Reseñas/Book Reviews

English as a Scientific and Research Language. Debates and Discourses: English in Europe, Volume 2

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The work is the second volume in a series that presents research reports resulting from the international research network and project titled *English in Europe: Opportunity or Threat?* The project involved a partnership between various universities in different European countries. The partner universities hosted conferences that included a special focus on the impact of having English as the medium in education and research in their own region. Details of this background to the project are given in the "Series Preface" written by the Principal Investigator of the *English in Europe* project. The chapters have been written by academics from across a range of European countries including Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and Sweden. This volume will, I believe, be of interest to scholars familiar with the European context. It will also be of interest to those, who like myself, have limited familiarity but would like an introduction to the issues, debates and research topics related to the adoption of English as a shared language for academic and research communication in the European context.

The work is organised into three parts. The first part is titled "The socio-cultural scenario", the second "The discourse community scenario" and the third "The language policy scenario: English as a lingua franca in linguistics?" The first chapter in Part I (The socio-cultural scenario) and the final chapter in Part III (The language policy scenario) have been written by each of the two editors of the book.

Part I explores social and cultural issues relating to the use of English and effects of the dominance of Anglophone academic norms in the European context. The chapters address different issues, such as the trend towards a

single academic epistemology, or epistemological monoculture, (BENNETT) and limited use of citations to publications in languages other than English in journals (BREEZE).

BENNETT presents an articulate and well-argued position paper that examines changes in academic cultures and the trend away from a former diversity of scholarly discourses and views on what constitutes valid knowledge. It is argued that such diversity has come to be sidelined by the prevalence of English Academic Discourse (EAD) and its concomitant tendency towards an empiricist research paradigm. The dominance of EAD stems, it is argued, from its associations with power and wealth rather than its inherent value as a means of communicating research or empiricism's inherent value as a means of explanation. The different epistemological traditions "encoded into different languages" are increasingly under threat from the "inexorable expansion of English academic discourse" (page 9). The primary mechanism driving this process is argued to be discursive and often implicit in the translation, revision and editing processes that operate when academic papers are brought into alignment with the dominant norms" of English academic discourse and "by extension" the empiricist paradigm (page 11).

The chapter by BREEZE focuses on citation practices and the question of whether there is a decrease in the citation of publications in languages other than English. Specifically, the chapter focuses on the citation practices of scholars from outside the Anglo-American inner circle (scholars in outer and expanding circles) and their citation practices in preparing papers for publication in international journals. The chapter discusses issues and reports findings from a two-stage study (quantitative analysis of the language of bibliography in a set of leading social science journals and interviews with journal article authors and editors to elicit their understanding of authors' difficulties in getting published and the reasons behind their citation practices). Needless to say, the study found very few of the sources referred to in the bibliographies to be in languages other than English. The chapter ends with a particularly insightful discussion section focusing on the interview data and findings concerning the authors' citation strategies and concerns. Two further chapters in Part I address the topics of resources for publishing in English as a foreign language (GNUTZMANN, JAKISCH & RABE) and the potential ramifications of the widespread use of English as the language for knowledge dissemination on the World Wide Web (BONDI).

Part II of the work is taken up with specific discourse communities and examines the impact of "English-only research publishing practices" (PLO ALASTRUÉ, page 5). The chapters report studies based mainly on comparative analyses of textual data from research communication. The first chapter examines Czech and Anglo-American writers of English use of text-organizing devices in research articles (POVOLNÁ). The second (OLIVER) examines the use of hedging expressions and attitude markers in three academic genres (research papers, case reports and book reviews) across languages (Spanish and English) and disciplines (medicine and linguistics). The third (SCHMIED) reports an examination of a range of text-linguistic features in a corpus of English writing of German students specialising in English Language and Linguistics in a particular English Department at a University of Technology with reference to comparable databases. The fourth chapter (DONTCHEVA-NAVRATILOVA) reports an analysis of citations in Czech English-medium and international English-medium linguistics journals.

The final chapter in Part II (BOCANEGRA-VALLE) reports a study of the recommendations for language improvement in reviews of articles submitted to an English-medium journal. As the author rightly points out, peer review reports are private documents that are generally not available for analysis. As a result, very limited linguistic, text-based description of this genre has been available to date. The chapter describes findings from an analysis of review reports of over 100 articles submitted by Anglophone and non-Anglophone researchers to a particular journal in the field of Applied Linguistics. It focuses on reviewers' assessments and comments about the researchers' use of language. The chapter provides a number of interesting findings, including the finding that there was limited evidence to suggest significant variation in how articles written by Anglophone and non-Anglophone writers had been rated for use of language (one criterion in the assessment sheets completed by the reviewers).

Part III concerns issues of language policy and language planning and examines perspectives about the effects of the use of English as a shared academic language on national languages. Drawing on data elicited in interviews with German L1 scholars, SCHLUER examines the factors influencing their decisions concerning the language to publish in. KUTEEVA reviews results from across a set of studies that have investigated the role of English in Swedish academia (a context characterised by a generally high level of proficiency in English). The chapter reports on the parallel language

policies that appear to have encouraged scholars to use languages other than English in their research. Further chapters include the topics of challenges of publishing in English as a lingua franca as perceived by researchers in the Romanian context (MURESAN & NICOLAE), the attitudes of students towards the implementation of English-medium instruction in Croatia (MARGIĆ & ŽEŽELIĆ) and attitudes of students towards native and non-native teachers of English in Poland (LEWIŃSKA).

The volume offers a rich and diverse set of topics to engage readers and enable them to develop a broad understanding of the field of enquiry. It provides a good mix across and within chapters of issues (debates) and reports of empirical studies. Taken as a whole, the volume presents a balanced overview of the situation in Europe. As can be seen from my brief overview above, whereas some content raises issues and suggests causes for concern, other content suggests that the Englishization of academic communication in the European context is perceived in rather "neutral terms" and "ambivalent attitudes" (PÉREZ-LLANTADA, page 354). The final chapter (PÉREZ-LLANTADA), reviews themes and debates across the chapters and identifies possible topics for future research. A conclusion drawn in this chapter suggests a nuanced view regarding the adoption of English as a shared language for academic and research communication. There is partial contestation of "early views of linguistic imperialism" (page 354) and concomitantly recognition that the adoption of English has led to some opportunities, not only threats.

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