint-pilot-a-new-experiment-for-a-new-era/).

In fact, recognizing the value of such work, NIH is now doing a [preprint pilot](https://nlmdirector.nlm.nih.gov/2020/06/09/the-nih-preprint-pilot-a-new-experiment-for-a-new-era/) to include discoverability of that research via PubMed and PubMed Central.

The Coalition for Responsible Sharing (CfRS) was formed in October 2017 by a group of society, not-for-profit and commercial publishers and information analytics businesses to engage with article-sharing platforms and scholarly collaboration networks which undertake, contribute to or otherwise allow or encourage unauthorized posting of publishers’ copyrighted content.

Manyjournalswillnowconsideranarticlethathasappearedona preprintserver,andgrant-awardingbodiesonbothsidesoftheAtlanticallowpreprintstobecitedingrantandfel-lowshipapplications

preprints’, ‘working papers’, or ‘manuscript drafts’ depending on the discipline—here we refer to these all as ‘preprints’, using the emerging standard term

Mechanisms for more formal dissemination emerged in the early 1990s with arXiv, a repository that now hosts more than 1.3 million preprints in physics, mathematics, and allied fields. SSRN, a preprint service originally for social science research, started in 1994. And, since 2013, more than two dozen preprint services have launched representing a wide variety of topics, indicating growing recognition of this mechanism of communication across all areas of scholarship

Although preprints only recently rose to prominence, they were first introduced in 1961 as part of a US National

Institutes of Health project called the Information Exchange Groups ( Cobb  M﻿.  The prehistory of biology preprints: a forgotten experiment from the 1960s. ﻿ *PLoS Biol*. 2017;15(11):e2003995. doi:[10.1371/journal.pbio.2003995](http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.2003995))

Since1991,physicistsandmathematicianshavebeenusingthearXivpreprintrepositorytocirculatearticlesandideas,totheenvyofmanybiologists.Afternumberoffailedattempts,includingClinMedNetprints(1999–2005)andNaturePrecedings(2007–2012),2 biologyprerintserverswerelaunchedin2013—PeerJPreprintsandbioRxiv(ColdSpringHarborLaboratory)

**Methodology**

The journals indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) database under the category ‘Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology’ were selected for the study. Thirty ‘publication titles’ were listed under the category (table 1). Of these, the title *Hearing Loss Mechanisms Prevention and Cure* was excluded as it was not a journal. The title ‘*Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology*’ was excluded as the journal does not belong to Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. The title,Journal of Medical Speech Language Pathologywas excluded as it is a discontinued publication. The remaining 27 jurnals were taken for further analysis. The official websites of each of the 27 journals were checked for their pre-print policies and listed in table 2.

On the official websites ‘Information for Authors’ and Editorial Policy”

An original list of 227 journals that publish palaeontological research was constructed based on an exhaustive Web search, followed by crosschecking with the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). We did not use common databases such as Scopus or Web of Sciences, as these reveal a very biased picture of the ‘global’ research landscape (Ciarli et al., 2014; Mongeon and Paul-Hus, 2016). This list includes discipline-specific journals, but also a number of interdisciplinary ‘megajournals’ that have proven reasonably popular within some areas of the palaeontology community and now represent a huge diversity of potential journals for palaeontologists to publish in. The following data were originally gathered in summer 2017, based on three main sources (Sherpa/ RoMEO; Web search; clarification through email).The information quality in Sherpa/RoMEO was also of varying quality, and often key data were missing, and so the data were checked manually (i.e., by gathering information directly from journal websites) again in February 2019 to make sure they are as up-to-date as possible and are available as supplementary files included in the Appendix

Journal name;

• Whether or not the journal permits sharing of

preprints;

• Whether or not the journal permits sharing of

postprints;

• Whether there is an embargo period or not

(where there is more than one option, this represents

a different embargo based on a different

repository type);

• Whether or not the publisher version (VOR) can

be shared;

• Whether or not an option for ‘gold’ OA exists

(i.e., instant availability at the point of journal

publication; including ‘hybrid OA’);

• What the article processing charge (APC) for

the gold option is (zero denotes ‘diamond’ OA);

• Source of information from Sherpa/RoMEO;

• Source of information from main website;

• Sherpa/RoMEO colour status;

• 2017 Source Normalised Impact per Publication

(SNIP, source:

http://www.journalindicators.com/methodology)

(n=182);

• 2017 impact factor (n=163); and

• Publisher

One of the first in this new wave was the discipline-based server, bioRxiv – set up by the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in 2013 to cover the life sciences – which has been a focus of discus-sion and debate (Abdill &Blekhman, 2019; Luther, 2017; Vale, 2015). However, there are a considerable number of other disci-plinary servers, including several set up by the Center for Open Science, such as SocArXiv, engrXiv and PsyArXiv (all of which were launched in 2016), as well as platforms such as ESSOAr, set up by the American Geophysical Union in 2018. At the same time, national servers have been launched, includ-ingChinaXiv (for China), IndiaRxiv (for India) and INA-Rxiv (Indonesia) (Mallapaty, 2019). Funders of research have also set up platforms that enable the sharing of articles before peer-review, including, in 2016, Wellcome Open Research, for Wellcome-funded researchers. In addition, a number of journal publishers have added the dissemination of preprints to their workflows. The open access (OA) publisher, PeerJ, began offering preprint services in 2013, MDPI in 2016 and Cambridge University Press in 2019. Whilst the first of these has now closed its server, significantly it cites its reason for doing so as the change in the preprints landscape between 2013 and 2019: “the academic community is now well-served with other preprint venue options” (PeerJ, 2019). A number of jour-nals, primarily in biomedical sciences, have adopted a dif-ferent model, and now deposit submissions from authors in bioRxiv on behalf of authors (where the author agrees to this). Journals practising this model in bioRxiv include Proceed-ings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), titles pub-lished by PLOS and many published by Frontiers (bioRxiv, n.d.). The F1000Research publishing platform has promoted anovel publication model involving preprints, in which immedi-ate release of author submissions as preprints is followed byopen peer review, with revised versions of a paper(alongside author responses to reviewer comments) published in the journal as they are made.

References

*medRxiv*: the preprint server for health sciences. Accessed September 27, 2020. <https://www.medrxiv.org/>

12.

*bioRxiv*: the preprint server for biology. Accessed September 27, 2020. <https://www.biorxiv.org/>

13.

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