

Editorial

Introduction to the Special Issue: Researching, Teaching, and Supporting Research Publication—Issues for Users of English as an Additional Language

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The ‘industry’ of research publication has now grown to mammoth proportions and its participants—authors, reviewers, editors, publishers and more—come from increasingly diverse locations and backgrounds, including of language. However, the language in which the vast majority of this research is published is now English, a situation that incorporates both advantages and disadvantages for participants, which are distributed unevenly. The proportion of the world’s population that uses English as an additional Language (EAL) now far outnumbers that of people using it as their first language—the so-called ‘native speakers’ [1]—and the effects of this change on the language itself and on the publication of research in it are wide-reaching. A growing cohort of scholars worldwide is engaged in researching the issues emerging from this situation and interacting with related communities who support research communication by EAL authors and/or teach English for research publication purposes (ERPP) [2]. One key community of these scholars meets under the banner PRISEAL—Publishing and Presenting Research Internationally: Issues for Speakers of English as an Additional Language, and this Special Issue features papers from the most recent PRISEAL conference, held in Coimbra, Portugal in November 2015. Following the precedent set at earlier meetings in Tenerife (2007) and Katowice (2011), the conference sought contributions from the widest possible range of scholars and practitioners involved in these issues: journal publishers, editors, and referees; authors’ editors and translators; teachers, materials writers, and course designers for ERPP; and scholars within humanities and social science fields, including applied linguistics. The aim is to encourage cross-fertilisation of ideas and approaches, and in 2015 topics of interest included these:

- academic publishing issues (e.g., the advantages and limitations of open-access publishing; predatory journals and publishers)
- the geopolitics of academic writing (e.g., the dominance of English, epistemicide [3], English as a Lingua Franca)
- academic ethics from a cross-cultural perspective (e.g., plagiarism and academic integrity)
- translation and editing in the academic context
- teaching of English for research and publication purposes
- peer-reviewing in intercultural and multilingual contexts

Thus a defining feature of this Special Issue is the breadth and diversity of topics and issues represented, and the extent to which they can be seen to interact in the globalised world of academic publishing in the 21st century. A unifying theme is the role of language in this world.

As a result of both the breadth and the interrelatedness of the subject matter, there are several organising principles by which the six papers in this Issue can be grouped for introduction—by

academic discipline on which the research focuses (from biomedicine to linguistics), by geographical point of origin (from France to Brazil), by the objects researched (from written texts to pedagogical approaches), or by the participants in the publishing cycle who create the researched situation or to whom the outcomes of the research are most directly relevant. I have chosen the last of these for what follows. We have two papers from the perspectives of those supporting EAL authors at the level of individual manuscript (an author's editor [4] and a translation specialist [5], two that analyse aspects of the written texts themselves, titles [6] and abstracts [7], to gain insights of value across the community, and two that focus on how novice research authors learn their craft [8,9]. However, across these groupings additional themes are highlighted. To what extent do, or should, EAL authors uncritically adopt the ways of writing and constructing knowledge approved by the English-language, Western academy [4,7,8]? What processes and players are key in helping EAL authors gain acceptance for their research articles and how can their contributions be strengthened [4,5,8,9]? How can close analysis of the written text open windows onto successful practices [4,6,7]? How does the pressure to publish in English impact the working and writing lives of researchers who use English as an additional language (all papers)?

I commend the Issue to our readers and to all those who attended PRISEAL 3 in Coimbra—and I look forward to seeing how these contributions to the field are taken up in future research and practice.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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