

# Language problems in writing in ERPP 'unfair linguistic play'?

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## our project

Ecologies of genres and ecologies of languages  
the dynamics of local, transnational and international  
scientific communication

Project FFI2015-68638-R MINECO/FEDER, EU

## aim of the project

What genres do academics use in their professional practices?  
What languages do they use in those genres?

to understand how ecologies of genres and ecologies of languages are shaped in today's academic settings in the context of ongoing internationalization processes at universities

## aim within the project

What language problems do Spanish scholars face when writing in English for Research and Publication Purposes?

repertoire of research genres  
strategies and resources

most problematic language aspects

'foreignness' and the 'quality' of English in their writing  
perceptions of the language-brokers' feedback

pedagogical proposals

to support English-medium publications skills development

## **policies and practices in ERPP**

greater merit to English-medium publications

(Lillis & Curry, 2010; Uzuner, 2008)

additional effort & ensuing challenges to non-Anglophone academics

## **issue of 'acceptability' in L2 English academic writing**

academic English is not a standardised knowledge

(Mauranen et al, 2010)

scientific prose in L2 English exhibits an "eclectic and even eccentric blend of different features coexisting in one text"

(Yakhontova, 2002: 231)

ideals and realities, "good" and "acceptable" English in L2 research writing

(Hynninen & Kuteeva, 2018)

## **claims of linguistic injustice?**

understandability & clarity

intelligibility & acceptability

understand the status and functions of English from the perspective of university staff

identify perceived language problems in ERPP practices

assess whether these are actually problems in the light of recent claims on 'good' and 'acceptable' English

## the University of Zaragoza

32,725 students (93% domestic) / 4,161 nation-based faculty

only 5% of the programs taught in English

study abroad programs

staff mobility

research purposes

international professional networks and

bi-/multilateral international collaboration

a primarily monolingual

English as an Additional Language

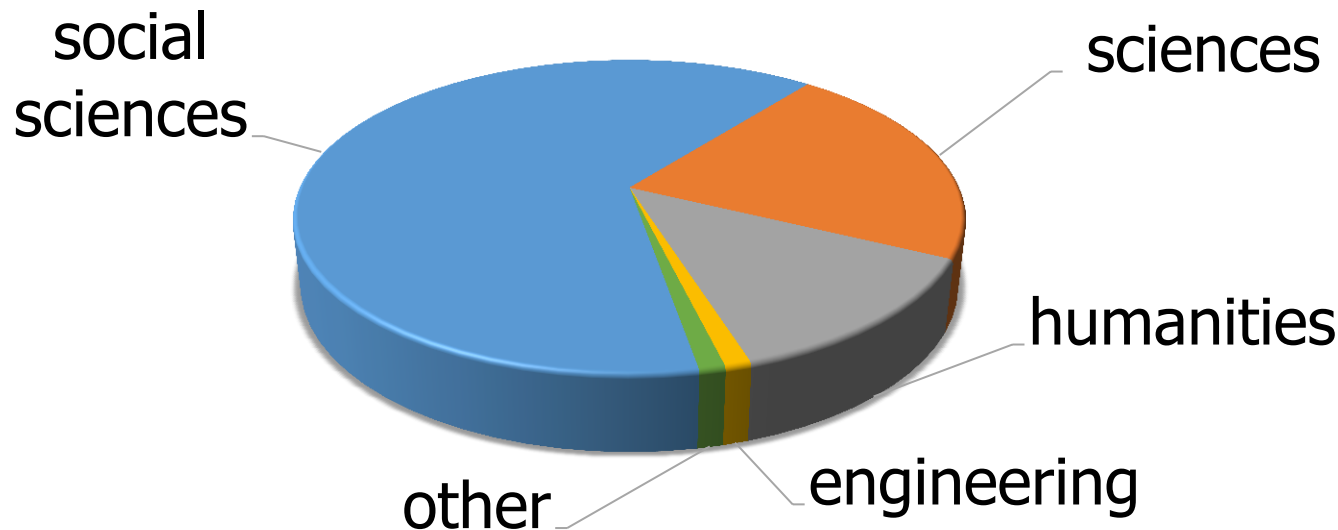
**survey** – repertoires of research-oriented genres ( $n = 93$ )

**semi-structured interviews** – to further into views ( $n = 40$ )

**case study** – writing in the Earth Sciences ( $n = 17$ )

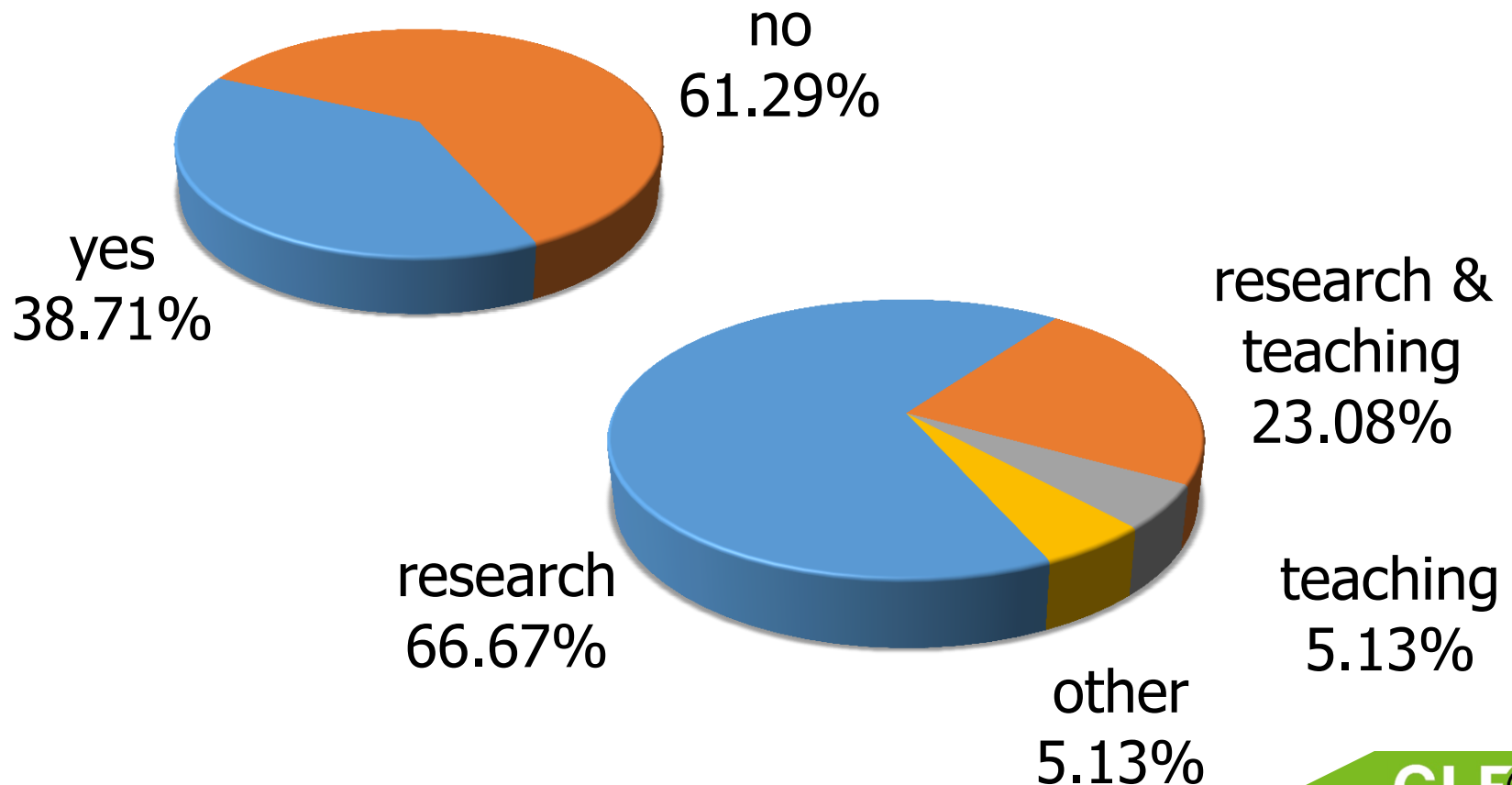
## by area of expertise

social sciences	63.44%
science	21.51%
humanities	12.90%
engineering	1.08%
other	1.08%



- survey** – repertoires of research-oriented genres ( $n = 93$ )
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### mobility experience

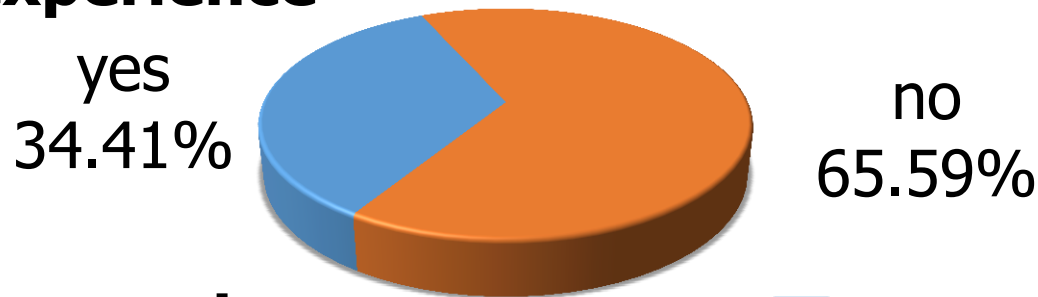




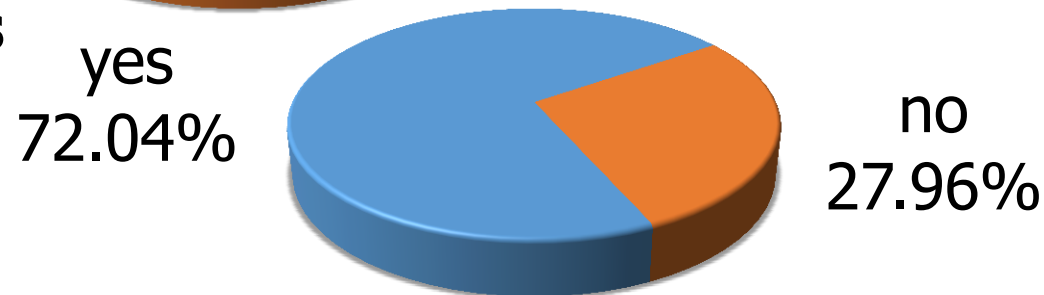
## overall results

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- semi-structured interviews** – to further into views ( $n = 40$ )
- case study** – writing in the Earth Sciences ( $n = 17$ )

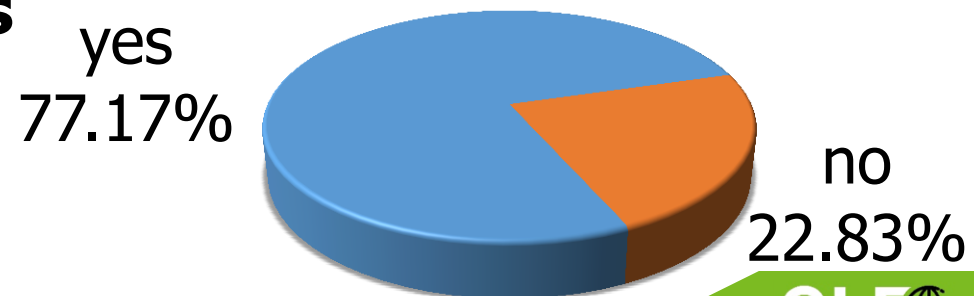
### EMI experience



### EMI prospects



### -> language services needs

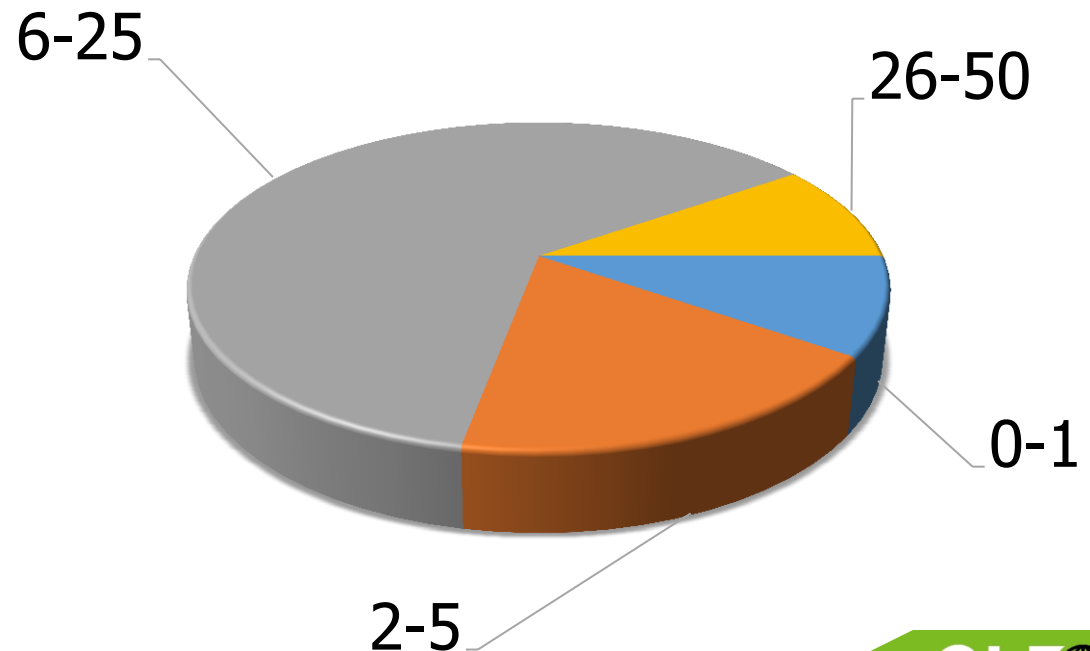


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### RPs published in the last 5 years

<b>0-1</b>	9.68%
<b>2-5</b>	18.28%
<b>6-25</b>	62.37%
<b>26-50</b>	9.68%
<b>51-75</b>	-
<b>76-100</b>	-
<b>101-200</b>	-
<b>&gt; 200</b>	-
n=93	



languages of RPs published

	Spanish	English	French	Italian
<b>0-10%</b>	40.00	17.20	93.24	97.30
<b>10-20%</b>	13.33	3.23	1.35	2.70
<b>20-30%</b>	10.00	5.38	-	-
<b>30-40%</b>	7.78	1.08	1.35	-
<b>40-50%</b>	7.78	6.45	1.35	-
<b>50-60%</b>	3.33	5.38	-	-
<b>60-70%</b>	1.11	3.23	1.35	-
<b>70-80%</b>	4.44	11.83	-	-
<b>80-90%</b>	2.22	15.05	-	-
<b>90-100%</b>	10.00	31.18	1.35	-
	21.11	66.67	2.70	

## genres -> ensuing literacy skills

## genres & languages

	%
communicating with colleagues (teachers / researchers)	98.92
reading scientific literature	98.92
preparing & giving lectures / tutoring	96.77
job-related travelling (fieldwork / conferences / meetings)	94.51
preparing & giving conference presentations & posters	93.55
preparing & writing research manuscripts	91.40
communicating with reviewers & editors	90.32
peer reviewing manuscripts	84.62
identifying & preparing proposals for funding	70.00
running & documenting experiments and procedures	65.91
dealing with office administration (finance / purchasing)	63.04

## genre & language skills

## genres & languages

	Spanish	English	French	German	Italian	Portug.	other
teachers & researchers	94.62	78.49	17.20	1.08	8.60	-	5.38
scientific literature	67.74	98.92	22.58	2.15	9.68	3.23	5.38
classes & tutorials	95.70	46.24	4.30	-	1.08	-	2.15
job-related travelling	82.80	76.34	19.35	-	8.60	-	4.30
presentations & posters	65.59	80.65	6.45	-	-	-	1.08
research manuscripts	80.65	60.22	5.38	-	1.08	-	2.15
reviewers & editors	49.46	83.87	6.45	-	-	-	2.15
manuscript review	60.22	75.27	2.15	-	-	-	2.15
funding proposals	63.44	25.81	2.15	-	-	-	-
experiments & procedures	52.69	52.69	4.30	-	1.08	1.08	2.15
administrative management	68.82	18.28	5.38	-	-	-	-

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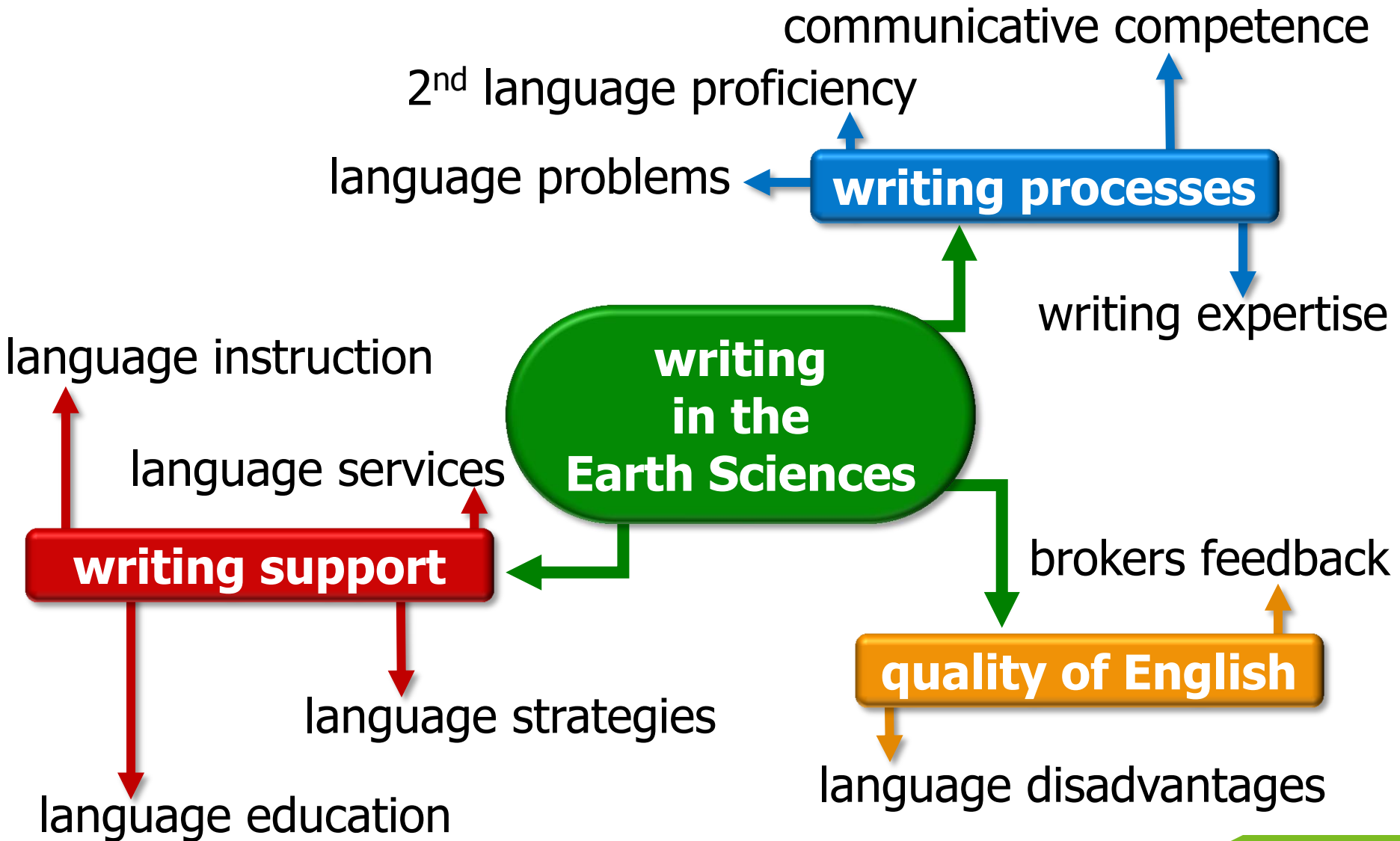
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aspects of literacy development



## aspects of literacy development

<b>writing processes</b>	communicative competence	38	
	second language proficiency	27	95
	writing expertise	22	49.22%
	language problems	8	
<b>writing support</b>	language services	27	
	language education	14	58
	language instruction	9	30.05%
	language strategies	8	
<b>quality of English</b>	language disadvantages	28	40
	language brokers feedback	12	20.73%

## a case study in the sciences

$n = 17$

limited skills  
national trait  
juniority vs. seniority  
international experience  
lack of opportunities

### 2<sup>nd</sup> language proficiency

fluency  
grammar learning=correct use?  
acknowledgement of deficiency  
linguistic range  
technical vocab vs. daily English

### language problems

## writing processes

### competence

NSEs as the benchmark  
vehicle of communication  
mutual support  
communication beyond rules  
bilingualism & multilingualism

### writing expertise

writing science = English  
academic English  
locality vs. globality  
searching for impact  
visibility / quality / certification

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low level of STs & Ts  
challenge for educators  
limited EMI



only gradual improvement  
an open attitude

HE socialization into languages

**language education**

picking up recurring phraseology  
textual borrowing  
online tools

**language strategies**

**writing support**

**editing support**

translation vs. editing  
linguistic vs. specialized correction  
loss of control over final product  
“Englishization” of text

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## quality of English

### brokers feedback

writers' non-native names  
hurtful comments  
stigmatization as NNSEs

acceptable language?  
questionable expectations

journal services  
problems 'softened'

### language disadvantage

pressure for publication  
high impact journals  
marginalization

English only policies  
loss of domain of academic  
Spanish

inclusion vs. exclusion  
vehicle of communication

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## the challenge of English-medium written communication

**journal article – the research genre par excellence**

**no gaps** in genre knowledge

**no weaknesses** in conceptualization/argumentation/expectations

**most problematic language aspects**

**argument** construction/discourse **pragmatics**/overall **rhetoric**

**quality of English**

linguistic inequality & '**unfair play**' to non-Anglophone scientists



EAP teaching that supports **literacy skills development**  
value of **bi-/multiliteracy skills** development

## the challenge of English-medium written communication

### language proficiency

- ✓ develop institutional language **planning & management**
- ✓ enhance staff **mobility** for researching & teaching purposes
- ✓ manage **internationalization** & plurilingual education

### writing expertise

- ✓ implement a **genre- and task-based** multilingual pedagogy
  - ✓ **transfer** generic & rhetorical knowledge from their L1
  - ✓ develop awareness of **lexicogrammatical** resources

### ENL vs. ELF

- ✓ raise awareness of writing **cultures** & rhetorical **traditions**
- ✓ raise awareness of **core** & **non-core** conventions of writing
  - ✓ ELF users' capability of **effective communication**

## unsolved challenges of English-medium written communication?

problematization of **unfair linguistic play** and language injustice  
(Rozicky & Johnson, 2013; Hynninen & Kuteeva, 2018)

awareness of **legitimate use** of 'academic Englishes' variants  
(Mauranen, 2010)

reflection on the difference between '**good English**' (i.e. good use of resources) and '**correct English**' (i.e. conformity to the Anglophone norms)  
(Greenbaum, 1996: 17)

**thank you!**

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