

A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing on a document. The person is wearing a red sweater and a silver watch with an orange and blue dial. A brown leather bag is on the left. The scene is set at a wooden desk with a wooden chair in the background. The text "Responding to reviewers' comments" is overlaid in white.

Responding to reviewers' comments

What are you going to learn?

- The loser's vs the winner's mindset
- Assessing the damage
- Planning your response
- Keeping track of changes

A man with a beard, wearing a black baseball cap and a red t-shirt, is shown in profile, looking upwards. The background is a bright, cloudy sky with a teal tint. The text "Adopting the right mindset" is overlaid in white, centered horizontally and slightly below the vertical center.

Adopting the right mindset

Adopting the right mindset

Loser's mindset



Winner's mindset



Loser's mindset

- An emotional reaction:
 - get angry, upset, frustrated
 - think the reviewer must be wrong and they must be right
 - think the reviewer is simply being mean and unfair
 - the reviewer = the enemy
 - blame mistakes on something or someone else (it's THEIR fault)
- What this leads to:
 - reluctance to address the comments,
 - wasting a lot of time arguing with the reviewer and coming up with counter arguments
 - not actually doing the work you're supposed to do
 - delaying the publication of your paper

A black and white photograph of a person with their hands covering their face, set against a dark background. The person is wearing a light-colored t-shirt. The image is centered and serves as a background for the text.

Your worst enemy is yourself.

Winner's mindset

- A rational reaction:
 - see the comments as an opportunity to improve
 - approach the comments logically and rationally
 - consider the reviewer as someone who is helping you
 - view the reviewer as an ally
 - own up to your mistakes and correct them
- What this leads to:
 - cool-headed response
 - logically assessing the damage and amount of work
 - addressing reviewers' comments swiftly and relatively painlessly
 - getting your paper published faster

Loser's vs winner's mindset



“ Losers tend to blame others for their failures. They adopt a victim's mindset, whereby it's always someone else's fault and the whole world is against them. Winners on the other hand see criticism as a positive opportunity to improve. They blame themselves for their mistakes and act on feedback to correct them.

– Marek Kiczowski

A photograph of a heavily rusted, white pickup truck in a desert landscape. The truck is the central focus, showing significant damage and decay. The background consists of a flat, sandy area with sparse, low-lying green and brown vegetation under a grey, overcast sky. A fence line is visible in the distance. The text "Assessing the damage" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the middle of the truck's body.

Assessing the damage

Assessing the damage

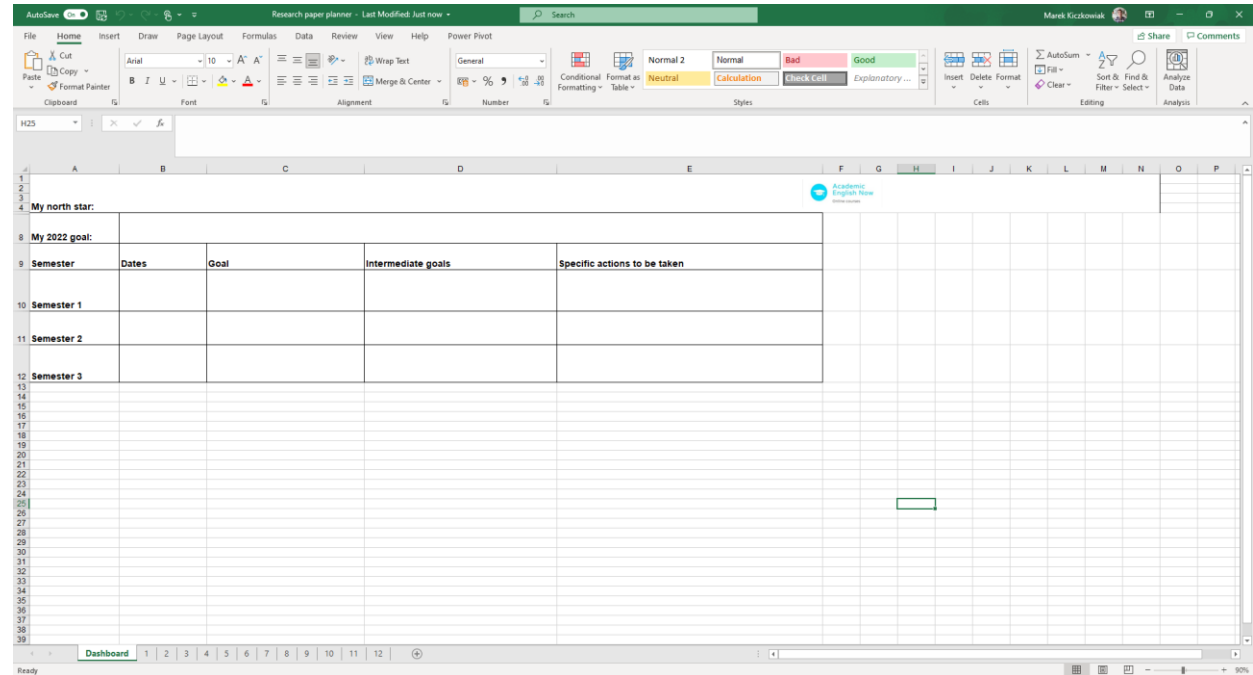
- **Numbers are misleading:** the number of comments doesn't equal the amount of work
- **Evaluate the severity:** go over all the comments and decide how severe each is or how much work it will entail (e.g. red – very severe, orange – medium, green – easy to fix)
- **Amount of additional work:** some comments can be addressed immediately because you already have the knowledge, but to address others you might need to rerun an experiment or read up on the literature
- **When to stand your ground:** <5% of the time, only if the required change is completely misguided or goes against a fundamental principle adopted in your work

Assessing the damage

- **Prioritise:** decide which comments to focus on first based on their severity, amount of additional work, your preferences
- **Getting momentum:** starting with the easiest ones is a good tactic because it can help you get the engine running
- **Chunk the heavy load:** those comments which need more complicated revisions can be chunked into smaller intermediate steps, which can be broken up to daily actions
- **Plan:** work backwards from your deadline (3 months) to establish a clear plan (use the planning worksheets from Week 2)

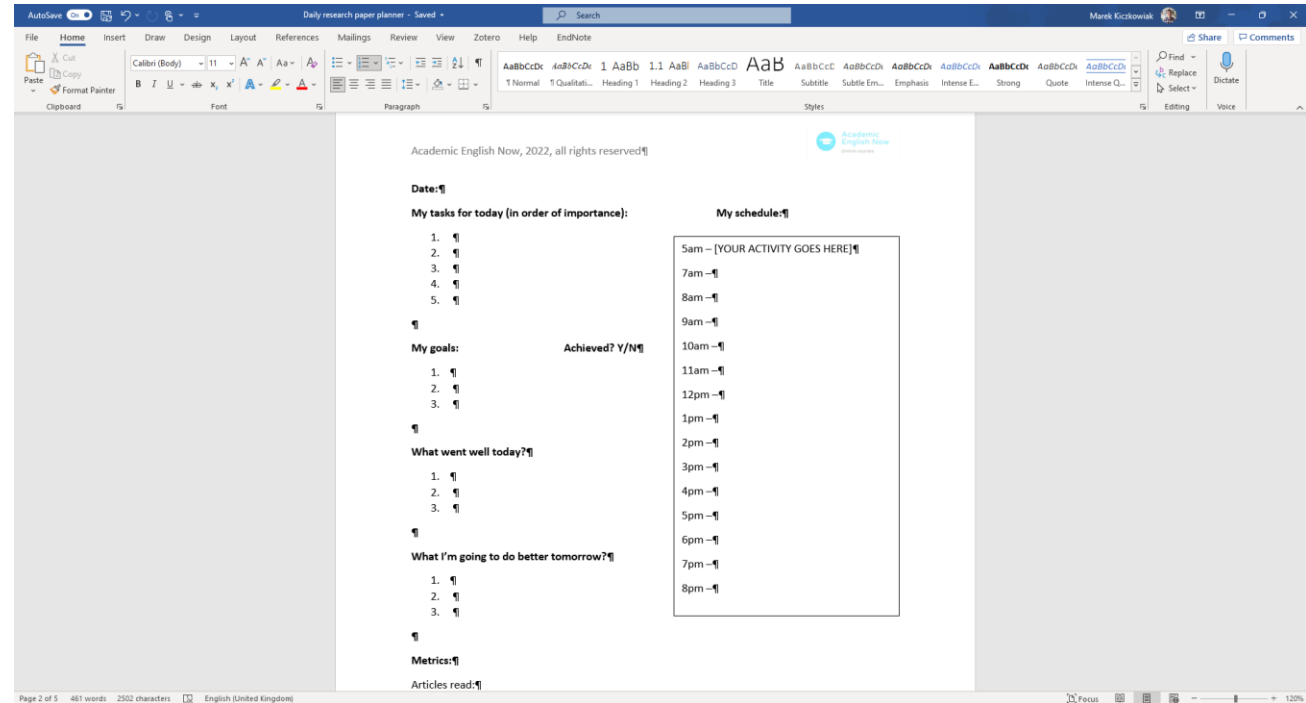
Action time

Use the Research paper planner to prepare a response attack plan.



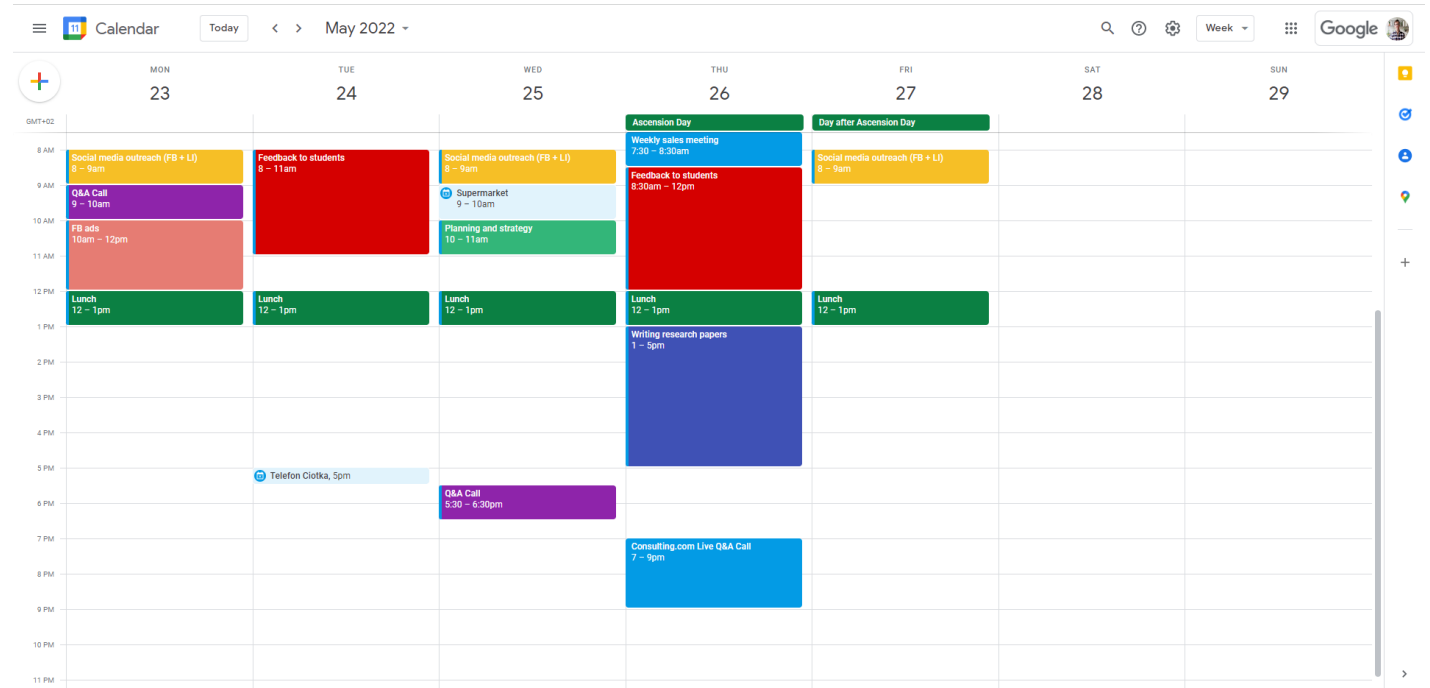
Action time

Use the Research paper daily planner to plan individual days.



Action time

Use your Google or Outlook calendar and purposefully block your time to respond to reviewers' comments.



A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a silver pen and writing in a spiral-bound notebook. The person is wearing a light blue shirt. The notebook is open, and the page has some faint, mirrored text. The background is a dark, out-of-focus surface. The text "Keeping track of changes" is overlaid in white, centered on the image.

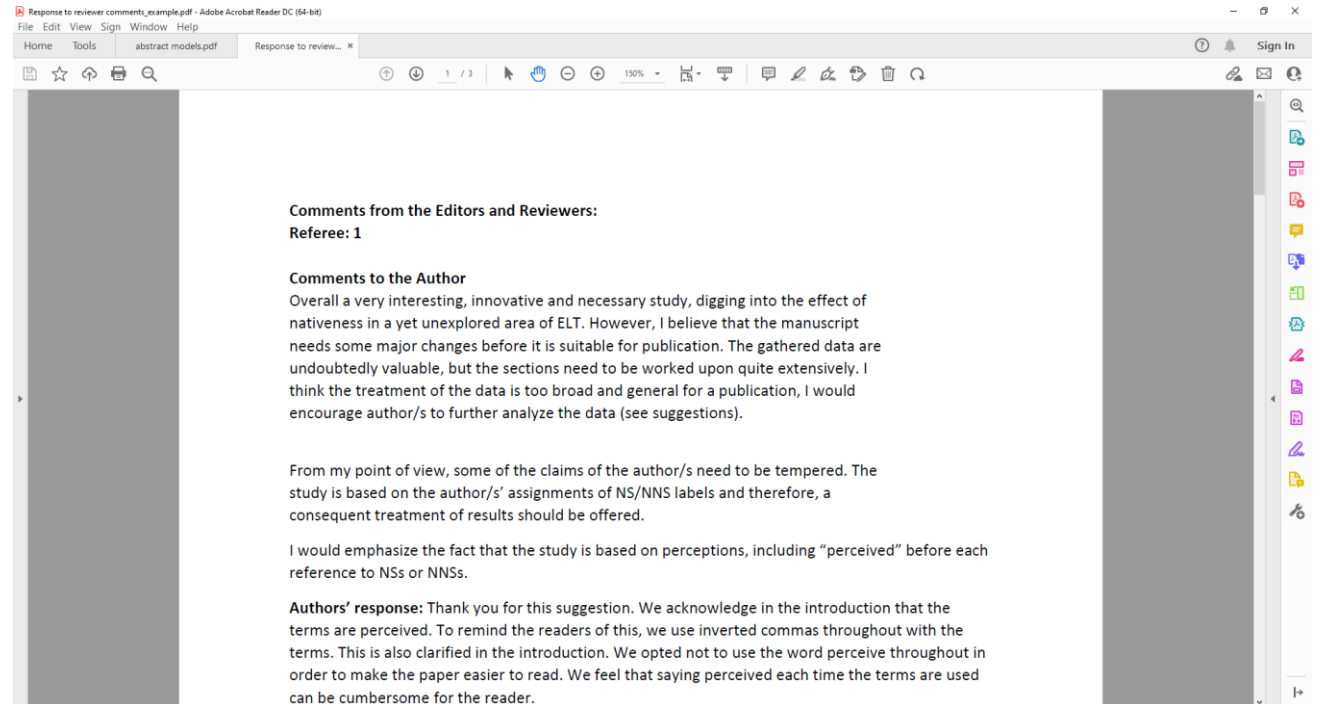
Keeping track of changes

Keeping track of changes

- **Use track changes:** this is a Word function that shows the reviewers what changes you've made
- **Why we use it:** to provide easy-to-see evidence that we've made the changes we were asked to
- **Respond to comments:** if the reviewer provided you with a list of requested changes in a separate document, respond to each explaining what you did
- **Pro tip:** be polite and always thank them for their insights and comments, e.g. Thank you for pointing this out; This is indeed an important point, etc.

Action time

See the Response to reviewer comments example to notice how you should respond to reviewers' comments.



The screenshot shows a PDF document titled "Response to reviewer comments, example.pdf" in Adobe Acrobat Reader. The document content is as follows:

Comments from the Editors and Reviewers:
Referee: 1

Comments to the Author
Overall a very interesting, innovative and necessary study, digging into the effect of nativeness in a yet unexplored area of ELT. However, I believe that the manuscript needs some major changes before it is suitable for publication. The gathered data are undoubtedly valuable, but the sections need to be worked upon quite extensively. I think the treatment of the data is too broad and general for a publication, I would encourage author/s to further analyze the data (see suggestions).

From my point of view, some of the claims of the author/s need to be tempered. The study is based on the author/s' assignments of NS/NNS labels and therefore, a consequent treatment of results should be offered.

I would emphasize the fact that the study is based on perceptions, including "perceived" before each reference to NSs or NNSs.

Authors' response: Thank you for this suggestion. We acknowledge in the introduction that the terms are perceived. To remind the readers of this, we use inverted commas throughout with the terms. This is also clarified in the introduction. We opted not to use the word perceive throughout in order to make the paper easier to read. We feel that saying perceived each time the terms are used can be cumbersome for the reader.