

A Citation Study of the Characteristics of the Linguistics Literature

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By analyzing the citation patterns of the linguistics literature, the authors provide a bibliometric description of the discipline that will help librarians who have reference, instruction, or collection development responsibilities in this area understand it better. One important aspect of such an understanding is determining where linguistics classifies within the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences. Based on several of the citation patterns discovered, namely the importance of recent publications to the field, and the prominence of journals as a primary vehicle of scholarly communication, this analysis concludes that linguistics more closely resembles the disciplines of the social sciences.



This study seeks to document the bibliometric characteristics of the linguistics literature through an analysis of its citation patterns. Such an analysis will help librarians with reference, instruction, or collection development responsibilities in linguistics, particularly the many with little background in the discipline. The needs of librarians unfamiliar with linguistics are important because, as Michael Adams and Candace Benefiel point out, librarians must often provide reference service in a discipline in which they have no subject expertise.¹ Yet, Robert Delgadillo and Beverly P. Lynch have shown that scholars want to work with librarians who have a knowledge of their discipline.²

One important aspect of understanding a discipline is that of knowing where it fits within the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences. This is especially relevant for linguistics because its basic subject

classification has been much disputed. Deborah Tannen has asserted that “linguistics ... can be scientific, humanistic, and aesthetic.”³ In 1992, Edward Finegan wrote that linguistics “has been called the most scientific of the humanities and the most humanistic of the sciences.”⁴ Though generally classified with the humanities, Rolf A. Zwaan and Anton J. Nederhof found that, as early as 1984, theoretical linguistics was showing publication patterns closer to the social sciences than to literary or historical studies.⁵ In keeping with this trend, a recent monograph by Alison Sealey and Bob Carter has as its title *Applied Linguistics as Social Science*.⁶

P. H. Matthews writes of the “institutional rift” within linguistics. The discipline “clearly has its ‘arts’ side and its links with other subjects in the humanities. Some linguists, for example, are historians of languages; others work quite closely with philosophers. Linguistics also has links with the social sciences,

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especially sociology and anthropology. Yet, it has its science side too."⁷ As evidence of its science side, a recent Oxford guide to the sciences includes a chapter on linguistics.⁸ Seeking to conceptually move linguistics still farther in the scientific direction, a 2004 book edited by Victor Yngve and Zdzislaw Wasik refers to pioneers "concerned with moving linguistics from the ancient semiotic-grammatical tradition into the world of modern science and with building a new hard-science linguistics there, a natural science cognate with the other natural sciences of physics, chemistry, and biology."⁹

Numerous scholars have documented differences in the citation characteristics of disciplines in the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences. It is for this reason that the authors of this study decided that a citation analysis, in addition to characterizing linguistics for librarians who need to familiarize themselves with the discipline, also may offer evidence of where linguistics fits in this broad continuum. Each of these two related goals will help librarians gain a better understanding of scholarship in linguistics.

The kinds of questions investigated in this citation analysis include the following:

- What are the primary vehicles of scholarly communication in linguistics (books, articles in books, journal articles, theses, etc.)?
- Is there a core set of journals for the discipline of linguistics as a whole?
- What types of publishers account for the majority of publishing in linguistics, and is there evidence of a core group?
- What are the important languages of scholarly communication in linguistics?
- Which countries account for the majority of publications in linguistics?
- How important are recent publications to the discipline?
- Does gender play a role in linguistics authorship?

Literature Review

Although the literature of citation studies is abundant, examination of the discipline of linguistics within these studies has been limited. It is possible that the uncertainty about where to classify linguistics has contributed to its relative neglect in citation studies because such studies are generally based on a single discipline or the humanities, the social sciences, or the sciences. For example, Michael Bowman's review of citation studies in all three areas includes only one on linguistics.¹⁰

Within the humanities, the subject category in which linguistics has most often been placed, a large number of citation analyses have focused on the field of literary scholarship.¹¹⁻¹⁶ In addition to literary studies, John M. Cullars has examined the citation characteristics of monographs in the fine arts and philosophy.¹⁷⁻¹⁹ In Maurice B. Line's large-scale citation analysis of the social science literature, linguistics is one of thirteen disciplines considered.²⁰ Other similarly broad bibliometric analyses of the social sciences, such as those by Robert N. Broadus, Wolfgang Glanzel, and Glanzel and Urs Schoepflin, do not include linguistics.²¹⁻²³ Within the literature of the sciences, Yngve and Wasik's *Hard-Science Linguistics* is one of the only publications to argue for the alignment of linguistics with the natural sciences.²⁴

In 1990, Zwaan and Nederhof performed the most in-depth citation analysis in linguistics.²⁵ Focusing on the sub-discipline of theoretical linguistics, they determined that some aspects of theoretical linguistics conform to the social sciences rather than the humanities. The authors identified a list of core journals in theoretical linguistics and determined that, unlike other humanities-based disciplines, recent literature was important in the field of theoretical linguistics. These findings are in keeping with a previous study by Nederhof, Zwaan, R. E. De Bruin, and P. J. Dekker, which found that some linguistic research more closely mirrors that of the social sciences rather than the humanities.²⁶

Other studies examine one or a few particular characteristics of the discipline of linguistics or one of its subdisciplines. In a 1991 study, Nederhof and Zwaan identified a set of core journals for the subdiscipline of general linguistics and investigated their quality.²⁷ Nederhof and E. C. M. Noyons examined the chronology of citations in the general linguistics publications of several university departments.²⁸ A more recent study by Nederhof, Marc Luwel, and Henk F. Moed looked at the field of linguistics as a whole in assessing the quality of its scholarly journals.²⁹ In Charlene Kellsey and Jennifer E. Knievel's citation study of foreign-language use by humanities scholars, linguistics was one of the four disciplines examined.³⁰ Lastly, in an examination of gender and its relation to publication and citation, Bonnie McElhinny and her colleagues looked specifically at the subdisciplines of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology.³¹

Methodology

In order to begin our citation analysis, it was determined that Language and Linguistics Behavior Abstracts (LLBA) would be the database from which citations would be culled. This conclusion was arrived at by performing an extensive comparison of LLBA with MLA Bibliography, another database that indexes publications within the subject areas of language and linguistics. The online information provided by the vendors (Cambridge Scientific Abstracts and OVID, respectively) about each database was thoroughly read and considered, as was the descriptive information contained in such works as Ron Blazes and Elizabeth Aversa's *The Humanities: A Selective Guide to Information Sources*, William H. Webb's *Sources of Information in the Social Sciences*, and Robert Balay's *Guide to Reference Books*.³²⁻³⁴ Moreover, a representative from each vendor was contacted to determine the content of each database more specifically. The content considered included the subject areas covered by each database, the languages indexed,

the proportion of language and linguistics materials indexed in MLA Bibliography, the proportion of books, journal articles, and other publications indexed in each of the databases, and the total number of citations included in each. The information provided by Cambridge Scientific Abstracts states that LLBA is a database that "covers all aspects of the study of language."³⁵ On the other hand, MLA Bibliography is broader in coverage in that it indexes scholarship "published on modern languages, literatures, folklore, and linguistics."³⁶

According to Anna L. Demiller's *Linguistics: A Guide to the Reference Literature*, LLBA is an "excellent index" that "is particularly strong in the areas of applied linguistics, descriptive linguistics, and psycholinguistics. Among other topics it covers are syntax, sociolinguistics, theory of linguistics, interpersonal behavior and communication, semantics, phonetics, phonology, discourse analysis, and poetics."³⁷ MLA Bibliography is listed as containing "comprehensive coverage of theoretical and descriptive linguistics and comparative and historical linguistics as well as allied areas such as applied linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, mathematical linguistics, paralinguistics, stylistics, and translation."³⁸

In addition, a list of journals indexed in each of the databases was downloaded and titles were compared to determine the proportion of journals indexed in both databases. Because LLBA is devoted exclusively to language and linguistics, it was used as the reference point for comparison. Of the 1,236 journals indexed in LLBA, only 519 were also indexed in MLA Bibliography.

To determine whether a core set of journals in linguistics exists, ISI Journal Citation Reports (JCR) was consulted. This resource provides citation data on the most highly ranked journals within the sciences and the social sciences.³⁹ The only applicable subject category that could be consulted was the subdiscipline of Applied Linguistics, within which JCR identified

a group of forty core journals. Both MLA Bibliography and LLBA were examined to determine how many of the forty core journals listed in JCR were indexed in each of the databases. MLA Bibliography indexed twenty-six of the forty core journals whereas LLBA indexed thirty-eight. These results are understandable because LLBA has been noted as being particularly strong in the area of applied linguistics.⁴⁰

As a result of these comparisons, LLBA was ultimately selected as the index from which citations would be culled and examined. Selecting random citations from the MLA Bibliography, despite its purported comprehensive coverage, would have resulted in many irrelevant citations and, based on our examination of the two databases, far fewer language and linguistics titles, because only a portion of the database is devoted to these two subject areas.

To cull a sample of citations from LLBA, random numbers were generated using the Randomizer Web site (<http://www.randomizer.org>). By contacting a representative from LLBA, it was determined that, at the time the study began, 2001 was the most recent complete year in the database.⁴¹ In addition, it was determined that for the year being studied, a total of 13,503 citations were indexed in the database. These citations ranged in accession number from 200100001 to 200113503. Furthermore, approximately 70 percent of the citations in LLBA refer to English-language publications. Having decided that this study would be limited to English-language citations only, it was determined that to have a final random sample of approximately 500 citations, 750 random numbers would be generated (to account for the exclusion of sources in languages other than English).⁴²⁻⁴⁵

After each citation was selected (citing works) from the LLBA database, the number of references in the cited work was counted. A random number was then generated using the Randomizer Web site in order to select a reference from the cited work.

Although the term *citation analysis* has been commonly used to describe this type of study, this really is, in essence, a "reference analysis." It was generally observed that most of the linguistic works considered (both citing and cited) did not contain formal citations. Rather, they contained a list of references that were generally found at the end in a bibliography or references section. This is much more in keeping with the way that works are generally cited in the social science disciplines.

Citations within the text of the cited works were very often explanatory. If the work in question contained citations/endnotes/footnotes within the text instead of a bibliography or a list of references, the number of citations/endnotes/footnotes was counted and a random number generated. If the random number referred to an endnote or footnote that was explanatory rather than bibliographic, it was not counted. However, such nonbibliographical footnotes and endnotes were uncommon.

Some of the works being studied could not be obtained. Another portion of the works was eliminated because they did not contain any true references. In total, 479 entries from LLBA were examined, along with the corresponding citations culled from the bibliographies of the citing works.

Results and Discussion

Citations by Types of Sources

Table 1 lists the number and percentage of citations in terms of type of source cited: monographs, articles in books, journal articles, and theses.

Citation of Books

Considering the citing sources, if the number of citations to articles in books is added to the number of citations to monographs, 14.8 percent of the citations are to books. This figure is significantly higher when considering the cited sources. By adding the number of citations to articles in books to the number of citations to

TABLE 1
Percentages of Citations by Type of Sources Cited

Source Type	Citing Sources		Cited Sources	
	%	N	%	N
Monograph	2.3	11	30.5	146
Article in book	12.5	60	19.2	92
Journal article	73.7	353	42.8	205
Theses	11.5	55	3.6	17
Other*	N/A	N/A	3.4	19
Total	100	479	100.1**	479

Note: *Includes newspaper articles, government documents, unpublished papers/manuscripts/lectures/research data, personal correspondence, and Web sites.
**Does not total 100 percent due to rounding.

monographs, 49.7 percent of the citations are to books. This large difference may be accounted for, in part, by the fact that the database from which the citing sources were culled, Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), is primarily an index to journal articles. In fact, approximately 80 percent of the citations in the database are to journal articles, and approximately 10 percent are to books and book chapters.⁴⁶

Based on the evidence provided by the cited sources, then, it appears that monographs figure prominently in linguistic research. As has been already well established, the monograph is the most heavily cited vehicle of scholarly communication in the humanities. This is not to say, however, that the monograph is not important in social sciences research. In fact, in his survey of citation studies in the social sciences, Broadus found that between approximately 30 and 60 percent of citations in the social science disciplines were to monographs.⁴⁷ These figures are even higher in Ylva Lindholm-Romantschuk and Julian Warner’s study of several disciplines in the social sciences and sciences, in which they determined that 72.3 percent of citations in sociology were to monographs, and 70.8 percent of citations in economics were to monographs.⁴⁸

The percentage of citations to monographs generally ranges between 60 and 88 percent for disciplines in the humanities.⁴⁹⁻⁵⁷ Although the humanities appear to rely more heavily on monographs than other types of sources as the principal mode of scholarly communication, they still figure prominently in social sciences research. The number of citations to monographs in this study suggests that the field of linguistics is more closely allied to social science disciplines such as economics (between 47.6% and 70.8% of citations to monographs) and sociology (between 45.2% and 72.3% of citations to monographs) than to

such humanities disciplines as literature (between 64% and 82.7% of citations to monographs), philosophy (between 81.3% and 88.5% of citations to monographs), and the fine arts (between 60.6% and 73.1% of citations to monographs).⁵⁸⁻⁶⁸

Citation of Articles

As is evident in table 1, the number of citations to journal articles for the citing sources is very high (73.7%). Again, this may be at least partly attributed to the composition of LLBA. For the cited sources, 42.8 percent of the citations are to journal articles. Although a citation analysis of the field of linguistics as a whole has not previously been undertaken, these figures are significantly higher than the 35 percent presented in Nederhof et al.’s bibliometric study on the subdiscipline of general linguistics.^{69, 70}

The number of citations to journal articles takes on further meaning when compared with data obtained from citation studies in other disciplines. According to the majority of the literature, citations to journal articles do not figure prominently in scholarly communication in the humanities. Citations to journal articles only account for between 13.3 (philosophy) and 26.7 percent (American literature) of the total number of citations examined.⁷¹⁻⁷⁸

Furthermore, although linguistics was not one of the subject areas examined, Glanzel and Schoepflin's citation study determined that, within the social sciences, the percentage of citations to serials ranged from 34.7 (history and philosophy of science and social sciences) to 64 percent (psychology and psychiatry). If these results are read as a ranking of the relevance of journal publications to scholarly communication within that discipline, linguistics falls squarely in the middle of the social science disciplines examined, ranking between sociology (40.4%) and information and library science (47.6%).⁷⁹

Previous citation analyses have grappled with linguistics' classification as a discipline. As evidence of this, Zwaan and Nederhof's 1990 study determined that "the characteristics of scholarly communication in linguistics ... resemble closely those of the 'harder' social-science fields, and do not fit the common stereotype of humanities research."⁸⁰ In the later Nederhof and Noyons study, which examined departments' research performance in the humanities, linguistics was one of the disciplines considered.⁸¹ Despite this ongoing ambiguity, the findings of this study indicate that, overall, journal articles are a very important vehicle of scholarly communication in linguistics. Therefore, these results further support the claim that linguistics is a field that more closely approximates the social sciences than the humanities, despite its traditional classification within the latter subject area. In fact, these findings, along with those of previous citation analyses in the humanities, suggest that the nature of humanities scholarship is changing in some disciplines, with journals playing an increasingly larger role.^{82, 83}

Citation of Theses and Other Publications

Although numerous citation analyses in the humanities and the social sciences have been published, very little recent research has been devoted to the examination of modes of scholarly communication other than monographs and journals. Further-

more, of the handful of citation analyses that have looked at aspects of publishing in linguistics, none have been comprehensive in their consideration of the relevance of nontraditional publications to the field. Thus, it is difficult to accurately determine the significance of publications such as theses and dissertations within the field of linguistics based on earlier investigations of the discipline.

Table 1 contains the percentage of citations to theses. Unpublished manuscripts other than theses are included in the broad "Other" category. For the citing sources, 11.5 percent of the citations are to theses. This figure is not surprising considering that approximately 10 percent of LLBA is composed of references to dissertations.⁸⁴ The percentage of citations to theses is much lower for the cited sources, at 3.6 percent. This figure is consistent with a ten-year study of citations in the journal *Indian Linguistics* by B. A. Sharada, which noted that five percent of the citations were to theses and dissertations.⁸⁵ The figures for both the citing and cited sources largely fall within the range reported for other humanities disciplines as well. In philosophy, Cullars reported that only two percent of citations were to theses and manuscripts.⁸⁶ For literary criticism, this figure ranges between 2.2 and 12.6 percent. For fine arts scholarship, 14.8 percent of the citations were to theses and manuscripts.⁸⁸ For history, a discipline that, like linguistics, has been considered both a humanity and a social science, a 2002 study by Sara M. Lowe, in which she analyzed references from *American Historical Review*, determined that 0.4 percent of citations were to dissertations.⁸⁹

For the social sciences, only a handful of older studies considered theses and dissertations as a format of publication. In a 1974 analysis of the literature of sociology by James C. Baughman, 1.34 percent of the citations were to dissertations.⁹⁰ In a 1972 analysis of economics literature by John Fletcher, 8.2 percent of the citations were to dissertations and unpublished manuscripts.⁹¹ More recently, Bowman's

TABLE 2
Most Highly Cited Journals for Citing Sources*

Rank	Journal Title	%	N
1	Computational Linguistics	3.1	11
2	Brain and Language	2.8	10
3	International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders	2.6	9
4	Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research	2.0	7
5	American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology	1.7	6
6	Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in the Schools	1.4	5
6	Psychonomic Bulletin and Review	1.4	5

Note: *Percentages are based on total number of citations to journal articles (353).

1991–1992 overview of citation analyses of various disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and the sciences, spanning the years 1899–1983, determined that only between 0.0 and 5.4 percent of citations were to theses and dissertations.⁹²

Thus, the figures of this study correspond to those cited for other disciplines in both the social sciences and humanities, confirming that the use of theses as a mode of scholarly communication in linguistics is minimal.

Most Highly Cited Journals

Several previous studies have sought to discover and document a set of core journals for linguistics or specific subfields within linguistics. The results of Zwaan and Nederhof “pointed very clearly to the existence of a set of core journals in theoretical linguistics,” and a later study by these scholars included a list of core journals in general linguistics.^{93–96} In their research examining the link between gender and publication and citation patterns in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, McElhinny and her coauthors listed five journals known to be among the most influential in these subfields.^{97,98} Although a specific list of linguistics serials was not identified, Line’s large-scale citation analysis of the social sciences indicated that approximately four percent of the linguistics serials examined accounted for just over 50 percent of

the total number of serials cited, implicitly indicating the existence of a core set of serials within linguistics.⁹⁹

As is evident in tables 2 and 3, however, *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research* is the only journal included in the most highly cited lists for both the citing and cited sources. *Computational Linguistics*, the most highly cited journal for the citing sources, had only two references in the cited sources. Of the various “core” journals outlined in the aforementioned literature, none of these titles was among the most highly cited journals for the citing sources, and only one title, *Language*, appeared in the most highly cited journals list for the cited sources. In addition, even the most highly cited journals in this study, such as *Computational Linguistics* and *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, accounted for only 3.1 and 3.4

TABLE 3
Most Highly Cited Journals for Cited Sources*

Rank	Journal Title	%	N
1	Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research	3.4	7
2	Journal of the Acoustical Society of America	2.4	5
3	Language	2.0	4
3	Modern Language Journal	2.0	4

Note: *Percentages are based on total number of citations to journal articles (205).

TABLE 4
Most Highly Cited Journals for Both Citing and Cited Sources*

Journal Title	Citing Sources		Cited Sources	
	%	N	%	N
Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research	2.0	7	3.4	7
Brain and Language	2.8	10	1.5	3
Computational Linguistics	3.1	11	1.0	2
Language Speech and Hearing Services in Schools	1.4	5	1.0	2
Linguistic Inquiry	1.1	4	1.5	3
Memory and Cognition	1.1	4	1.5	3
TESOL Quarterly	1.1	4	1.5	3
Cognition	1.1	4	1.0	2

Note: *Percentages are based on total number of citations to journal articles.

percent, respectively, of the total number of citations to journal articles.

To further verify the academic standing of the most highly cited linguistics journals in this study, the authors consulted ISI Journal Citation Reports (JCR). Of the eleven most highly cited journals for both the citing and citing sources, eight were ranked in JCR. Of the three most highly ranked journals that did not appear in JCR, one title, *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, was included in a recent report that ranked high-quality linguistics journals based on nominations by linguistics scholars, rather than by citation-based impact factors.¹⁰⁰

With very little commonality between the most highly cited journals for the citing and cited sources, and taking into account the relatively low number of citations that even the most highly cited journals received, this study does not confirm prior research in that it finds no evidence that a core set of journals exists for the field of linguistics. It seems much more likely that core journals might be identified for specific subfields within linguistics, as previous studies suggest, rather than for the field of linguistics as a whole.

With regard to the subject classification of the most highly cited journals in tables 2, 3, and 4, the authors consulted the Dewey Decimal Classification System. Of the fourteen unique titles listed, three were classified under “Psychology” (100), one was classified under “Social Sciences” (300), four were classified under “Languages” (400), one was classified under “Natural Sciences and Mathematics” (500), four were classified under “Technology” (600), and one was classified under “Literature and Rhetoric” (800). Thus the subject classifications of the most highly cited journals in this study offer further evidence that linguistics is a discipline that may be more closely allied with the social sciences and even the sciences

because a majority of the most highly cited journals fall under these subject categories.

Presses Publishing in Linguistics

Types of Presses Publishing in Linguistics

The type of publishers that produced both the citing and cited sources was examined. As is evident in table 5, publishing in linguistics is predominantly an academic affair. For the citing sources, 77.6 percent of the citations were to publications by domestic and foreign university or academic presses. None of the citations were to popular trade presses. The remaining citations (22.4%) were to publications by specialized presses, which include government agencies, associations, and university departments. Of the seventy-one citations to strictly domestic specialized presses, the majority were to highly respected associations such as the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (eighteen citations), the Chicago Linguistic Society (eleven citations), and the Psychonomic Society, Inc. (ten citations). (See table 6.) Although association presses such as these have been classified

TABLE 5
Types of Presses Publishing in Linguistics*

Type of Press	Citing Sources		Cited Sources	
	%	N	%	N
US University Press	12.0	51	11.2	49
Joint US/UK University Press	5.2	22	9.4	41
Foreign University Press	4.0	17	2.3	10
US Academic Trade Press	9.0	38	16.9	74
Joint US/UK Academic Trade Press	20.3	86	7.8	34
Foreign Academic Trade Press	18.6	79	10.5	46
Joint US/Foreign Academic Trade Press	8.5	36	8.5	37
US Popular Trade Press	—	N/A	5.0	22
Joint US/UK Popular Trade Press	—	N/A	0.7	3
Foreign Popular Trade Press	—	N/A	2.8	12
US Specialized Press**	16.8	71	21.3	93
UK Specialized Press**	0.2	1	—	N/A
Joint US/Foreign Specialized Press**	0.2	1	—	N/A
Foreign Specialized Press**	5.2	22	3.7	16
Total	100	424	100.1***	437

Note: *This table does not take into account citations to unpublished documents such as theses and manuscripts, or documents in which the publisher was unverifiable. Figures are based on total number of citations to published documents.
 **Includes government documents, association papers, and papers by university departments.
 ***Does not total 100 percent due to rounding.

as “specialized” for the purposes of this study, their publications are primarily academic. Of the seven most highly cited journals (table 2), four are published by either the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association or the Psychonomic Society, Inc.

For the cited sources, 66.6 percent of the citations were to publications by domestic and foreign university or academic presses. Only a handful of citations were to popular trade presses (8.5%). The remaining citations (25%) were to publications by specialized presses. Two of the most highly cited specialized presses (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and

TABLE 6
Most Highly Cited Publishers for Citing Sources

Rank	Publisher	%	N
1	Elsevier	10.0	48
2	John Benjamins	8.6	41
3	Kluwer	4.4	21
4	Taylor & Francis	4.2	20
5	MIT Press	4.0	19
6	American Speech-Language-Hearing Association	3.8	18
7	Blackwell	2.5	12
7	Cambridge University Press	2.5	12
7	Oxford University Press	2.5	12
8	Chicago Linguistic Society	2.3	11
9	Psychonomic Society, Inc.	2.1	10

TABLE 7
Most Highly Cited Publishers for Cited Sources

Rank	Publisher	%	N
1	Elsevier	8.4	40
2	Cambridge UP	5.2	25
3	MIT Press	4.2	20
4	Oxford UP	3.3	16
5	Mouton de Gruyter	3.1	15
6	Blackwell	2.5	12
7	American Psychological Association	2.3	11
7	American Speech- Language- Hearing Association	2.3	11
8	Kluwer	2.1	10

American Institute of Physics) accounted for two of the most highly cited academic journals. (See table 3.) In addition, the American Psychological Association, the American Institute of Physics, TESOL, the Linguistics Society of America, and the Psychonomic Society, Inc., which combined, accounted for almost 33 percent of the publications by specialized presses, all publish highly regarded academic journals. Thus, the percentage of citations to academic publications is even higher than the 66.6 percent outlined in table 5. This further supports the claim that the most highly cited publishing houses in linguistics are scholarly presses and associations.

A significant percentage of citations were to publications produced by joint presses (34.2% for the citing sources; 26.4% for the cited sources). Academic and university presses such as Blackwell, Cambridge University Press, and Oxford University Press accounted for a large percentage of the joint U.S.—U.K. publications for both the citing and cited sources. Similarly, presses such as Taylor & Francis, Elsevier, and Kluwer were among the most highly cited of the joint U.S.—foreign publishers. (See tables 6 and 7.) This may be evidence of a growing trend in linguistics publishing, one in

which publishers that may once have specialized in language and linguistics are being acquired by a handful of large multinationals that account for an ever-increasing percentage of publications in a variety of disciplines. Companies such as the highly cited Elsevier, once solely based in Europe, now owns imprints such as Academic Press, Butterworth-Heinemann, Digital Press, Focal Press, Harcourt, Morgan Kaufmann, Newnes, and Pergamon. In fact, for the citing sources, the percentage of citations to publications by joint multinational presses was roughly equivalent to that of the strictly domestic presses (37.8%) and higher than the number of citations to publications by strictly foreign presses (27.8%). For the cited sources, the percentage of citations to joint multinational presses also was higher than that of the strictly foreign presses (19.3%).

Table 5 shows less than a five percent variation between citing and cited sources in all categories except for the percentage of sources from domestic, foreign, and joint U.S.—U.K. academic trade presses. Domestic academic trade presses accounted for only 9 percent of the citing sources, but 16.9 percent of the cited sources. Foreign academic trade press publications were roughly twice as predominant in the citing sources (18.6%) than the cited sources (10.5%). A similar trend was evident for joint U.S.—U.K. academic trade press publications. The citing sources (20.3%) contained more than twice as many citations to this type of press when compared to the cited sources (7.8%). This variation may be at least partly accounted for by the composition of LLBA, which indexes approximately twice as many publications from foreign presses than from domestic presses.¹⁰¹ In addition, LLBA indexes predominantly journal publications, a very significant percentage of which are published by the multinational concerns.

Most Highly Cited Publishers

In addition to the types of presses publishing in linguistics, the most highly cited publishers for both the citing and cited sources were examined. For both the citing and cited sources, it was decided that any publisher that received fewer than ten citations would not be included in the most highly cited lists.

Table 8 suggests that a core set of publishers exists within linguistics, in that each of the publishing companies listed received a significant number of citations in both the citing and cited sources. In the study by Nederhof, Luwel, and Moed, which surveyed linguistics scholars on the perceived quality and the international visibility of various publishers, all but two of these presses, Elsevier and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, were among those most frequently nominated.¹⁰²

Reflecting a trend previously identified, five of the eight most heavily cited publishers for both the citing and cited sources were joint presses. (See table 8.) By type of press, the breakdown for the most popular publishers was as follows: four academic trade presses (Elsevier, Kluwer, Blackwell, Mouton de Gruyter), three university presses (MIT, Oxford, Cambridge), and one specialized press (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association). The second largest supplier of citing sources, John Benjamins, received only seven citations in the cited publications.

By area of specialization, Elsevier and Kluwer identify themselves as primarily scientific publishers, Mouton de Gruyter focuses on the publication of "high-profile linguistics research," the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association produces publications for speech-language pathologists and audiologists, and the remaining presses (MIT, Blackwell,

Oxford, and Cambridge) publish broadly across the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences.¹⁰³⁻¹¹⁰ These findings thus provide further evidence that linguistics scholarship is not strictly the domain of humanities-based publishers.

Language of Citations and Use of Translations

Table 9 shows that English is the primary language of scholarly communication in linguistics. Only 6.5 percent (31) of the citations were to non-English-language sources. Furthermore, only 1.3 percent (6) of the English-language citations were to translations. Thus, only 5.8 percent (37) were to sources originally written in languages other than English.

Of the citation studies that have looked specifically at some aspect of linguistics, only one recent study has examined the language of publication in a comprehensive manner. In their citation analysis of foreign-language use by humanities scholars, Kellsey and Knievel determined that, in 2002, 89.6 percent of the citations in the linguistics journal *Language* were to English-language publications.¹¹¹ By analyzing the publication output of Dutch universities in the field of general linguistics-

TABLE 8
Most Highly Cited Publishers for Both Citing and Cited Sources*

Publisher	Citing Sources		Cited Sources	
	%	N	%	N
Elsevier	10.0	48	8.3	40
Kluwer	4.4	21	2.1	10
MIT Press	4.0	19	4.2	20
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association	3.8	18	2.3	11
Oxford University Press	2.5	12	3.3	16
Cambridge University Press	2.5	12	5.2	25
Blackwell	2.5	12	2.5	12
Mouton de Gruyter	2.3	11	3.1	15
John Benjamins	8.6	41	1.5	7

TABLE 9
Languages of Publication for Cited Sources*

Language of Publication	%	N
English	93.5	448
French	1.7	8
German	1.5	7
Spanish	0.4	2
Hungarian	0.4	2
Japanese	0.4	2
Polish	0.4	2
Russian	0.4	2
Chinese	0.2	1
Croatian	0.2	1
Danish	0.2	1
Hebrew	0.2	1
Norwegian	0.2	1
Unknown**	0.2	1
Total	99.9***	479

Note: *The language of publication for all the citing sources was English.
 **The language of publication for one of the cited sources could not be determined.
 ***Does not total 100 percent due to rounding.

tics, Nederhof, De Bruin, and Dekker found that the majority (56%) of publications were written in English.¹¹² Line's citation analysis showed evidence that scholars have a tendency to cite works in their own language.¹¹³ This is not surprising considering that the majority of linguistics materials are published in the United States and the United Kingdom. (See table 10.) Line also discovered that serials, regardless of the language of publication, have a tendency to cite works in English.¹¹⁴ Broadus concluded that "English-speaking social scientists do not depend greatly upon re-

search materials in foreign languages."¹¹⁵ This may be due to the limited linguistic ability of social scientists identified by Line's examination of the information uses and needs of social scientists and by the in-depth study of foreign-language materials use by humanities scholars by W. J. Hutchins, L. J. Pargeter, and W. L. Saunders.^{116,117} These findings possibly reflect a general Anglo-centric trend in academic scholarship whereby mastery of foreign languages by native English speakers is not regarded as necessary.

Similar trends have been documented in citation analyses of other humanities disciplines. Broadus found that 87.7 percent of all humanities-related interlibrary loan requests were for English-language materials.¹¹⁸ Cullars reported that 70.2 percent of the citations in fine arts criticism and 84.6 percent of the citations in philosophy monographs were to English-language publications.^{119,120} Even in a discipline such as history, Jean-Pierre V. M. Herubel found that the majority of scholarship is written in English.¹²¹ This finding is confirmed by Lowe's recent reference analysis of the *American Historical Review*, in which she determined that 91 percent of citations in 2002 were to English-language publications.¹²²

Table 9 also shows that French and German are the next most heavily cited languages in linguistics scholarship. The

TABLE 10
Most Highly Cited Countries of Publication for Both Citing and Cited Sources*

Country of Publication	Citing Sources			Cited Sources		
	Rank	%	N	Rank	%	N
USA	1	47.8	229	1	52.4	251
England	2	19.4	93	2	19.4	93
Netherlands	3	15.5	74	4	5.6	27
Germany	4	3.8	18	3	5.8	28
Canada	5	3.3	16	—	—	—
Scotland	—	—	—	5	1.3	6

Note: *Publications Include theses/dissertations.

Pargeter study determined that French and German publications accounted for the majority of non-English materials used in the academic community.¹²³ This finding is further confirmed by the results of Kellsey and Knievel's study, which states that "German and French remain the most important non-English languages of scholarship for the humanities."¹²⁴

Citations by Country of Publication

In keeping with the fact that English is the primary language of scholarly communication in linguistics, four of the most highly cited countries for both the citing and cited publications were English-speaking. The majority of publications for both the citing (47.8%) and cited (52.4%) sources were from the United States. England ranked second, with 19.4 percent of both the citing and cited publications. (See table 10.)

Line's citation analysis indicated "a strong tendency for most countries to refer to, and be cited by, their own publications."¹²⁵ Thus, it is not surprising that the United States and England, the two countries that accounted for the majority of the citing publications culled from LLBA, also would account for the majority of the cited publications.

Citations by Chronological Period

In listing the citations by decade, table 11 shows that the majority (52.6%) of linguistics publications being cited were published after 1990. Because the most recent publications examined in this study were published no later than 2001, these findings show that a considerable percentage (44.3%) of materials being cited by linguists were published within the past ten years (1992–2001). These findings correspond with other citation analyses which state that recent publications are important in the field of linguistics. In examining publications in theoretical linguistics, Zwaan and Nederhof discovered that 61 percent of the references were to literature that was ten years old or less.¹²⁶ Nederhof and Noyons reported

TABLE 11
Percentages of Citations by Chronological Period

Dates of Citations	%	N
2000–2001	2.5	12
1990–1999	50.1	240
1980–1989	23.8	114
1970–1979	10.9	52
1960–1969	5.4	26
1950–1959	2.5	12
1940–1949	0.8	4
1930–1939	0.6	3
1880–1929	1.0	5
Pre-1880*	0.6	3
Unknown**	1.7	8
Total	99.9***	479

Note: *These ranged from 1816 to 1600.
 **Precise dates were available for only 471 of the 479 citations.
 ***Does not total 100 percent due to rounding.

that materials in general linguistics are most heavily cited three to four years after publication.¹²⁷

Table 11 shows that slightly older publications are also relevant in linguistics, however, as a further 34.7 percent of the citations were to materials published between 1970 and 1989. The percentage of citations drops off significantly for materials published prior to 1970, with only 10.9 percent falling in this category.

The median age for the citations in this study was twelve years. This number falls squarely within the citation age range of literature reported for the social science disciplines.^{128,129} In general, citation analyses within the humanities have demonstrated that, although recent publications are becoming increasingly important, references span a broader chronology of dates. For example, in his study of philosophy monographs published in 1994, Cullars found that the 1980s were the most heavily cited decade, followed by the 1970s and the 1960s. In fact, only 8.9

percent of citations were from the most recent five years.¹³⁰ Similarly, in the fine arts, thirty years is an acceptable age range for publications.¹³¹ Thus, the findings of this study further support the notion that citation patterns in linguistics more closely mirror those of the social sciences in that there is greater emphasis on citing newer materials such as journal articles.

Gender of Citing and Cited Authors

In the case of the citing authors, it was possible to determine the author’s gender in almost 80 percent of the cases. First names were always listed, and given the convention that male names are generally taken to apply to men and female to women, gender could very often be determined. Names that can commonly apply to both sexes were classified in the “Unknown” category unless the author note indicated gender.

This was not the case with the cited authors. In fact, the author’s gender could not be determined in the majority (65.5%) of the cases. This was because only an initial was used in most cases to represent the author’s first name. Due to the time that would have been required to research and accurately determine the gender of each author (even where possible to do so), it was decided that when initials were used to represent the author’s first name, no further verification of gender would be attempted. As a result, the data for the cited sources are inconclusive.

With regard to the gender of citing authors, table 12 shows that slightly more authors were women (41.4%) than men (38.1%). In the McElhinny study, which

examined how gender correlates with publication and citation over a thirty-five-year period (1965–2000) in five major sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropology journals, it was determined that women authors accounted for approximately 33 percent of publications.¹³² In examining the citations of these journals over the same time period, it was determined that 27.3 percent of the total citations were to female authors.¹³³

Except for the McElhinny study, very little has been written that examines the relationship between citation and gender in the field of linguistics. The authors of this study sought to determine whether linguistics, like many other disciplines, is a field in which women authors are not as strongly represented as male authors. The very preliminary findings are encouraging. Although journals within the subfields of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology appear not to be quite as receptive to the publication and citation of works by women, this study tentatively suggests that the field of linguistics as a whole is becoming increasingly representative of women authors in publication in journals, the great majority of the citing publications. (See table 12.)

Conclusion

Major Citation Characteristics of Linguistics

One of the main purposes of this study was to document the citation characteristics of linguistics in order to help reference, instruction, or collection development librarians familiarize themselves with the discipline, in particular librarians with little or no subject background in this area.

Both monographs and journals figure prominently in linguistics scholarship. Taking into account both the citing and cited sources, 58.3 percent of the citations were to journal articles and 32.3 percent were to books and articles in books.

Contrary to some earlier studies, however, no journals were cited frequently enough to fit into a set of core journals. Only a single journal was found among the top journals in both the citing and

TABLE 12 Gender of Authors		
Gender of Authors	Citing Authors	
	%	N
Male	38.1	304
Female	41.4	330
Unknown	20.5	163
Total	100	797

cited sources, and its ranking differed considerably between the two. This lack of a recognizable core may reflect the many different specializations in linguistics and the fact that Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA) offers a broad cross section of the entire discipline.

Linguistics publishing is an overwhelmingly academic endeavor with only 7.8 percent of the citations from popular trade presses. Given the highly specialized terminology and concerns of the discipline, this is not surprising. The majority of citations were published by a core group of academic presses: Elsevier, Kluwer, MIT, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Blackwell, and Mouton de Gruyter. Society publications play a major role, and multinational publishers account for approximately one third of the total citations in this study.

English is the primary language of scholarly communication in linguistics, even in non-English speaking nations. The United States accounts for 50.1 percent of the citations, with the United Kingdom following at 20 percent. These numbers suggest that linguistics scholarship and publishing are not merely Anglophone, but largely Anglo-American, despite some major contributions from the Netherlands and Germany.

Subject Classification of Linguistics

One important aspect of developing knowledge of a discipline is determining where it falls in the continuum that extends from the humanities through the social sciences to the sciences. In particular, because the classification of linguistics has been much disputed over time, an understanding of its subject categorization will provide librarians with a clearer picture of scholarship in this area.

Although some citation characteristics examined in this study did not provide direct evidence of linguistics' subject classification (for example, it was determined that English is the primary language

of scholarly communication for both the humanities and the social sciences), based on such factors as the importance of recent publications to the field (44.3% of citations were published within the last decade), the prominence of journals as a primary vehicle of scholarly communication (58.3% of the total number of citations were to journal articles), the Dewey Decimal subject classification of the most highly cited journals, and the areas of specialization of the core group of linguistics publishers, it was determined that the publication and citation patterns of linguistics more closely resemble those of the social sciences than the humanities. More specifically, linguistics is very similar to such social science disciplines as sociology, economics, and library and information science.¹³⁴

If, however, linguistics continues to be classified with the humanities, the findings of this study support such conclusions as the ones made by Nederhof and his colleagues, which show that journals are a very important source of publication in all humanities disciplines.^{135,136} Thus, this study serves as further evidence that the nature of publishing and citation in the humanities is changing.

Implications for Librarians

These findings will have implications for academic librarians who have reference and/or instruction responsibilities in the subject area of linguistics. By understanding the nature of scholarship and publication in the discipline, the academic librarian will be better able to identify relevant resources. Such an understanding also will inform the instruction librarian's teaching of research and information literacy principles appropriate for the field. For example, in being able to convey to students that, like other social science disciplines, both books and articles are relevant to their literature review, that materials published within the past ten years are acceptable, and that English is the primary language of scholarly communication (even when studying a non-

English-speaking group or phenomenon), the reference and/or instruction librarian can help students establish important guidelines in terms of how they should go about conducting their research and which resources are appropriate.

Moreover, the findings of this study will benefit collections development departments in academic libraries. The prominence of recent literature in linguistics, despite the lack of evidence for a group of core journals, is an important consideration for librarians when deciding budget allocations for resources. In addition, the establishment of a set of core academic publishers in linguistics, with the majority of scholarship being published in English, by a handful of primarily English-speaking countries, will further aid librarians in making resource purchasing decisions for the field.

Limitations of the Study

As has been noted previously, one of the major limitations of this study is the composition of LLBA. Obviously, this must be taken into account when considering the characteristics of the citing sources, in particular the analysis by type of publication.

It has also been documented that, at least within the social sciences, serials are nearly twice as likely to reference serials instead of monographs.¹³⁷ Thus, to avoid the possibility of bias, future citation studies in linguistics may wish to examine citations that have been selected from a more balanced mix of books and journals because this study proves that both are important modes of scholarly communication.

Another limitation is the use of Journal Citation Reports (JCR) as a resource to assess the most highly cited journals. JCR only lists the most highly ranked journals for the subfield of applied linguistics and not for the field of linguistics as a whole. However, because inclusion of this study's most highly cited journals in JCR's rankings confirmed their existence as high-quality journals, JCR was consulted despite this limitation.

With regard to the academic standing of the most highly cited journals list for the citing sources, the selection process used by LLBA also should be taken into account. Although LLBA claims to be a comprehensive language and linguistics database that covers both theoretical and applied linguistics and indexes, "any article from any journal if the article pertains to language in any way," it is impossible for any single database to index every journal within a particular discipline.^{138,139}

Additional investigations would be needed to adequately account for the variation between the citing and cited sources for academic trade presses. It is uncertain whether this variation reflects a changing trend in scholarly communication between domestic and foreign scholars or whether this is entirely a result of the selection process used by LLBA. In other words, do foreign scholars publish more frequently in journals published in their own countries or do they prefer publication in those journals that are perceived as qualitatively "better," regardless of their country of publication?

Areas for Further Research

An interesting question raised by this study, and one that needs to be pursued further, is the issue of gender and the role that women play in linguistics writing and publishing. This might be done by focusing future studies on authorship in linguistics. Is a core group of scholars writing in linguistics? Are women indeed playing a larger role than men in linguistics scholarship?

Further work also could be done on the kind of linguistics topics that scholars are examining. Are certain areas of specialization particularly dominant, and how has this subject emphasis changed over time? In addition, as fields within the humanities and the social sciences become increasingly interdisciplinary, it would be interesting to determine whether such interdisciplinarity holds true for linguistics as well.

Notes

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