# St Andrews Journal of International and Language Education (SAJILE):

# Research Synthesis Submission Template

1. **Style guide**
2. **Sample**

## General

- **Format:** Please supply a Cover Page and an Anonymised Main Document as two separate Word files
- **Word limit:** No more than 10,000 words (Anonymised Main Document), including the title, abstract, main text, other required or optional elements, references, and appendices.
- **Page size:** A4.
- **Margins:** 2.54cm all sides
- **Tabs:** 1.25cm
- **Font type:** Calibri.
- **Font size:** 12-point (main text).
- **Line spacing:** Single (except headings, which are double spaced).
- **Page numbers:** Footer, right aligned.

## Cover Page

- **Alignment:** Left.
- **Title:** Bold, 16-point, left aligned, title case.
- **Author name list:** Level 2 heading, followed by author details on a new line in sentence case: author 1 given name, family name, affiliated institution, city, country, ORCID (optional), author 2, etc.
- **Corresponding author:** Level 2 heading, followed by author's full name (given, family) and email address on a new line in sentence case.
- **Structured Abstract:** Level 2 heading. Text follows on new line. Block (left and right justification), both left and right margins should be indented 1.25cm. Limit to 200 words or less. Includes aim, design, results, originality.
- **Keywords:** Level 2 heading. Numbered list, up to five, each on a new line. Sentence case.
- **CRediT Statement:** Level 2 heading, sentence case statements on a new line. Guidelines here.
- **AI (Artificial Intelligence) declaration:** Level 2 heading, statements on a new line in sentence case. Please follow the instructions listed on the SAJILE homepage.
- **Conflict of interest:** Level 2 heading, statements on a new line are in sentence case. Please follow the instructions listed on the SAJILE homepage.
- **Acknowledgements (optional):** If given, left aligned title should be capitalised and in **bold** as for sub-headings. Acknowledgements on a new line are in sentence case, should be factual, and do not give honorifics, job titles, etc.

For more details, refer to the [APA7 style guide](#).

**Anonymised Main Document**

- **Alignment:** Left.
- **Title**
- **Structured Abstract:** Level 2 heading. Text follows on new line. Block (left and right justification), both left and right margins should be indented 1.25cm. Limit to 200 words or less. Includes aim, design, results, originality.
- **Keywords:** Level 2 heading. Numbered list, up to five, each on a new line.
- **Level 1 headings (e.g. Methods, Analysis, Results):** Centre aligned, have the first letter of every word capitalised except articles (a, an, the), conjunctions (and, but, or), and prepositions (e.g., in, on, at, with), and in bold.
- **Level 2 headings (e.g. Materials, Procedures):** Flush left, have the first letter of every word capitalised except articles (a, an, the), conjunctions (and, but, or), and prepositions (e.g., in, on, at, with), and be in bold.
- **Lower level headings:** See the [APA7 style guide](#).
- **Line spacing:** A single-spaced empty line should precede headings.
- **Indenting:** Indent the first line of all paragraphs other than the first one immediately following a heading. No extra space is needed between paragraphs.

**Level 1 Heading**

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**Level 2 Heading**

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## Tables and Figures

- **Numbers:** Numbers for figures and tables should be left aligned, single-space, have only the first letter of the first word capitalised, be in bold, and be preceded by a single spaced empty line as with headings.
- **Titles:** Titles should be on a new, double-spaced line, have only the first letter of the first word capitalised, and be italicised.

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**Table 1**
*Responses to the survey*


**Figure 1**
*Comparison of mean scores before and after intervention*

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- **General:** Include any tables and figures in the main text. Following that, mention tables and figures by name (e.g. 'as shown in Table 1' not 'as shown in the table below'). Tables should follow the APA 7 style guide (e.g., non-bordered on left and right). Figure resolution should be 600 dpi for line art and 300 dpi for images. Table and figures should be followed by a single empty line before main text resumes.

## References

- **Heading:** New page, Level 1 heading **References**.
- **Indent:** References should use a 1.27cm hanging indent.
- **General:** For other details, follow the APA7 style guide.

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### References

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of work*. Publisher.
Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of periodical*, *volume number*(issue number), page–page. https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy

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## Appendices

- Appendices should start on a new page and be titled with the Level 1 heading Appendix followed by a colon, space, and the title of the appendix. If more than one, label Appendix A,B,C...

See pages 4–7 of this document for a sample.

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Sample Cover Page(s)

# Research Synthesis: The Role of Cultural Immersion in Language Learning

**Author(s) Name(s) and Affiliation(s)**

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**Abstract**

**Aim:** To synthesize research on the role of cultural immersion in language learning, focusing on its impact on vocabulary acquisition, cultural competency, and learner motivation. This synthesis seeks to provide educators and researchers with a comprehensive understanding of how immersion-based approaches can inform teaching practices and curriculum design.

**Design:** A systematic qualitative synthesis was conducted, adhering to PRISMA guidelines. The study reviewed 25 peer-reviewed articles published between 2000 and 2023. A comprehensive database search (Scopus, ERIC, Web of Science) identified studies that met predefined inclusion criteria, and findings were analysed to identify recurring themes.

**Results:** The synthesis identified three key findings: 1. Immersive environments improve vocabulary retention by up to 30% compared to traditional methods; 2.Cultural immersion enhances cultural competency, aiding cross-cultural communication; 3. Immersion increases learners' intrinsic motivation and engagement in language learning.

**Originality:** This review uniquely integrates findings from diverse studies to present actionable insights for educators and researchers. It highlights the transformative potential of cultural immersion in addressing challenges in language education and suggests practical applications for both study-abroad and classroom settings.

**Keywords**

1. Immersive Language Learning
2. Vocabulary Acquisition
3. Cultural Integration
4. International Exchange Programs
5. Mixed-Methods Research

**CRediT statement**

Emily Johnson: Conceptualisation (lead); Writing – original draft (lead); Formal analysis (lead); Writing – review and editing (lead); Review and editing (supporting). Aarav Singh: Software (lead); Methodology (lead); Writing – review and editing (supporting); Review and editing (supporting). Wei Zhang: Writing – review and editing (supporting); Review and editing (equal).

## AI Declaration

We, the authors, declare that we used AI tools in the production of this manuscript. The specific tools we used were ChatGPT 5. We used it in our planning of the study to help us select an appropriate research design for our aim. The impact of this can be seen in the Methods sections pages 7-8 where we describe the details of the quasi-experimental, pre- and posttest design we adopted, including the selection of the vocabulary instrument. However, we affirm that the manuscript itself was authored by us and not by AI, meeting all the submission criteria of SAJILE.

## Conflict of Interest

Emily Johnson has received research grants from ABC Company, which could be perceived as constituting a potential conflict of interest. The grant is related to The Internationalisation Project that is also the subject of the submitted work. Aarav Singh and Wei Zhang have no financial or personal relationships with other people or organisations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work.

## Acknowledgements

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## Methodology

This synthesis follows a systematic approach based on PRISMA guidelines, ensuring transparency and reproducibility. The protocol was registered with IDESR prior to data collection. We conducted a comprehensive search of databases including Scopus, ERIC, and Web of Science, using keywords such as *cultural immersion*, *language acquisition*, and *study-abroad programs*. A total of 325 articles were identified, screened, and assessed for eligibility. After applying inclusion criteria (e.g., focus on immersive learning environments, peer-reviewed publications, studies involving participants aged 16–25), 25 studies

were included in the final synthesis. The search and screening process is documented in the PRISMA flow chart (Figure 1).

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**Findings Overview**

The synthesized studies highlight three key themes:
1. **Vocabulary Acquisition**: Immersive environments significantly improve vocabulary retention, with Frome (1995) reporting a 30% higher retention rate in immersion programs compared to traditional instruction.
2. **Cultural Competency**: Cartwright (1997) emphasizes that cultural immersion fosters deeper cultural understanding, enabling learners to navigate cross-cultural communication more effectively.
3. **Motivation and Engagement**: Paulie (2013) found that immersion increases learners' intrinsic motivation, promoting resilience and persistence in language learning.

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**References**

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Cartwright, B. D. (1997). Study abroad and language study. *Language Teaching*, *30*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy

Paulie, A. (2013). Sustained learning: Grit and academic performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *105*(3), 800-814. https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy

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