



Experimental Psychology in the Year 2020

Where We Stand and Where to Go

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With the year 2020, the journal *Experimental Psychology* started into a new decade and our term as Editors-in-Chief has already reached its half time: time for a résumé what we have achieved so far and what we have planned for the future.

Where Do We Stand?

In our previous Editorial (Eder & Frings, 2018), we identified the following five criteria of excellence for a research journal that would serve as benchmarks for our own editorial practice:

Standard 1: A good journal has a specialty.

Standard 2: A good journal has rigorous peer review.

Standard 3: A good journal is transparent.

Standard 4: A good journal honors the value of reproducible data.

Standard 5: A good journal is author-friendly.

Our activities were geared toward strengthening these standards, resulting in several tweaks and changes concerning the review and publication procedures at *Experimental Psychology*.

For a highlight of the relevance of our journal subject (experimental research in psychology), we invited several distinguished scientists to write articles that highlight significant advances in influential areas of experimental psychology. We are very happy that several renowned scientists followed our invitation. Bernhard Hommel from Leiden University (The Netherlands) wrote an article in which he extended the *Theory of Event Coding* to representations of the self and others, highlighting the relevance of experimental research for our understanding of social communication (Hommel, 2018). Charles Spence from the

University of Oxford (United Kingdom) published a theoretical review on the relationship between color and taste/flavor, highlighting the importance of experimental research on multisensory perception (Spence, 2019). Jan De Houwer from Ghent University (Belgium) discussed in his article the importance of relational knowledge for our understanding of classic “associative” phenomena, proposing an alternative to dual-system accounts (De Houwer, 2019). Additional prominent researchers have agreed to submit articles for coming issues. Sign up to our electronic journal (<https://econtent.hogrefe.com/>) so that you will not miss them!

Rigorous peer review is the most important instrument for quality assurance, and we implemented this measure without compromise. Every submission was reviewed without exception by independent experts in the field. As a consequence of this rigorous policy, not every submission could make it into print, with the rate of acceptance at 37% in the last year while the rate of submissions remained constant over the last 2 years. We see it as very important to emphasize the high quality of papers at *Experimental Psychology*. In this regard, we are extremely fortunate to have the support of a professional Editorial Board that has served excellently for this journal since many years. They are the pumping heart of this journal, and we want to thank them here for their continued dedication to this journal. Our special thanks go to Arndt Bröder (University of Mannheim, Germany) and Gesine Dreisbach (University of Regensburg, Germany) who decided to step down from the board after having served as editors for many years. We are fortunate to have them replaced with excellent new editors who will reinforce our Editorial Board with their expertise in selected subfields of experimental psychology. Ullrich Ecker is Associate Professor for Psychology at the University of Western Australia. His research investigates

human memory, memory updating, and the processing of misinformation. Julia Vogt is Associate Professor for Psychology at the University of Reading (United Kingdom). Her research focus is on motivation, emotion, and social cognition. Welcome to our Editorial Board!

Other editorial activities aimed to strengthen transparency about decisions and publication practices. Advance in this direction was made with the award of Open Science badges to articles for the acknowledgment of open science practices (open data, open materials; preregistration). The badges were provided by the Open Science Foundation, and they appear in both the print journal and online articles. A study showed that acknowledgment of open science practices with digital badges improves public accessibility of data and materials used in scientific research (Kidwell et al., 2016). *Experimental Psychology* is one of the few scientific journals that made publication of raw data in a public data archive obligatory (except for noted reasons). Since the official introduction, the Open Data badge was awarded to every empirical article published in our journal. The Open Material badge was awarded to 27% and the Preregistration badge to 14% of the articles, attesting a high amount of transparency. In addition to Open Science badges, we also made efforts to increase the number of open-access publications. Specifically, one article per issue was published open access based on editors' pick and without additional costs for the authors. Since the start of this initiative, an additional six articles (in addition to the three invited articles noted above) could be made open access (Arnold, Heck, Bröder, Meiser, & Boywitt, 2019; Berry, Allen, Waterman, & Logie, 2019; Genschow, Schuler, Cracco, Brass, & Wänke, 2019; Hussey & De Houwer, 2018; Kranz, Nadarevic, & Erdfelder, 2019; Zhang, Phan, Li, & Guo, 2018). We thank Hogrefe Publishing for the generous support of this publication model, and we would like to see more articles published under the Hogrefe OpenMind License in the future.

In times of a noted "replication crisis" in psychology, a good journal should honor the value of reproducible data. *Experimental Psychology* acknowledged the importance of preregistration of study plans and publication of negative study results very early with the introduction of the Registered Report article type. A Registered Report is a preregistered study plan detailing the theoretical background, empirical hypotheses, methods, and data-analytic strategies for a planned but not yet conducted experiment. The study plan is evaluated by scientific peers and, importantly, an editorial decision on acceptance is made before the results of the experiment are known. The preregistration prevents hypothesizing after the results are known and withholding negative results from publication. In addition, the format is particularly suitable for a preregistration of direct replication studies that often fail to

provide affirmative results (see, e.g., Mieth, Bell, & Buchner, 2019). We are very happy that several registered report articles appeared in our journal since the start of our editorial term (e.g., Frech, Loschelder, & Friesse, 2019; Grange, 2018) and that more are under revision at the moment.

Last, but not least, a good journal has to be author-friendly. A service, typically unnoticed by external people, is the careful screening of incoming manuscripts for formal errors by our Editorial Assistants, Anand Krishna and Sarah Schäfer. Their diligent proofreading and constructive feedback to authors is an invaluable asset to our editorial work. In our previous Editorial, we also stated the goal to reduce the manuscript turnover time from completion of submission to the first decision after review. In 2017, the average turnaround time was 64 days. In 2018, we could reduce this time to 49.5 days ($SD = 28.7$) and in 2019 even further to 39 days ($SD = 23.4$)! We are extremely happy that we were able to reduce the turnaround times below 40 days, and we thank our editorial team for making this possible.

In addition to the reduction of turnaround times, we also made efforts to facilitate advance online publication after acceptance of manuscripts. We are aware that authors want their papers published as soon as possible after acceptance. We therefore made an agreement with Hogrefe Publishing that advance online publication in the paper's final form is guaranteed within 12 weeks after acceptance (provided that there were no significant delays in the approval of proofs for release). Furthermore, Hogrefe Publishing also revised the guidelines on sharing and use of articles submitted to *Experimental Psychology*. The manuscript version accepted by the journal for publication could now be shared and posted at any time after acceptance, including on authors' personal websites, in their own institutional repositories, in not-for-profit subject-based repositories, and in scholarly communication networks such as ResearchGate or Academia.edu. In addition, the final version of the article as published in the journal (version of record) can be shared at any time with individuals upon request for their personal scientific or other noncommercial research uses and as part of a grant application or submission of a thesis or doctorate. For more information, the interested reader is referred to the Hogrefe Publishing Internet guidelines on sharing and use of articles in Hogrefe scientific journals.

Where to Go?

Since the start of our editorial term, we hence could note several positive trends in the development of *Experimental*

Psychology, such as shortened turnaround times, pervasive use of open science practices, and removal of embargo policies. These trends must be consolidated and further strengthened in the coming time. However, there were also negative developments. Particularly alarming is the steady decline of the journal's impact factor (IF) from 1.83 in the year 2016 to 1.21 in 2017 and 1.00 in the year 2018. While the interpretation of the IF is complex (for an in-depth discussion, see our previous Editorial; Eder & Frings, 2018), it is a quantitative measure of the visibility of a journal in the scientific community. We deem an IF of 1.00 as unacceptably low according to this standard. Since the start of our editorial term, we started several initiatives that should increase the recognition of our journal (e.g., invited articles by distinguished scientists, special issues), the most important being the rigorous quality assurance of journal contributions (see our rates of acceptance above). Thus, we are confident that the negative trend has already been stopped and that a turnaround has been reached. In addition, we now also use social media to reach a broader audience. Readers are invited to follow us on Twitter to get all updates about the journal such as announcements of the latest publications, important news, and reminders regarding special issues.

Call for Registered Replication Studies

Replication lies at the heart of the scientific method, and cumulative knowledge is only possible on the basis of confirmed and reproducible scientific findings. *Experimental Psychology* therefore wants to encourage researchers to carry out replication research using its registered report format. Replication studies could be direct (using the same research protocol as the original study) or conceptual (investigation of the same research question with a different research protocol). Using a 2-stage review system, study protocols are reviewed by peers before data collection commences, and results from accepted studies will be published, regardless of the direction or statistical significance of the outcome (for more information, see our Author Instructions). For an additional incentive, the editors of *Experimental Psychology* and its publisher, Hogrefe Publishing, will award grants of €500 for each of two replication studies that pass Stage 1 of the tiered review process. The grant money may be used for any purpose as long as it is related to the replication, and it is paid even in the unlikely case in which the submitted article is rejected at Stage 2. Proposals can be submitted at any time, and there are no additional requirements for

participation. Please indicate in your cover letter whether you want to apply for the grant (for detailed instructions, see hogrefe.com). Grants will be awarded on a first come, first served basis each year for a period of 2 years starting May 1 this year (2020).

Call for Special Issue

Experimental Psychology invites submission of proposals for thematic special issues on a wide range of topics in experimental psychology, particularly those focusing on timely or emergent research areas. Consistent with the journal's priorities, articles must meet the journal's primary criteria, namely, the rigorous use of experimental methodology and/or a strong and innovative theoretical contribution to experimental psychology as a basic science. A special issue typically comprises a review of the special issue topic as well as empirical research papers or articles on methodological innovations (see, e.g., the forthcoming special issue on *Stress & Cognition in Humans* guest-edited by Gregor Domes and Christian Frings). A target article might also be published together with one or more invited comments. Proposals can be submitted at any time (for details, see hogrefe.com/j/exppsy).

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