

It only works if we *all* participate: A response to ‘Diamond is a scientist’s best friend. Counteracting systemic inequality in open access publishing’

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1 Introduction

As the chair of Anéla (Dutch Society for Applied Linguistics) and chair of VIOT (*Vereniging Interuniversitair Overleg Taalbeheersing*) we have been asked to respond to the position paper by Andringa, Mos, van Beuningen, Gonzalez, Hornikx and Steinkraus (2024) titled ‘Diamond is a scientist’s best friend. Counteracting systemic inequality in open-access publishing.’

First and foremost, we would like to thank the authors for their thought-provoking and important contribution. While we share the authors’ concern about open access publishing and the systemic inequalities it brings about within global academia and beyond, we also find that the authors present a (too) positive stance towards achieving change. In the following, we would like to suggest some additional actions we can undertake as associations within the fields of applied linguistics and language and communication to achieve the goal set out by Andringa et al. (2024): making Diamond open access publishing the standard in publishing. We conclude by adding two more benefits when doing so.

2 A (too) positive stance?

We believe it is important that the authors take position and encourage Diamond open access (DOA) publication as default choice, not only within the fields of applied linguistics and language and communication, but everywhere. However, we do question whether all academics will be able to take their moral responsibility and put their unpaid labor into non-commercial DOA journals. The reason for questioning this is threefold.

First, as long as (young) scholars are judged or scored based on their publication lists, impact scores and indexes, they will need to publish in high-ranked journals, which are currently, in most cases, the long-standing, commercial journals. Therefore, the DOA goal can only be achieved if this goes hand in hand with new ways of funding and promotions within science. The new recognition and rewards programs (see [Recognition and Rewards | NWO](#)) initiated by governmental funding bodies and adapted by universities across the Netherlands (and other countries worldwide) need to play an important role in the shift to a better recognition and rewards culture. However, we are not there yet. In order to make this shift successful and to allow (young) scholars to publish DOA, recognition and rewards programs need to be supported by academics across all leadership positions.

Second, from a publisher's perspective, whenever there are economic opportunities, financial gain will always exist. While DOA may become increasingly preferred amongst scientists, predatory open access journals are simultaneously on the rise. In a scholarly culture that is built around the premise 'publish or perish', such predatory journals benefit from quick article processing (and can ask high fees to do so).

Third, it should be noted that the suggested change to DOA still requires unpaid labor from many scholars (such as reviewing, editing, coordinating) including practical organizational skills (such as running an online platform, generating visibility, typesetting, etc.). Labor that is outsourced to (paid) professionals by the commercial journals now needs to be done by academics themselves, on top of the unpaid labor they were already delivering. Although we admire the ways in which journals such as the Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics currently take up these duties, we also think the authors may underestimate the time and unpaid labor that is required for journals that publish many issues and large volumes of papers each year.

Thus, a successful change towards DOA is complex and requires *everyone* to participate. At the same time, we think that bottom-up change is feasible and admirable. Associations, like Anéla and VIOT, have an important role to play in this culture shift. We are glad to be given such a role and take our moral responsibility in this.

3 Moral responsibility of associations

In line with Andringa et al. (2024), Anéla and VIOT would like to encourage DOA publishing. As chairs for these two associations covering sub-disciplines within linguistics

(applied linguistics and language and communication), we feel it is our moral responsibility to be part of this change and encourage an academic culture shift, at least without our field. Therefore, in addition to some of the suggestions given by Andringa et al. (2024), we would like to add several other ways in which we can advocate DOA. As associations within the field applied linguistics and language and communication we can explicitly:

- a. Take position, underscoring that DOA is the only way forward (e.g., via this response and through our (social) media channels);
- b. Encourage both senior and junior researchers to publish in, and review, for our DOA journals;
- c. Facilitate special workgroups or research networks, such as the AILA research network [Open Scholarship in Applied Linguistics](#), to promote open access publishing;
- d. Create more awareness about DOA, for example through celebrating this type of science (see [AILA research network](#) infographics as an example), encouraging our members to discuss these issues in linguistics and communication teaching;
- e. Facilitate and finance academic journals that are DOA, such as DuJAL and *Tijdschrift voor Taalbeheersing*.

4 Even more benefits

Besides the arguments given by the authors to encourage DOA, we would like to address two more benefits of this type of publishing. First of all, every piece of research output we put behind a paywall, does not advance our field. In times of turbulence in which the field of Dutch, applied (Dutch) linguistics and the school subject Dutch are fighting for attention and students, it is essential that we share our work with other disciplines and people beyond academia. The study of linguistics, language and communication can help answer some of the 'grand' questions of our time, e.g., dealing with misinformation, information inequalities, and the emergence of AI tools, such as ChatGPT. The only way forward is to make our research data, designs, output and results (more) visible and fully accessible. DOA is key in this.

Second, through DOA, people from all over the world cannot only *read* the research results published within our field, people from all over the world can also *submit* their research projects without paying excessively high fees. This makes the journal output more diverse and inclusive. Equality in publishing exposes underrepresented languages, in different contexts, with different collaborators and provides new perspectives and networks. We should all aim for diversifying (language) science. If our associations can add to this diversification through solidarity from our members, we are proud to be part of these associations.

Author contributions

Tessa van Charldorp & Nanon Labrie: conceptualization, writing-review-editing; Tessa van Charldorp: writing – original draft

Statement of interest

The author(s) have declared that there were no conflicting interests. Tessa van Charldorp is chair of Anéla. Nanon Labrie is chair of VIOT. Both authors represent their organizations. This response paper has been read and approved of by their fellow board members in May 2024. We would like to thank them for their input and feedback. Paz González, as board member Anéla and author of the original paper did not contribute to the content of this response.

Statement of technology use

No AI-based generative technology was used in the preparation of this manuscript and the execution of the research that the manuscript reports upon. Or see: [Technology Use | Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics \(dujal.nl\)](#)

Supporting information

None.

References

Andringa, S., Mos, M., van Beuningen, C., González, P., Hornikx, J., & Steinkrauss, R. (2024). Diamond is a scientist's best friend: Counteracting systemic inequality in open access publishing. *Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.51751/dujah18802>