# Formal Aspects of Term Papers and Theses in English Linguistics (as of 03 July 2026)

## 1. Structure of the paper (Basic structure):

- **Cover page** (see exemplary template on IfLA homepage)
- **Table of Contents** (with page numbers, list each (sub)chapter)
- **Introduction** (introduction to the topic, aim of work)
- **Background** (relevant concepts/theories, research to date)
- **Main part** (detailed examination of the actual question, e.g. own study)
- **Discussion** (relate own findings to previous research/theories)
- **Conclusion** (brief summary of results, outlook)
- **Bibliography** (full bibliographical references only of literature mentioned in the text)
- **Appendix** (if meaningful)
- **Declaration of Authenticity** (signed!)

## 2. Layout of the paper:

- printed on one side
- margins: about 2,5 - 3 cm; the left margin may be slightly larger than the right one
- line spacing:
  - continuous text: 1,5
  - footnotes, bibliography: 1,0
    (only use footnotes if absolutely necessary!)
- font size: 12pt
- page numbers (bottom, centered) on every page except title page and declaration of authenticity

## 3. Source references in the text (Note: In linguistics we follow **APA** style: https://apastyle.apa.org)

- format at the end of a textual reference or paraphrase in your own words: (*LastName, Year*), e.g. **(Fischer, 2004; Altmann & Kabak, 2011)**
- electronic sources without author: online source title and – if available – year
- page number required for literal citations and for very close paraphrases! (see point 4. below)
- if possible integrated in the text flow, then as *LastName (Year)*,
  e.g. **According to Zerbian (2016)** ... or **Altmann & Kabak (2011) describe**...
- complete bibliographic listings only in the bibliography
- sources should not be provided as footnotes!

## 4. Literal Quotes:

- should be used very sparingly, better are paraphrases in own words (see point 3. above)
- always include page numbers !
  Format: in the text flow *LastName (Year, Page)* or after the citation (*LastName, Year, Page*)
  e.g. **Fischer (2004, p. 490) points out that " …Citation…".**
  or **" …Citation…" (Fischer, 2004, 490).**
- Punctuation, spelling, or highlighted portions of the cited text must be copied without changes.
- Integrate up to three lines of length into the text and mark them there with quotation marks
- Citations that are longer than three lines are written in close lines and set off (without quotations marks, but definitely still with a reference that includes page numbers).
- Own additions that are relevant for the understanding are put in square brackets.
- If unimportant parts of a citation are omitted, this must be clearly indicated, e.g.: **[...]**. The meaning of the statement must not be changed by such omissions.

## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- most important: Uniformity!
- Always sort alphabetically by last name of (first) authors.
- for reference works (e.g., dictionaries), use the name or title (see example below)
- in case of several works of one (first) author: list chronologically, but single publications before jointly authored literature
- in case of several works of one (first) author from the same year: list alphabetically by title (with specification 'a' or 'b' after the year)
- first names may alternatively also be spelled out in full form (But be consistent !)
- title of publication medium (book/journal title) must be italicized (see examples below)
- online sources are integrated alphabetically by author (if available) or by title in bibliography (→ no separate list)

Formatting examples for different types of sources:

If available, add DOI at the end; **NOT**: *Researchgate, Semantic Scholar etc.* !

- **Monograph** (self-authored book):
  Chomsky, N. & Halle, M. (1968). *The Sound Pattern of English.* Harper & Row.
- **Article in a journal**:
  Fischer, S. (2004). Optimal Binding. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 22, 481-526. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:NALA.0000027668.22030.aa
- **Chapter in anthology** (1 author):
  Zerbian, S. (2016). Sentence Intonation in Sotho-Tswana. In L.J. Downing & A. Rialland (Eds.), *Intonation in African Tone Languages* (pp. 393-433). Mouton de Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110503524-012.
- **Chapter in anthology** (2 authors):
  Altmann, H. & Kabak, B. (2011). Second language phonology. In B. Botma, N.C. Kula, & K. Nasukawa (Eds.), *The Continuum Companion to Phonology* (pp. 298-319). Continuum.
- **Webpage**:
  Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden-Württemberg (2016). *Bildungsplan Grundschule Englisch*. Retrieved 01 July, 2026 from https://www.bildungsplaene-bw.de/,Lde/BP2016BW_ALLG_GS_E
- **Lexicon/Dictionary**:
  Hardcopy: Merriam-Webster. (2003). Litmus test. In *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary* (p.727).
  Online: Merriam-Webster (n.d.). Semantics. In *Meriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved July 01, 2026, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/semantics

## 6. COMPLETION TIME AND LENGTH:

- Seminar paper: depending on time and length specified by lecturer in the relevant seminar
- Thesis:
  according to the PO, the exam should show "that the person to be examined is able to work independently on a task [...] according to scientific methods within a given period of time and to present the results appropriately"

| **Study program** (as of 01 July 2026) | **PO** | **ECTS** | **Completion time** | **Length** (in pages) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| B.A. *Lehramt Englisch* | 2015, 2022 | 6 | 4 months | ca. 30 |
| B.A. *Anglistik* | 2018 | 12 | 4 months | ca. 50 |
| M.Ed. *Englisch Lehramt* | 2017,2022 | 15 | 6 months | ca. 60 |
| M.A. *EASEL* | 2020 | 30 | 6 months | ca. 80 |
| B.A. *Linguistik* | 2023 | 12 | 4 months | ca. 40 |
| M.A. *Digital Humanities* | 2023 | 30 | 6 months | ca. 80 |