

## Research Article

# Replication Infrequency: Perspectives from Applied Linguistics Editors

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Doi: <https://doi.org/10.48308/clls.2025.239606.1334>**Abstract**

Replication studies play a crucial role in advancing scientific research, yet they are notably infrequent in applied linguistics (AL) journals. While editors serve as pivotal decision-makers in shaping academic publications, their perspectives on the scarcity of replication studies remain unexplored. This study aims to uncover insights from 27 editors-in-chief regarding the infrequency of replications in AL journals, shedding light on the challenges faced by replication research within the discipline. Thematic analysis revealed that editors identify a complex set of interrelated factors hindering the prevalence of replication studies, including predefined guidelines, limitations of academic journals, and an implicit bias toward impactful and original research. Further, editors recognize the critical role of replication in scientific research but emphasize that it is not a panacea for all research problems, urging its consideration as a valuable tool alongside other rigorous research methods. These findings underscore the need for reform in the research culture of AL, advocating for increased replication studies and emphasizing transparency and rigor in research practices.

**Keywords:** Applied Linguistics; Journal Editors; Publication Bias; Replication; Thematic Analysis.**Introduction**

Replication in research refers to the process of conducting a study aimed at reproducing the findings of previously completed research. This is done to assess the validity and reliability of the original results, whether under similar or different conditions (Porte 2012). Replication in scientific research encompasses various types, each serving distinct purposes in advancing our understanding of phenomena. Specifically, while direct replications focus on verifying original study findings within the same population, partial and conceptual replications extend this

inquiry by assessing the generalizability of results across different populations or linguistic forms (Porte 2013). Replication is a crucial component of scientific research, providing a means to test and verify the findings of previous studies. In the field of applied linguistics (AL), replication studies are especially important given the practical implications of the research (Marsden and Morgan-Short 2023; McManus 2022). For instance, policy and practice decisions in language teaching and learning are often based on findings from research studies. If these studies are not subject to replication, there is a risk that policies

and practices could be based on inaccurate or unreliable information (McManus 2022). This, in turn, can have negative consequences for language learners and educators.

Further, recent research has provided evidence of the prevalence of questionable research practices (QRPs) and scientific misconduct in AL (Isbell et al. 2022; Plonsky 2023) making the current status of AL research in dire need of re-evaluation and reproduction. QRPs are techniques that can increase the likelihood of producing an appealing, paradoxical research conclusion that is more likely to be published in scientific journals, or of discovering apparent evidence to support an expected outcome. QRPs include, for example, omitting to report any or all of the study's dependent measures or conditions, stopping or continuing data collecting until one discovers evidence to support a hypothesis, and rounding off numbers to favor statistical significance (Marsden and Morgan-Short 2023). While replications often cannot definitively identify the specific QRPs employed, conflicts may arise due to variations in samples, contexts, and disparities between the original and replication studies. In such cases, adopting the perspective of a replicating or reproductive study can be valuable for identifying inconsistencies by discerning patterns that defy logical coherence.

In this sense, replication is indispensable in guaranteeing the reliability of research results and rectifying any unintentional or deliberate errors that might have occurred during the research process (Frais-Navarro 2020; Isbell et al. 2022). The most recent systematic review on replication in AL (Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber 2018) indicated that there is a lack of replication studies in the field. Moreover, almost half of the replication studies in McManus's (2022) sample did not explicitly label themselves as replication, as if replication might not be a welcome practice and making their recognition difficult. This dearth of replication studies raises questions about the reliability and validity of findings and limits the generalizability of results (Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber 2018; Marsden et al. 2018b; Marsden and Morgan-Short 2023; Porte and McManus 2019). It also limits the ability of researchers to build on and extend previous research, slowing the progress of the field as a whole (Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber 2018; Porte and McManus 2019).

While commendable attempts to promote replication in AL have been observed, particularly through initiatives like special issues in journals such as *ReCALL* and *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, it is imperative to recognize and address the challenges faced by replication studies. Identifying and tackling these challenges are

essential steps toward intrinsically addressing the replication crisis. In this regard, Porte (2013) identifies three potential reasons for the scarcity of replication research in AL, including potential misunderstandings of the concept of replication, lack of encouragement for replication at the university level, and potential biases from journals and editors. The current study investigates the third reason as journals and editors play a significant role in disseminating research findings and selecting what is deemed relevant and appropriate for their respective fields.

### Editors' Views and Journal Policies on Replication

Journal editors have a key role in promoting replication studies in AL. As gatekeepers of academic publishing, they can encourage researchers to conduct and submit replication studies (Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber 2018; Porte 2013). Moreover, they can help ensure that the replication studies are rigorous, transparent, and methodologically sound, thereby contributing to the strengthening of the field's knowledge base (Frias-Navarro 2020). By providing space for replication studies in their journals, editors can also help reduce the potential publication bias against replication studies that may exist in the field (Frias-Navarro 2020; Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber 2018; Porte 2013). As such, journals can play a pivotal role in supporting replication studies and promoting the scientific integrity and reliability of AL research.

Editors are the fundamental parties in shaping journals' policies and practices when it comes to supporting replication studies in AL. As Madden et al. (1995) noted, editors are uniquely situated to provide insights and comments on the role of replication in scientific research. They are exposed to a wide range of papers and research studies, which gives them a comprehensive understanding of the trends and issues in their field. Additionally, as leaders in their respective fields, editors' viewpoints reflect mainstream disciplinary biases that can shape the direction of research in AL. By carefully selecting and distributing what is relevant and appropriate, they have the power to influence the discourse and development of the field. Therefore, their involvement in promoting and supporting replication studies is essential for ensuring that the research in the field is reliable and transparent and contributes to the advancement of knowledge in AL.

Lastly, understanding the perspectives of influential decision-makers, often referred to as agents of change, on the scarcity of a particular research approach or methodology can serve as a valuable indicator of its legitimacy within an academic discipline (Marefat et al. 2024; Zimmerman and Zeitz 2002). Editors hold significant sway within academic journals, serving as key decision-makers, gatekeepers, and catalysts for change (Zimmerman

and Zeitz 2002). Their perspective on replication infrequency is central to understanding and addressing this challenge within the field of AL. Editors' attitudes toward the scarcity of replication studies can shape the discourse surrounding replication's legitimacy and acceptance in their journals (Tipu et al. 2022; Zimmerman and Zeitz 2002). By delving into their views and policies concerning replication infrequency, we gain invaluable insights into the dynamic realm of academic publishing, elucidating the path toward bolstering the legitimacy of replication research in AL.

Research investigating the policies of scientific journals and editors' perspectives regarding replication has been of interest to scholars for several decades. The exploration of replication research within academic journals has evolved over time, offering insights into the changing editorial landscape. Neuliep and Crandall (1991) conducted a study that marked an early attempt to assess the role of replication in academic publishing. Their findings revealed a relatively less valued position for replication studies, as they were perceived to be less desirable in comparison to novel research in various academic institutions and journals during that period. Subsequently, Hubbard and Armstrong (1994) continued this line of inquiry during the 1990s. Their study echoed the earlier observations, underlining the challenges faced by replication research in gaining recognition and publication within the academic sphere.

Madden et al. (1995) contributed to this chronicle with a comparative analysis that uncovered a significant divergence in editors' perspectives on replication across various academic disciplines. Editors in the natural sciences exhibited a notably higher receptivity to replication studies, recognizing their intrinsic value and significance. In contrast, those overseeing journals in the social sciences often favored the pursuit of novelty and innovation over replication, resulting in a conspicuous dearth of replication studies within their publications. These collective insights illustrate the historical progression of editorial attitudes toward replication, providing a backdrop to the current landscape of replication research within academia. All these significant studies employed mail-distributed surveys and conducted comparative analyses to delve into the intricate relationship between replication and academic publishing. Moreover, their research was not confined to a single academic discipline but embraced an interdisciplinary perspective.

Interest in examining journal policies regarding replication has persisted, extending to recent studies that scrutinized the author guidelines of journals across various fields. Yeung (2017), focusing on neuroscience, found that only a small fraction of journals explicitly welcomed

replications, with a substantial majority remaining silent on their stance. A similar trend was observed in psychology journals by Martin and Clarke (2017), where the vast majority of journals were not explicit about their acceptance policies for replication studies, with only a minor percentage expressing support for such research. Tipu and Ryan (2021) also reported limited explicit support for replication studies in business and management journals. Additionally, Hensel (2018) explored the editorials of top management journals, revealing that although replication was generally valued, cues within the editorials indirectly suggested a potentially inferior position for replication.

## The Current Study

Despite the importance of replication for scientific progress, little is known about how journal editors perceive the scarcity of replication in AL. A review of the literature shows that research examining editors' views on replication and challenges causing its infrequency in AL is underrepresented. Thus, the present study aims to investigate the perspectives of journal editors regarding replication in the field of AL. Understanding editors' views on replication could provide valuable insights for researchers who are considering conducting and submitting replication studies. In this regard, the following research question is addressed:

How do editorial views on replication scarcity reflect broader challenges to publishing replication in AL?

## Method

### Participants and Procedures

The participants of this study were the editors-in-chief (henceforth editors) of AL journals. The first step to identifying editors of AL was to detect scientific journals related to this discipline. To achieve this, Weber and Campbell (2004), Egbert (2007), and Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber (2018) were consulted, as they conducted thorough examinations of journals dedicated to L2 learning and relevant disciplines. Furthermore, Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber (2018) also provided a list of peer-reviewed Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) journals by scouring databases of Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts and PsycINFO. Eventually, ninety-three leading journals were identified after omitting the redundant journals from the aggregated inventory (Appendix A).

Once the list of journals in AL was assembled, the next step was to identify the editors. To do this, we searched the journals' websites and LinkedIn profiles, where the names and contact information of the editors were usually listed. We also used online directories such as the Directory of Open Access Journals and Ulrich's Periodicals Directory to cross-check and verify the editors' details. In

cases where the editor's contact information was not readily available on the journal's website or LinkedIn profile, we sent a request to the journal's general email address asking for the editor's email address. The process of identifying and collecting the editors' email addresses took approximately three weeks. Ultimately, we obtained the email addresses of 98 editors from the 93 journals, which formed the basis of our sample.

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

A qualitative approach was taken in order to gain a proper understanding of the perspectives of editors on replication. A web-based semi-structured interview method was adopted to collect data. The interview questions for this study were developed through a comprehensive review of the existing literature on replication in AL. The challenges surrounding the publication of replication studies have been consistently highlighted in prior research within our field (Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber 2018; Marsden et al. 2018b; McManus 2021; Porte and McManus 2019). These recurring themes, including journals' discouragement and bias toward replication, were instrumental in guiding the development of our interview questions, which were designed to probe editors' perspectives on these challenges.

In addition, since the main objective of this study was to understand the challenges and limitations facing replication studies in their publication processes, we drew on Oppenheim (2000) work on questionnaire design, which acknowledges the importance of considering negative wording in question formulation in cases where challenges and limitations are explored. The interview questions were deliberately crafted with a negative bias to focus on specific aspects of replication infrequency and discouragement within the context of AL. This deliberate stance aimed to prompt respondents to critically reflect on potential barriers, limitations, and disincentives associated with replication studies in AL, rather than eliciting broad perspectives on the topic.

The interview questions underwent a piloting process to ensure their clarity, relevance, and effectiveness in eliciting meaningful responses. A pilot study involving a small sample of experts (N= 5), comprising editors of some Iranian AL journals within the academic community of AL, was conducted to test the feasibility and comprehensibility of the questions. Based on the feedback received from these experts during the pilot study, adjustments were made to refine the wording and structure of the questions before the commencement of the main data collection phase. For example, one of the experts proposed that Question 4, which was previously posed as "Do you think researchers are hesitant/ willing to conduct replication studies in applied linguistics? Why?", needs more

direction to lead the question toward the aim of the study (i.e., seeking for the potential role of journals for replication infrequency). The final set of questions was designed to elicit responses from the editors that would provide insight into their views regarding the role of replication in disciplinary development, the reasons why replication studies may be discouraged in AL, and the potential steps that academic journals can take to promote and encourage replication studies (Appendix B).

The data were analyzed using inductive and deductive thematic analysis, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), using MAXQDA. To become acquainted with the data, authors read all transcripts multiple times and documented thoughts and potential codes or themes throughout this phase and the entire data analysis (i.e., reflexive journaling). To generate initial codes, the first five interviews were coded independently by the two authors of the present study (peer-debriefing), leading to the creation of the initial codebook that included both conceptually-driven (deductive) and data-driven (inductive) codes that emerged from participants' responses and updated after each new interview. For example, reading the transcripts, the researchers realized that the editors expressed their concerns about sharing the research data openly. This subtheme, which had not been anticipated in the initial codebook, was incorporated into the updated codebook as "non-mandatory research data," and later refined to "data reservation" to align more precisely with ongoing scholarly debates about open science practices. Themes were reviewed in two stages: (1) by examining the coherence of data within each theme, and (2) by validating the distinctiveness of each theme in relation to others. Referential adequacy was established through constant reference to raw data (an audit trail) to confirm that the themes authentically represented participants' voices. Lastly, to name themes, a consensus was reached referring to the existing literature, and the final report of the data was prepared. Relevant excerpts were provided that reinforced them. In order to ensure the trustworthiness and dependability of the research, audit trail, reflexive journaling, and peer-debriefing, as recommended by Nowell et al. (2017) were followed.

To recruit participants for the study, a targeted email strategy was employed. The email sent to the participants included a brief explanation of the research, along with the interview questions. The email also explained the purpose of the study and assured the participants that their responses would remain confidential. All follow-ups on participants' responses were conducted through emails. After a two-month period, from August 3<sup>rd</sup> until October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, a total of 27 editors replied (response rate of 27.5%). The participants' demographics are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

Participants' Characteristic	Demographics Value
<b>Total Number</b>	27
<b>Gender</b>	Male(70%) 19 : (30%) 8 :Female
<b>Average Age Range</b>	43–53 years
<b>Academic Rank/Title</b>	Professor(59%) 16 : (30%) 8 :Professor Associate (11%) 3 :Professor Assistant
<b>Country of Institutional Affiliation</b>	USA: 8 UK: 4 Germany: 1 Brazil: 1 China: 1 Australia: 1 Japan: 1 France: 1 Canada: 1 India: 1 Sweden: 1 South Africa: 1 Argentina: 1 Spain: 1 Norway: 1 Italy: 1 Netherlands: 1

As demonstrated in Table 1, while anonymity is assured, the quotes associated with each editor could be traced back to a specific participant.

**Findings**

In this study, we explored editors' perspectives on the factors contributing to replication infrequency in the field of AL. It is important to acknowledge that editors' perspectives may reflect both their personal biases/preferences and their perceptions of broader trends within the field. The thematic analysis of editors' responses to the interview questions revealed patterns of their views about replication and the reasons for its infrequent publication. These patterns led to the development of three themes: journal regulations and restrictions, implicit inclination toward significance and novelty, and replication as a panacea: a misconception. Each theme is further expanded in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Themes and Subthemes*

Theme	Subthemes
Guidelines and Limitations Set by Journals	1. Data Reservation 2. Reporting within Word Limits
Implicit Drift Towards Impact and Originality	1. Emphasis on Originality 2. Periodic Resurgence of Replication Interest
Replication Panacea Paradox :Navigating the Labyrinth of Misconceptions	1. Repliation Study Quality 2. Alternative Research Approaches

As can be seen in Table 2, each theme is divided into two subthemes which are further explained in what follows.

**Guidelines and Limitations Set by Journals**

This theme delves into the specific rules and limitations established by academic journals, investigating how these guidelines shape the publication process. It explores the cultural, ethical, and methodological considerations underlying such decisions, aiming to shed light on the implications for transparency and reproducibility in cultural studies. Editors noted that a lack of data-sharing policies and word limits can make it difficult for replication authors to publish their work. The first subtheme, data reservation, investigates instances in cultural research where authors may choose to restrict access to specific data, posing challenges for replication attempts and further analysis. E1 mentioned that: *Journals can be responsible in that requirements for open science are not strict enough yet.* Similarly, E12 underscored that: *More rigidity is required in data reporting to help replication frequency.*

E3 refers to data reporting, an element of transparency, as a means to promote replication frequency. Without access to the necessary information, it can be challenging for other researchers to replicate the study and come to a sound conclusion when comparing their findings with those of

the original study. As observable in these excerpts, it is not mandatory in all journals that authors share their raw data and materials in an open-access format. Such a limitation hinders transparency and the ability of others to replicate their findings.

The second subtheme, reporting within word limits, outlines the specific guidelines and constraints related to the length of submissions within the journal. Authors are expected to adhere to predefined word limits to ensure clarity, conciseness, and adherence to the journal's editorial standards. In addition to inadequate open science practices, journals usually have strict word count requirements that may not be conducive to reporting on the original study as well as replication findings. The following excerpt by E13 exemplifies this line of finding:

*I think space could be a problem. We usually receive replications exceeding the word limit of the journal. Although we return the manuscript to the authors and ask them to reduce the word count, we are not usually happy with the results because sometimes it costs losing consistency and quality.*

...Some journals may have word limits or space constraints, making it difficult for replication studies to be published alongside original research

A lack of space might compel researchers to sacrifice important details and results in uninformative, low-quality work that is short enough to fit but not explanatory enough to be replicated.

### **Implicit Drift Towards Impact and Originality**

This theme explores the unexpressed trends within academic communities that lean towards studies with notable impact and original contributions, probing how these trends influence scholarly recognition. The first, subtheme, emphasis on originality, explores the implicit bias or inclination within academic journals toward research that emphasizes originality. It delves into how scholarly works that introduce novel concepts, methodologies, or perspectives are perceived and valued. Our analysis showed that journals tend to have a preference for publishing research with novel and significant findings, which may result in an implicit bias against publishing replications. While replications are essential for the validation and reproducibility of scientific findings, the lack of novelty in the research design and results may cause them to be overlooked by journals in favor of more novel research. Journals perceive novel studies as more likely to receive attention. The next excerpts by E24 and E5 provide evidence for this argument:

*I don't think journals intentionally discourage replication studies, but the selection process can indirectly discour-*

*age authors from conducting them as they might receive desk rejection. Some journals may have a preference for publishing studies that present original and significant findings. (E24)*

*The bitter truth is journals prioritize publishing research that is innovative and groundbreaking to attract a wider audience. (E5)*

E6 pointed to selectivity as the reason behind such a tendency. He mentioned that: *Limited space in journals can make it challenging to give replication studies the same priority as original research, it doesn't mean they are any less in value though.*

While it is not necessarily the case that journals actively discourage replication studies, there is an implicit preference toward publishing studies that produce "original", "novel", "significant", "innovative", and "groundbreaking" findings, in editors' words. What E6 mentioned along with the phrase "bitter truth" that E5 used indicates that editors might not see replication studies as less valuable. Rather, such bias is driven by the highly competitive nature of academic publishing. Many journals prioritize the publication of original research and may not have enough space to accommodate replication studies. This can result in replication studies being overlooked or dismissed. It may indirectly dissuade authors from conducting replication studies, as they receive rejection at the outset of the process.

Periodic resurgence of replication interest, as the second subtheme, examines the cyclical nature of interest in replication studies. The research explores how attention towards replication waxes and wanes over time, with periodic resurgences of interest. Such fluctuations have implications for the perceived legitimacy and importance of replication in different periods within the academic discourse. This concept is explicitly observable in E15's statement where they talked about the time-to-time interest in replication.

*Scholars periodically review their research practices, and in a similar vein, scholarly journals also undergo regular assessments of the methodologies and themes they choose to emphasize. The periodic interest in replication studies within academic journals aligns with broader trends observed in the research community. This cyclical attention to replication highlights the significance of methodological rigor, transparency, and the reliability of scientific findings. When journals periodically focus on replication studies, it demonstrates a dedication to promoting robust scientific inquiry. The fluctuating attention given to replication within journals contributes to an ongoing dialogue in the academic community, emphasizing a shared commitment to enhancing research standards and ensuring the*

credibility of published work.

### **Replication Panacea Paradox: Navigating the Labyrinth of Misconceptions**

Entering a conceptual labyrinth, this theme navigates the paradoxical landscape of replication as a panacea, highlighting the intricate web of misconceptions that surround its supposed universal efficacy. The first subtheme, replication study quality, scrutinizes the quality and rigor of replication studies within the academic landscape. It delves into the criteria and standards used to assess the robustness of replication efforts, examining factors such as methodological soundness, transparency, and adherence to established protocols. In this regard, E18 pinpointed the ever-evolving process of replication and self-doubt. They uttered:

*...Replicating experiments also highlights vulnerability—the possibility of uncertainties and doubts. As replication is an ongoing process, differences in methodology, variations in context, or different interpretations may occasionally arise, causing doubts about the accuracy of the reproduced results. This examination is a normal part of scientific discussions and encourages constant improvement in research methods and practices.*

Focused on exploring diverse methodologies beyond traditional approaches, the second subtheme, alternative research approaches, investigates the growing interest and adoption of alternative research methods. It examines how researchers are embracing innovative approaches, such as meta-studies, interdisciplinary studies, or unconventional data collection techniques. It aims to shed light on the motivations, challenges, and implications of incorporating alternative research approaches in the academic sphere. Editors also expressed their concerns regarding viewing replication as a cure-all solution for all research problems. They believed that although replication is critical for improving the quality of scientific knowledge, it should be seen as a valuable tool rather than a substitute for other rigorous research methods. This theme is captured by the following excerpts by E27 and E8.

*We do believe that promoting transparency, rigor, and replication can help reduce the impact of QRPs (questionable research practices, authors added) in applied linguistics. This will contribute to building a more trustworthy and reliable body of knowledge. That said, it's important to acknowledge that replications can also be erroneous. (E27)*

*While I recognize the importance of replication studies in verifying robustness and reliability in a field, they are not always the most effective way to address research every problem. Meta-studies can be more helpful in some cases. Journals should be open to different research ap-*

*proaches and methods. (E8)*

As E27 and E8 pointed out, diminishing QRPs and scientific misconduct and verifying robustness and reliability can be achieved by replication, but it is not the only one way nor always the best way. Journals should welcome a wide range of research methods, including meta-analyses and syntheses.

### **Discussion and Implications**

The aim of this study was to reflect on the obstacles and challenges that impede the replication of research in the field of AL, as perceived by journal editors. The findings indicated that editors in AL acknowledge the importance of replication research, but from their perspectives, various factors hinder its publication. Specifically, editors cited limitations faced by journals regarding data and material sharing. In this regard, Marsden and Morgan-Short (2023) highlighted the challenge of data availability in scientific research. They referred to a study conducted by Miyakawa (2020) where almost half of the authors withdrew their manuscripts when requested to submit their data alongside their submission. Moreover, previous studies have shown a low rate of data availability upon request, ranging from 0.07% to 44% (Gabelica et al. 2022), despite the fact that some journal policies require data to be made available.

The findings of Marsden and Morgan-Short (2023) also suggested that the slow adoption of open science practices is a significant challenge in making research materials openly available. Despite a decade-long effort by IRIS to encourage journal editors to request open materials from authors, only a few journals have regularly achieved this. This highlights the need for increased advocacy and implementation of open science practices to promote transparency and reproducibility in research.

Moreover, replication studies may require more space to report on the original study's methods, results, and potential differences in replication, which could lead to challenges in fitting the study within a journal's space limitations. To tackle the challenge of limited space for replication studies, guidelines for concise reporting or the definition of replication as a distinct research type with increased word limits could be adopted. Authors might consider relocating detailed information to supplementary materials, surpassing traditional article limits, and journals could encourage this practice or support submissions to repositories like the Open Science Framework. Additionally, to address concerns about potential errors and biases, advocating for the adoption of the Registered Reports article type, which has benefits for both replication and original studies, as discussed by Chambers and Tzavella (2022) and elaborated on in Marsden and Morgan-Short (2023), could be a valuable strategy. These

measures collectively enhance transparency, methodological rigor, and the crucial role of replication in advancing scientific knowledge.

Additionally, journals may prioritize publishing new and novel findings over replication studies. While editors do not openly admit to discouraging replication, our study found that they do acknowledge a preference for novel and statistically significant results. This tendency toward novelty and significance has been reported in earlier studies of other disciplines as well (Hubbard and Armstrong 1994; Martin and Clarke 2017; Madden et al. 1995; Neuliep and Crandall 1991, 1993; Tipu and Ryan 2021; Yeung 2017). However, the findings of our study suggest that editors may be taking a more cautious stance toward novelty if they were given enough space and a larger audience. Such findings could potentially indicate that when replication is seen as a valuable venue of research by journals' audiences, a shift in research culture may happen. This shift, in turn, could lead to a greater emphasis on embracing replication by journals giving rise to rigorous research methods and the increased value placed on replication studies.

Nonetheless, further research is needed to fully understand the implications of how this shift can happen in the field of AL. One way of addressing this gap is by providing researchers with the necessary resources and incentives to conduct high-quality replication studies. Encouraging authors to participate in replication studies requires a comprehensive strategy (Al-Hoorie and Marsden 2024). Journals can contribute by creating dedicated sections or special issues for such studies, offering reduced publication fees, and promoting open science practices. Collaboration between original and replication researchers is essential, potentially leading to co-authored papers that showcase a joint commitment to scientific rigor (Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber 2018). Recognizing replication efforts in academic evaluations, promotions, and tenure decisions, along with establishing awards for outstanding replication studies, enhances the prestige of replication in the academic community (Marsden, Morgan Short, Thompson, and Abugaber 2018). Training programs, workshops, and resources on replication methodologies ensure researchers possess the necessary skills, while funding opportunities through grants or proposal inclusion provide financial support. Collectively, these incentives can cultivate a culture in academia that values and emphasizes the pivotal role of replication in scientific research.

Lastly, the perception that replication is not a cure-all also emerged as an additional factor. The barriers to replication in AL research appear to form a complex, interconnected system where one barrier often leads to another,

creating a seemingly impenetrable circle that is difficult to break. Although replication studies are essential in addressing QRPs, it's important to recognize that they alone cannot eliminate every potential source of error or bias in research. Therefore, it's important for researchers to carefully and attentively justify their work to ensure its acceptance by AL journals.

## Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the infrequency of replication studies in AL journals and explore the reasons behind it from the perspectives of journal editors. The study found that editors consider a range of factors hindering the publication of replication studies, journal policies, implicit biases toward novelty, and recognition of replication limitations. To promote transparency and rigor in research, there is a need for reform to encourage more replication studies in AL journals. We recommend that guidelines for the publication of replication studies be established. Additionally, the complex nature of the publication process in AL, as revealed by our study, highlights the need for a significant shift in the research culture that values replication among a broader audience of researchers. Awareness and education on the value and significance of replication research should be emphasized, and journals should be open to different research methods.

This study was limited in that it focused on a small sample of editors, which can affect the generalizability of the results. Moreover, it used 92 SSCI-indexed journals, which is justifiable as these journals are widely regarded for their rigorous double-blind peer review standards and for upholding strong methodological quality. While this strategy ensured consistency and global relevance, it inevitably excluded some regionally influential journals, such as certain Iranian AL journals, which may offer valuable insights. Future research may consider complementing this approach with survey-based selections or incorporating regional journals with wider samples to better reflect localized editorial practices.

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## Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

## Appendix A The List of Journals

Annual Review of Applied Linguistics  
Applied Psycholinguistics  
\*Asian Journal of English Language Teaching  
Assessing Writing  
Bilingualism: Language and Cognition  
CALICO Journal  
Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology  
\*Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue anadienne des langues vivantes  
Computers and Composition  
Educational Action Research  
Educational and Psychological Measurement  
Educational Research  
\*Educational Researcher  
Educational Technology, Research, and Development  
Educational Technology Systems  
ELT Journal  
English for Specific Purposes  
\*English Today  
\*English World-Wide: A Journal of Varieties of English  
Foreign Language Annals  
French Review  
Harvard Educational Review  
Hispania  
\*International Journal of Applied Linguistics  
International Journal of Intercultural Relations  
\*International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education  
\*JALT Journal  
\*Journal of Applied Psychology  
\*Journal of Child Language  
\*Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology  
Journal of Educational Measurement  
Journal of Educational Psychology  
\*Journal of Experimental Education  
Journal of Experimental Psychology: General  
Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance  
Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition  
\*Journal of Language and Social Psychology  
Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages  
Journal of Pragmatics  
Journal of Psycholinguistic Research  
\*Journal of Second Language Writing  
Language and Cognitive Processes  
Language Awareness  
\*Language Change and Variation  
Language in Society

\*Language Learning  
Language Learning & Technology  
Studies in Second Language Acquisition  
\*TESOL Quarterly  
The Modern Language Journal  
Language Testing  
Anthropological Linguistics  
\*Bilingual Research Journal  
\*Discourse Processes  
Issues in Applied Linguistics  
Journal of English for Academic Purposes  
Journal of Language, Identity, and Education  
Korea TESOL Journal (KOTESOL)  
Language Teaching Research  
Linguistics and Education  
\*Research in the Teaching of English  
\*RELC Journal  
\*Second Language Research  
\*System  
\*TESL Canada Journal  
TESL-EJ  
\*World Englishes  
International Journal of Lexicography  
\*Language Teaching  
Cognition  
South African Journal of Psychology  
Recall  
Language Assessment Quarterly  
Language and Speech  
Journal of Memory and Language  
\*CALL  
Annals of Dyslexia  
Journal of Literacy Research  
Communication Research Reports  
*Note: While some journals listed are general education journals, they have been included due to their relevance to applied linguistics-related research topics as identified by Weber and Campbell (2004), Egbert (2007), and Marsden, Morgan-Short, Thompson, and Abugaber (2018).*

## Appendix B Interview Questions

Dear Editor,

This interview will focus on the topic of replication studies in applied linguistics. The goal is to gain insight into your thoughts and opinions on this topic, as well as any relevant experiences you may have had. Please kindly provide an answer for each of the following questions.

1. In your opinion, what are the primary factors that contribute to the infrequency of replication studies in applied linguistics?
2. Do you think academic journals have a role in discouraging replication studies? If so, how?
3. What steps do you believe academic journals can take to promote replication studies?
4. Why do you think some researchers may be hesitant to conduct and submit replication studies in applied linguistics?
5. From your experience, have you encountered any instances where a journal has discouraged replication studies? If so, can you provide an example and explain why you think this happened?