UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

https://helda.helsinki.fi

"Good" and "acceptable" English in L2 research writing : Ideals and realities in history and computer science

Hynninen, Niina; Kuteeva, Maria

2017-11
Elsevier B.V.
http://hdl.handle.net/10138/306737
Hynninen, N & Kuteeva, M 2017, '"Good" and "acceptable" English in L2 research writing : Ideals and realities in history and computer science', Journal of English for Academic Purposes, vol. 30, pp. 53-65. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2017.10.009

Downloaded from Helda, University of Helsinki institutional repository. https://helda.helsinki.fi
This is an electronic reprint of the original article.
This reprint may differ from the original in pagination and typographic detail.
Please cite the original version.

Final draft of:
Hynninen, Niina & Kuteeva, Maria (2017) "Good" and "acceptable" English in L2 research writing: Ideals and realities in history and computer science. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 30, 53–65. **https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2017.10.009**

"Good" and "acceptable" English in L2 research writing: Ideals and realities in history and computer science

Niina Hynninen (University of Helsinki) & Maria Kuteeva (Stockholm University)

Abstract

In light of the recent developments on the international publishing scene, increasingly dominated by L2 writers of English, the question of what is considered to be "good" and "acceptable" English calls for further research. This paper examines in what ways researchers describe the English used for research writing in their field. Interview data were collected from historians and computer scientists working in Finland and Sweden. Our analysis points towards some differences in the way researchers perceive "good" writing in English in their field, and what they themselves report to practice as (co-)authors, readers/reviewers, and proofreaders. The discrepancy between the ideals and realities of research writing in English was clear in the case of the historians. Our findings suggest that in research writing for publication, there is a pull towards some form of standard norm. This standard can be jointly negotiated during the writing, reviewing, and proofreading process. It may also develop in different directions in different disciplines, but it is likely to be based on the principles of understandability and clarity.

Keywords: academic writing in L2; writing for publication; standard written English; language norm; English as a lingua franca; disciplinary differences

1. Introduction

Research into writing for publication has become an established part of English for Academic Purposes and is sometimes referred to as ERPP (English for Research Publication Purposes). Two special issues of JEAP have been dedicated to this topic: the 2007 SI included a range of papers focusing primarily on the problems experienced by researchers writing in English as an additional language; the 2014 SI approached the topic from a somewhat different perspective which viewed English as one among several languages available to international researchers in multilingual settings (e.g. Gentil & Séror, 2014; Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014; McGrath, 2014). Several studies have discussed the issues of perceived difficulties experienced by researchers who use English as their additional language (e.g. Flowerdew, 1999, 2007; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Olsson & Sheridan, 2012; Pérez-Llantada et al., 2011; Langum & Sullivan, 2017). This line of research has often underscored the centre versus periphery dichotomy which marginalises non-Anglophone researchers (Canagarajah, 2002, 2013). In a recent article, Hyland (2016) debunks what he calls the myth of linguistic injustice. Drawing on the statistics concerning recent journal submissions and his own editorial experience, he shows that other factors such as academic expertise and access to international research networks play an important role in being accepted for publication. Writing for international publication presents challenges for both Anglophone and non-Anglophone researchers, and the majority of journal submissions today originate from non-Anglophone countries. Submissions originating from non-English-speaking countries have dominated top science journals such as Nature and Science for more than a decade (Wood 2001). Hyland's (2016) survey of the articles published between 2000 and 2011 in six disciplines indicated a threefold increase in publications by non-Anglophone authors. His study included biology, electrical engineering, physics, economics, linguistics, and sociology, and was based on the sample of five journals with the highest five-year impact factors per discipline, thus representing top cited sources in a broad range of established disciplines. The research output of

non-Anglophone countries has grown dramatically (e.g. China #2 in the current SJR ranking), which has contributed to a shift in power relations between the Anglophone countries and the rest of the world (Kuteeva & Mauranen, 2014).

English functions as the main academic lingua franca and is used on a daily basis by researchers in different parts of the world. As an indication of such development, the editors of a prestigious scientific journal, Molecular Biology of the Cell, wrote in 2012 that "[w]hen possible, reviewers and editors of manuscripts should look beyond errors in grammar, syntax, and usage, and evaluate the science" (Drubin & Kellogg, 2012, p. 1399). In light of the recent developments on the international publishing scene, which is increasingly dominated by L2 writers of English, the question of what is considered to be "acceptable", "functional", and "good" English in research publication calls for further research. Our purpose in this paper is to shed light on researchers' perceptions about the "quality" of English in research writing, and what this implies about the kind of English accepted in research writing in particular fields. We do this by conducting a comparative analysis of researchers working in two different fields and countries.

Many studies have approached the question of ERPP from the point of view of "choice" between writing academic texts in English as L2 versus academic writing in L1. Much previous research (e.g. Pérez-Llantada et al., 2011; McGrath, 2014) that has considered the choice question has concluded that L2-English researchers increasingly write in English, but these studies tend not to consider what kind of quality of English is required from them. The question of language quality is important since the increase in the number of L2-English writers also means that an increasing number of L2-English researchers act as reviewers and editors in gatekeeping positions, as reviewers in particular are often appointed based on the literature cited in the submitted manuscript. Regardless of being L1 or L2 users of English, reviewers and editors act as gatekeepers of scientific quality above all. As mentioned above, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of published and cited articles by L2-English researchers across

different disciplines, which inevitably leads to changes in who is involved in the reviewing and editing process (e.g. Hyland 2016, p. 65). In this context, Standard English norms may indeed prevail but not as a result of English-L1 users' intervention but rather as a result of the practices adopted by the scientific communities, which include increasing numbers of L2 users of English who are influential in their respective fields. Thus, L2-English researchers' perceptions of what counts as "good" English are increasingly relevant for other researchers writing for publication.

Importantly, previous research has suggested that we cannot take it for granted that the norms for "good" English would stay the same; for instance, Gnutzmann & Rabe's (2014) findings imply that the mere increase of L2-English researchers in a field may influence what is accepted as "good" English. Jenkins' 2014 proposal of a new ELFA paradigm in EAP writing instruction calls for moving away from "native academic English" towards a more inclusive approach which takes into account the diversity of students who use English as a lingua franca. Jenkins' proposal has provoked a strong reaction from Tribble (2017), who argues that the native versus non-native distinction is not applicable to academic writing, which is subject to disciplinary differences and has to be mastered by both L1 and L2 users of English who are novice to the field. This argument is not new, as EAP researchers and practitioners have often underscored the irrelevance of the native versus non-native dichotomy in relation to academic writing (e.g. see Hyland 2016 for an overview).

Our purpose in this paper, then, is to shed light on researcher perceptions about the "quality" of English in research writing, and what this implies about the kind of English accepted in research writing in particular fields. We do this by conducting a comparative analysis of researchers working in two different fields and countries. What is perceived as "good" writing in academia is often embedded in discourses that emphasise the importance of the mother tongue or a universally recognisable standard (Mauranen, 2016), such as Standard written English which does not belong to any given community (e.g. Elbow 2002). In addition, academic publishing of traditional genres such as research articles is a highly regulated form of writing with its own

conventions and guidelines, as well as established peer review processes. On the one hand, this degree of regulation may imply that any changes in what kind of language is accepted as "good" or "good enough" often depends on vague native-speaker intuition and needs to be accepted by most if not all actors involved in the publication process (e.g. Hartse & Kubota, 2014). On the other hand, Tribble (2017) reports the occurrence of "non-canonical" forms (Rozycki & Johnson, 2013) in some papers published in the high impact journal Acta Tropicana, identifying approximately one deviation for every 60 words in his corpus of selected papers (p. 37). Tribble concludes that L2 users of English may have their papers accepted for publication in leading journals despite non-standard language uses at clause level, as long as the rhetorical structure of the research article genre is followed. Flowerdew and Wang (2016) have shown that there is a threshold for how many language errors in a submitted manuscript can be considered to hinder understanding. They examined 15 manuscripts by Chinese researchers which were eventually published in SCI-indexed journals and found that over 100 corrections were made to each manuscript, including a substantial amount of revisions that affect the meaning of the text and involve negotiation between the author and the editor (e.g. substitution, addition, deletion, and rearrangement at the lexico-grammatical level). This finding underscores the fact that language norms in academic writing are being renegotiated in the process of writing and reviewing the manuscripts for publication.

It has also been shown that reviewers' comments on "language" are often unclear and may refer to rhetorical aspects of the text or register features (e.g. Hyland 2016, p. 66). For example, Englander (2006) suggests that L2 writers in her study did not meet the reviewers' expectations of "good" academic writing with regard to register and style. Based on our own experience of publication in applied linguistics journals, we can add that remarks on "language" can also target native-English idiomatic expressions. Considering the dramatic increase in journal submissions from non-English-speaking countries, it is no longer safe to assume that the reviewers of English-medium article manuscripts have English as their mother tongue. The trend towards an

increase in the number of L2 users of English equally concerns journal reviewers and editorial board members, which means that the change in the writing practices and language norms affects all agents involved in the publication process.

In this paper, we focus on the issues surrounding the use of English as an additional language for research-based writing in two disciplines, history and computer science. Our data were collected in two northern European countries, Finland and Sweden, which are relatively small but rank high both in terms of their research output (SJR ranking 1996–2015: Sweden #18, Finland #26 in the world) and English language proficiency (EF Index 2016: Sweden #3 and Finland #5 in the world). In contrast to some previous research (e.g. Hartse & Kubota, 2014), we avoid the native versus non-native speaker dichotomy in our approach to data analysis. To emphasise the fact that most of our study participants do not speak English as their L1 but actively use it in their research, we have adopted Mauranen's (2012) term "L2 user" even though English can be their third or fourth language (cf. Dewaele's 2017 proposal for the term "LX user", but it is not established in EAP and L2 writing research). Since our focus is on writing and writers, we sometimes specify the "user" as "writer" and thus refer to our study participants as "L2 writers". When a distinction between those writing in their L1 as opposed to their L2 is needed, we also talk about L1 writers.

Unlike some of the previous research mentioned above, we are not focussing on the question of choice between writing academic texts in English versus other academic languages. Rather, our aim is to examine researchers' perceptions of academic writing and what they construe as "good" writing in English in their disciplines. In what ways do researchers describe the English used for research writing in their field? As we seek to answer this overarching research question, comparisons will inevitably be drawn between the two disciplines and institutional contexts. The following section will outline the reasons for our choice of disciplines and contexts.

2. Background: disciplinary and institutional contexts

Disciplinary differences in academic writing have been explored extensively, showing variation at the lexical and structural level of research articles published in different fields (e.g. Hyland, 2000; Lin & Evans, 2012). Previous studies focusing on L2 users of English writing for publication have also identified some clear trends within and across disciplines (e.g. Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014; McGrath, 2014; Salö, 2015; Salö & Hanell, 2014). The historians at a German university in Gnutzmann and Rabe's (2014) study reported a dominance of English L1 editors and reviewers in the target publication outlets, leading to higher English language requirements for historians of British, American and colonial history, whereas specialists in the local history reported having their own outlets for publication in German. Compared to their counterparts in general linguistics and anthropology, the Swedish historians in McGrath's (2014) study also reported having higher expectations of native-like fluency in academic writing and a trend to publish more in their L1, although the younger generation was more positive towards writing in English for peer-reviewed journals. As to computer science in the Swedish context, Salö (2015) and Salö and Hanell (2014) point out that English is a prerequisite in the field: Swedish has never been a language of research publication in this discipline, although Swedish L1 computer scientists in the two studies use Swedish to discuss and comment on each other's English-medium writing.

In this study, we have chosen to focus on history and computer science because they represent two different facets of the academy with regard to writing and publishing in English as L2. History is one of the oldest and most established disciplines at universities around the globe, often with a special connection to the national research community and the general public, which implies a strong tendency to write and publish texts in the local language(s). Monographs and thematic volumes are highly valued forms of publication, although peer-reviewed research articles (in English-medium journals) are gaining more prestige (e.g. McGrath, 2014). Computer

science, on the other hand, is one of the most recent and rapidly-changing disciplines with a strong connection to the Anglo-American research community and wide international collaboration networks. Due to the rapid developments in the field and its various sub-branches, the most common form of publication in computer science is a paper in peer-reviewed conference proceedings[1]. Journal articles are also valued in the field but take longer to be published and cannot therefore contain much original research (e.g. the computer scientist Harko Verhagen, personal communication).

Trowler (2014) discusses disciplines in light of "family resemblances" (Wittgenstein, 1953), which implies that the historians and the computer scientists in our study share a number of common features across institutional and national contexts. At the same time, Trowler (2014) also challenges the essentialist view of disciplines as "tribes and territories" and argues that disciplines are context-dependent, which means that they can display specific characteristics in different institutions. Our study was conducted in two Nordic countries, Sweden and Finland, the former representing the typical Scandinavian situation with one main national language (i.e. Swedish), and the latter with two very different national languages, Finnish and Swedish. Both countries have strong traditions of valuing equality and citizen participation. There is also awareness that international cooperation is key, and English is important for research-related communication. As mentioned above, both Sweden and Finland score high on English language proficiency but Sweden has also adopted a somewhat protectionist stance towards the "threat" of English in high-stakes domains, including research and higher education (e.g. Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012; Olsson & Sheridan, 2012). In Finland, on the other hand, although it has been concluded that the discussions about language in the context of Finnish higher education tend to focus on the position of English rather than the two national languages (Saarinen, 2014; see also Saarinen, 2012), English enjoys a more neutral status and the negative rhetoric is directed more towards

[1] To be able to present at a computer science conference, a complete article needs to be submitted for review and be accepted. Less than a fifth of the submitted articles are accepted for the most prestigious conferences.

Swedish (e.g. Lindström & Sylvin 2014). It is also notable that L1-Finnish researchers have always had to operate in an L2 to reach an international audience, whereas L1-Swedish researchers used to be, and to some extent still are, able to reach a wider -- largely Scandinavian -- audience by using Swedish, particularly in older fields such as history. It can thus be expected that differences in the historical and current linguistic situations in the two countries may have an influence on how scholars in the two countries perceive language issues, including the question of quality in academic writing in English.

3. Method

In order to gain a "holistic" view of research writing practices across disciplines, it seems that in addition to more textual approaches, we need research on text production processes and how participants understand these processes (see Lillis & Curry 2010; Hyland 2012). One way of gaining insights into these processes is by investigating the ways in which research writing is constructed through social and discursive practices, also taking into account what role language plays in that construction (Gnutzmann & Rabe 2014; cf. Canagarajah 2002). Data obtained through interviewing researchers provide such insider views that are needed to understand research writing practices, and thus interviews provide a suitable way to investigate the language issues we approach in this paper. Below, we describe our data (section 3.1) and our methods of analysis (section 3.2).

3.1. Study participants and data collection

Our data consist of semi-structured thematic interviews conducted with historians and computer scientists working in three major research universities. The Finnish data were collected from

two universities by the first author in 2015–2016, as part of the *Language Regulation in Academia* (LaRA) research project[2]; the Swedish data were collected from one university by the second author and research associates between 2013 and 2016. Informed consent was obtained from all study participants. The number of participants by discipline and country is summarised below.

Table 1. No. of research interviews conducted with researchers in the two disciplines and countries.

	History	Computer science	*In total*
Finland	9	9	*18*
Sweden	5	4	*9*
In total	*14*	*13*	*27*

As can be seen in Table 1, we conducted 27 interviews in total. These data resulted from a mixture of purposeful and snowball sampling based on the study participants' research interests and networks. The sample is (nearly) balanced in terms of the disciplines, but somewhat biased towards the Finnish context. Both samples include researchers in different career stages: the Finnish data comprise five professors, six senior researchers and seven postdocs, and the Swedish data five professors, three postdocs and a doctoral student;

Both samples also include representatives of the national language(s) of the country in question as well as speakers of other languages. In the Finnish dataset, the historians had the following L1s: Finnish (7) and other languages (2); the computer scientists Finnish (4), Swedish (1), and other languages (4).[3] The difference in the number of L1 speakers of Finnish reflects the situation in the two disciplines: history has strong ties to the Finnish context, and also much of the teaching at university is conducted in Finnish (or Swedish), whereas computer science

[2] The LaRA project, funded by the Kone Foundation, is based at the University of Helsinki and directed by Dr. Anna Solin. The website of the project is at http://www.helsinki.fi/project/lara.

[3] For reasons of anonymity, we list the L1s of our study participants without specifying the national or institutional context or the discipline: Dutch, English, Finnish, French, Kurdish, Persian, Serbo-Croatian, Sinhala, Swedish, and Turkish.

recruits more researchers from abroad. The same trend applies to the Swedish data in terms of L1s: for historians, it is Swedish (4) and another language (1); the 4 computer scientists all had different L1s, only one of which was Swedish (see footnote 2).

Both genders were represented across the two datasets and selected disciplines: 10 female and 17 male study participants. Since we are not focusing on gender-related issues and for reasons of anonymity, we do not provide further details of gender distribution. When referring to our interviewees, we use "their" as the third person singular throughout. For anonymity reasons, we have numbered our study participants and refer to them only by their national and disciplinary contexts in the data excerpts below (e.g. FH1–9, SCS1–4). The excerpts translated from Finnish into English by the first author are marked with a "t" at the end, e.g. FH3t (Finnish historian #3, translated).

The historians in our study represent different branches of history: some work on topics of national interest while others have a more international focus (e.g. political history or history of Western thought). In order to protect the participants' anonymity, we avoid specifying their main research interests. It is worth noting, however, that the computer scientists in our study represent the more applied side of the field, along with those working in human computer interaction (HCI). This trend applies to data from both Finnish and Swedish universities. Not all study participants working in computer science departments had an educational background in computer science, but rather in cognitive science, mathematics, or other disciplines.

All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and anonymised (for transcription conventions, see Supplementary materials). Most of the interviews at the Finnish universities were conducted in Finnish, i.e. 12 out of 18. The remaining 6 interviews were conducted in English by the same interviewer whose L1 is Finnish. Excerpts from the interviews conducted in Finnish have been translated into English by the first author. The translations have been kept as literal as possible, and repetitions and unfinished utterances have been included so that the translations would resemble the style of the original as closely as possible. The original Finnish

transcriptions of the translated excerpts are available as supplementary material. All interviews conducted at the Swedish university were in English. Although the interviewees were given the choice of speaking English or Swedish, they chose to use predominantly English. This choice may be due to the fact that the interviewers were either L1 speakers of English or did not share the participants' L1. The typical length of an interview was between 30 minutes and 1.5 hours, depending on the amount of detail provided by the interviewees.

Interview guides were designed to elicit discussion about language practices in the disciplines, with particular focus on writing practices. The use of interview guides ensured comparability, i.e. specific themes were covered in all 27 interviews. These themes were: languages used for research purposes, role of English in the field, and experiences and perceptions of research writing particularly in English. The questions used in the interviews varied, as deviations from the guides were purposefully allowed in order to assure that both the interviewer and the interviewee could pursue any topic of relevance that emerged during the interview.

3.2. Data analysis

We started our interview data analysis by identifying passages relevant to our research question. In this process, we organised the data under the following themes that emerged from the data: (a) the interviewees describe interventions in the quality of their English-medium research writing made by different "literacy brokers" (Lillis & Curry, 2010); and (b) they talk about English-language requirements in their discipline. We then did a closer analysis of the themed data, where we used the data excerpts organised under the themes to answer our research question. So in order to shed light on the use of English in the two disciplines, we focused on interviewee experiences and perceptions regarding the use of, and requirements for, English in their fields.

Our approach to interview analysis is in line with a social practice orientation: instead of an exclusive focus on the content of the interviews, or the "what" of the data, we also considered the "how", i.e. "the linguistic and/or interactional resources used in co-constructing content and locally achieving the interview as speech event" (Talmy, 2010, p. 140). This idea of co-construction further means that in describing their language practices, interviewees were not seen to simply retrieve information but rather to (re-)construct their experiences and perceptions as part of the interview event (see Edley, 2001).

We approached these experiences and perceptions by analysing the different positions from which our study participants were talking. When referring to "positions", we mean accounts in which the participants talk from their own experience of acting in a particular role (e.g. author/co-author, peer reviewer, proofreader; see example (a) below), or accounts in which the participants talk about a particular writing or editing practice which they have observed or experienced without being actively involved (e.g. receiving peer review comments or reporting general observations; see example (b) below):

(a) ((...)) **i try to write** it in a way that it wouldn't become a factor between me and, my reader that would <I: [yeah]> [like] take unreasonably much [attention away from what i want to say]
(b) ((...)) it's kind of like now **really highly advised for everything to be active voice** <I: okay> so we kinda like try to make everything active voice ((...))

In the results section, we provide our analysis and illustrate the main findings with data excerpts that represent typical and contrasting ways our study participants talked about language.

4. Results

Our findings suggest that discipline was a clearer differentiator in terms of how our study participants described their use of English for research writing than the national context in which

they worked. Subsections 4.1 and 4.2 that we have divided along disciplinary lines reflect this overall finding. Some characteristics were specific to the national contexts, though; for instance, both historians and computer scientists working in Sweden expressed stronger concerns about having to write in English compared to their colleagues working in Finland. It is possible that historical factors play a role here: Swedish has been, and to some extent still is, used for international purposes; for instance, in our data, Swedish historians sometimes described the Scandinavian audience as international, whereas this has never been the case for Finnish. The national context is thus not insignificant, but overall, there were more similarities between the historians on the one hand and between the computer scientists on the other hand, irrespective of the national contexts where they worked.

4.1 History: ideals versus realities

There was a great deal of individual variation in our historians' reports about their experiences of writing in English. Some preferred to write in English, even if they reported their L1 to be their strongest language (e.g. FH2, SH2), others were less comfortable with English and expressed concern about having to write "like English people" (FH8). Overall, the general requirements for research writing in English were often described as "reasonably high", and in reference to English as a native language, as in Excerpt 1 below:

(1)

> yeah i think they're i mean **i think they're reasonably high in terms of, erm being idiomatically correct i mean not just grammar but also sort of sounding like actual english as it is spoken in english speaking @countries@ er but of course that's a wide field**, and, yeah
>
> (FH7)

The comment in excerpt 1 was made in relation to a question about expectations of writing quality in the discipline. Interestingly, however, when talking from the position of a writer,

rather than expressing a more general perception, the historians often described the requirements in a different way. In the words of the same historian (FH7), “as long as it’s correct and understandable, that’s okay”. To illustrate this observable difference in the perceptions of writing quality in more detail, we discuss three interview excerpts (2–4) where the historians talk about English-language requirements in their field. We consider the positions from which the interviewees are talking and illustrate interviewee perceptions in relation to these positions.

Excerpt 2 relates to a discussion about the proofreading of the interviewee’s own texts.

(2)

R: ((...)) you do notice that the text is completely different when a professional checks and brushes it @brushes@ but er i haven’t had to use a proof reader for a while

I: how do you notice it that a proof reader has gone through your text,

R: er there will be like **more fluent expressions idiomatic expressions** that you might not have thought of youself or, er the kinds of article er mistakes **easy mistakes**, i usually test them and with google i check also that which he- which article should i use here, they are always pretty difficult for finns these to for @@ from, but er, maybe it has to do with the kind of like **yearning for elegance** where it is pretty difficult for a finn to compete with like a shakespeare researcher we just yesterday er a couple of days ago talked with a colleague about how how er on the other hand it is actually **a good thing as well that you don’t have too much like fancy rhetoric to hide behind but rather you have to try to like communicate your ideas fairly clearly and, perhaps without embellishments, then again the kind of like, of course it is wonderful to listen to and to read the kind of really elegantly flowing text, where everything is in its right place but, it’s not our @first language@ so we have to tr- strive for like understandability** ((...))

(FH4t, interviewer backchanneling removed for readability)

In excerpt 2, when talking from the position of a reader (*wonderful to... read*), the interviewee expresses admiration towards *elegantly* written texts, which FH4 seems to associate with apparently L1-English-speaking *shakespeare researcher[s]*. At the same time, when talking from the position of a writer, the interviewee emphasises the ability to *communicate your ideas fairly clearly and perhaps without embellishments* as well as striving for *understandability*. Such usage is linked to being an L2 user of English (*not our @first language@*), which suggests that

the kind of elegance the interviewee is yearning for is seen to be beyond the reach of an L2 user of English. At the same time, using proofreading is described as a way to move towards the ideal (*there will be like more fluent expressions idiomatic expressions*; *maybe it has to do with...*). Thus, what is constructed in this excerpt is an interplay between ideals and realities: ideal writing, described as "elegant", is associated with some L1 writers of English, whereas the practical goals for writing in English as an L2 user are described in relation to *understandability*.

This interplay is also evident in excerpt 3, where a historian describes the English-language requirements in the field.

(3)

I: how would you describe what are the requirements for english like in the field of history,

R: well they are such that that er you ca- **can write clear expository text** <I: yeah> like that that i can't can't say that they would be like very (there is not) well the requirement is that you can write like like i mean faultless or it doesn't have to be faultless from the start [(because) it is sent for proofreading at some point before publication] <I: [right yeah yeah yeah]> publication but but the requirement as such is not like the ide(a) in these is usually a kind of basic expository text where **your language use is not required to be like tremendously rich** i mean you can see that that when **a native e- e-language speaker english speaker writes text so often the like for instance the language may be richer** <I: okay> also in this kind of academic sense that he or she can use fancier expressions [and such] <I: [yeah]> but er, but but **a basic expository text is enough <I: [yeah]> [as long as] it is faultless and such but for that too you may very well use an [external] <I: [yeah]> proofreader <I: yeah> which is quite okay <I: yeah> ((...))**

(FH9t)

In excerpt 3, FH9 is talking from the position of a writer. As in excerpt 2, a contrast is made between L1- and L2-using writers, with the "richness" of language and use of *fancier expressions* attributed to some L1 writers. Interestingly, such use is not described as necessary, but rather disciplinary writing requirements are perceived as the ability to write a *clear* or *basic expository text*. What is more, such writing is deemed to be *enough* as opposed to the *richer*

language used by some L1 writers, which, similarly to excerpt 2, implies an interplay between realities and ideals.

In addition to the ability to write a basic expository text, another disciplinary writing requirement constructed in excerpt 3 is linguistic correctness. However, being able to write *faultless* English is not seen as a requirement for the L2 writer, it is rather attributed to proofreading. Thus, proofreading is seen as a means to achieve the required correctness goals, and contrary to excerpt 2, elegance is not mentioned.

In general, many of our historians reported having their texts intended for publication proofread. Correctness was described to ensure or at least to ease the understandability of the text and to secure that the text gives a professional impression. It was also seen as important in making sure that language does not cause friction between what the writer wants to convey and the reader of the text. These perceptions are illustrated in excerpt 4. In the discussion preceding the excerpt, the historian had mentioned the importance of "native speaker" intuition in judging the quality and idiomaticity of academic texts (i.e. the kind of comments received from proofreaders, such as "this is correct but a native speaker would not put it this way"). The ensuing discussion is in excerpt 4.

(4)

I: [okay yeah], is it st- strong still like in the field of history this this native english is it like the standard historians strive for,

R: well, i don't know **it probably can't be native english** ((...)) sometimes i have to admit that when you get hold of something like really sophisticated british english text [it] <I: [yeah]> it's already a bit **like, i i i mean many non- non-native speakers write more fluent @no i mean like@ more easily comprehensible english [to a non-native speaker]** <I: [yeah yeah yeah]> than than then and americans write eas- much more easier english according to [my my @experience@] <I: [okay yeah]> so brits some brits still write a bit [like] <I: [yeah]> like more elaborately <I: right> but i can't estimate whether whether our ideal is like **of course our ideal is that our english language would not not be- become a kind of factor in the text that it would somehow estra- take away attention from what we want to say to the f- f- [forms]** <I: [yeah]> **of language in which it is [said]** <I: [yeah] yeah> so personally i strive for the kind of, like i can't write like some some [lord of the house of lords @@] <I: [mhm-hm mhm-hm @@]> that has graduated graduated from a british board- [boarding school] <I:

[mhm-hm]> i will never be able to master the language at that kind of level of nuances but **i try to write it in a way that it wouldn't become a factor between me and, my reader that would <I: [yeah]> [like] take unreasonably much [attention away from what i want to say]**

I: [yeah yeah] yeah yeah sounds like very m- like @reasonable@ like yeah yes yeah

R: **and that's why i think it's important that there aren't that many like, awkward grammar mistakes** ((...))

(FH3t)

In excerpt 4, following the interviewer's clarification question, FH3 rejects the proposed idea that historians would strive for native English in their writing (*it probably can't be native english*). Instead, the interviewee moves on to describe their experiences from the position of a reader, and compares the writing of L1 and L2 users of English. That many *non-native speakers* of English are described to write *more easily comprehensible english* suggests that, in this account, understandability is highly regarded also from the position of a reader. This perception is in sharp contrast with the ideal of elegance associated with some L1-English writers (see excerpt 2). Similarly, talking from the perspective of historians more generally, and as a writer, the interviewee takes a pragmatic stance (*i try to write it in a way that it wouldn't become a factor between me and my reader*). This pragmatic stance highlights the importance of conveying the message in a way that does not frustrate the reader and the role of grammatical correctness in achieving this. While the English use of (educated) L1 writers is, similarly to excerpts 2 and 3, described as more nuanced, this account does not idealise such language use, but rather labels understandability as *our ideal*. It thus seems that the ideals are brought closer to the described realities of reading and writing.

As a whole, the historians' interview accounts construct the importance of grammatical and idiomatic correctness with reference to the ideal of English as a native language. At the same time, the interviewees also emphasised that, in reality, it is sufficient to be able to write a *basic expository text* (FH9). These two perceptions suggest a division between what is considered an ideal text as opposed to what the pragmatic goals of the writers are. The ideal, or what is

admired, seems to be a “beautifully” and “elegantly” written text, often associated with an L1-English writer. At the same time, the goal the writers seem to have set for themselves, and often also describe as the requirement within the field, is to be able to write “correct and understandable” texts. When comparing their writing to that of L1-English writers, the historians tend to see their own writing as not as rich. At the same time, it seems that such richness and the kinds of nuances the writers attach to L1 use in general may distract them as writers (see excerpt 2: may be good not to be able to hide behind *fancy rhetoric*), or readers (see excerpt 4: difficult to understand sophisticated British English). In this sense, the pragmatic goals described in the accounts may be closer to actually achieving mutual understanding than the admired elegance associated with some L1-English writers.

4.2. Computer science: clarity and correctness

Our analysis suggests that computer science seems to operate predominantly in English (see also Salö, 2015), but when asked about the *kind* of English used in the field, the interviewees reported variation in the English they encounter. For instance, they would suggest that “the level of English is all over the place” (FCS8), or that “sometimes the language can be quite lousy” (SCS2), but reportedly because of the dominance of English, computer scientists’ language competence was also deemed as “pretty good like on average” (FCS3). What is more striking, however, is the importance the interviewees placed on the “clarity” of expression and on “correct” linguistic form. Below we take a closer look at the data to discuss these two notions. We do this by considering the different positions from which the interviewees are talking.

Excerpt 5 is illustrative of the clarity and correctness aspects the computer scientists often raised when asked about the requirements for English in their field.

(5)

I: what kinds of requirements are there for writers, in terms of what the English is [supposed to be like]

R: [erm] okay, so if i consider this passive voice and active voice i can comment [on that] <I: [okay]> it's kind of like now **really highly advised for everything to be active voice** <I: okay> so we kinda like try to make everything **active voice** <I: mhm-hm> that may be one thing and what else about english. mhm of course **simple and easily understandable** that's that's that's one main concern <I: okay> we try to make it as er **more straightforward and understandable** and, **shorter sentences with less er complex terms** and <I: okay> and that kind of stuff but, (yes) other than that @i don't know@ @@

I: is er, correctness an issue

R: mhm yes it is it is of course yes er **correctness is a is a huge issue** like **we generally make sure that grammatically everything is correct** <I: okay> er yeah that that's that's like i- it's kinda like the **face-value first impression** is coming from coming and if the if if if the grammar is wrong **there's a very low chance for it even if the content is very good** er especially with major conferences er they would not i don't think they would c- care that much (xx) has actually made (an) influence on on a- yes

(FCS1)

In excerpt 5, the interviewee shifts between providing general perceptions of English-language requirements in the field (e.g. *really highly advised for everything to be active voice*; *correctness... is a huge issue*) and describing their own writing from the position of a co-author (*we try to...*; *we generally make sure...*). Notably, when talking from the position of a co-author, the interviewee uses the first person plural *we*, which illustrates the collaborative nature of scientific writing in the field. It seems that the perceived requirements function as a writing guide; for instance, correctness is first described as a *huge issue* after which the interviewee continues from the position of a co-author saying that *we generally make sure that grammatically everything is correct*. What is highlighted as aims are understandability and clarity of expression (*more straightforward and understandable*; *shorter sentences with less er complex terms*) but also grammatical correctness, which is described to possibly influence the reception and evaluation of a text, including actual uptake of manuscripts for publication (cf. Lillis & Curry, 2015).

Excerpts 6a and b below illustrate how clarity was often attributed not only to text-level organisation and presentation of the contents but also to sentence-level clarity, which was also the case in excerpt 5 above.

(6)

a) ((…)) i usually do many reviews reviewing for the journals and the conferences so i don't know how many uh just during the may i did six journal eh reviewing so uh the texts **should provide the information clearly for me** what's the contribution what's the problem statement is um eh i'm i'm looking the in the my subject <I: okay> at the in the general of course is uh you expect eh the text is be clear <I: okay alrighty alright <cough>> **the message should be clear in the text** ts- so this is really usually eh eh **we (publish it) if its message is clear**

(SCS1)

b) I: ((...)) what did do you expect of good text
R: mhm uh again first my thought's to understand what what you wanted to say so **in my research it's the most important to understand uh uh uh and that means having clear sentences really clear sentences what you recozgni- recognize**

(SCS3)

Importantly, clarity is highlighted as a requirement irrespective of whether the interviewee is talking from the position of a reviewer (excerpt 6a) or a reader-writer (excerpt 6b). In addition, correctness was often construed to contribute to clarity, as illustrated in excerpts 7a and b.

(7)

a) ((...)) it it can really **offend** me if they um the english um they write uh too much of a struggle to read so **too many ae- eh language errors that uh hinder me from reading** which (xx) uh can happen in in conference review for example

(SCS4)

b) I: is correctness an issue.

R: as in g- grammar <I: [yeah]> [gr-] correctness <P: 05> i mean **the first question is does it hurt er understanding the content of the paper**, at least when i review er my first concern is does it does it hurt the correctness of the paper because then it's it's a it is a huge problem if i have to to to think through a some s- important sentences and have to to guess to guess what i couldn't understand from a sentence from the context or the (experimentation) then that's a big problem then i would say **my personal taste**

would go towards, correctness if possible because at least (i mean) it doesn't disturb you from from from from the content ((...))

(FSC9)

In excerpts 7a and b, the interviewees talk from the position of a reviewer. In both excerpts, correctness is construed to support understanding of the content. Language errors are described as a problem if there are *too many... that uh hinder me from reading* (excerpt 7a) and if they *hurt er understanding the content of the paper* (excerpt 7b). It thus seems that a certain number of language errors may be acceptable in a submitted manuscript unless they hinder understanding (cf. Flowerdew & Wang, 2016). At the same time, it appears that *too many* language errors may also cause serious annoyance and possibly affect the outcome of the review process (cf. Lillis & Curry, 2015). In excerpt 7a, the interviewee reports that language errors may *offend* them as a reviewer, and similar comments about "annoying" errors were made by other computer scientists, too, most of whom were L2 users of English (e.g. FCS5, SCS2).

This attention of L2 users of English to correctness suggests that the issue of "renegotiation of correctness norms" in some disciplines (cf. Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014; Hyland, 2016) is a complex matter. Increasing numbers of L2 users in gate-keeping positions does not necessarily lead to more variation in language use. Comments about language errors being "offensive" or "annoying" (see excerpt 7a) imply that researchers using English as an L2 may also uphold correctness standards in their practices and reject change. In addition, many of our interviewees attached a great deal of importance to proofreading. Our computer scientists sometimes reported that "it is not my job to correct linguistic form" (FSC2t) when doing a scientific review and said that they would suggest that authors turn elsewhere for language support. Such comments imply that the authority for correctness norms may very well be "outsourced".

Since correctness was highly valued in the accounts, it is perhaps not surprising that both of the two researchers in our study whose L1 is English reported that they were often asked to act as proofreaders. In the words of one of these researchers: "I'm like the token proofreader for

the group because I'm the I'm the only native English speaker" (FCS8). Reliance on L1-English co-authors for language support was evident in the data, even if professional proofreading services were also reportedly used. In order to shed further light on the aspects of clarity and correctness in the field, we take a closer look at three data excerpts where the focus is on researchers who have English as L1.

Excerpt 8 is taken from a computer scientist's response to a question about how natural it is for the researcher to do proofreading. At the time of the interview, this English as L1 researcher had lived in Finland for several years.

(8)

((…)) **it's still i think reasonably easy for me to do er but it's actually getting harder, because i- i've changed the way i speak and [and] <I: [okay]> i've got used to things** ((…))

(FCS7)

The excerpt suggests two things: (a) that proofreading is seen as a way to adjust a text towards English as a native language and (b) that the way English is used in local research communities, and possibly in the field more generally, may influence an individual's language use. In this case, we have an L1-English speaker reporting to have *changed the way i speak*, which reportedly makes it more difficult for the researcher to do proofreading according to the apparently English native language correctness criteria expected.

Changes in English use are also apparent in excerpt 9. When asked about whether other people intervene in their language, this computer scientist, who also has English as L1, reported the following:

(9)

I: yeah, do people intervene in your language

R: um <P: 05> not that often (like). i like to think my writing is not bad [@@] <I: [@@]> er like, like i don't know when i w- when i was much younger i used to to write a lot like for pleasure <I: okay> er so i think my my written English is pretty good <I: mhm-mh>, er **so occasionally someone will come and say that's like a weird turn of phrase or whatever <I: mhm okay [yeah]> [um] or just i- i'll use something that's like maybe, too british or @@**

I: yeah yeah [@@]

R: [yeah] um **and i i guess that is the the one area some people tend to intervene in my language is the american versus UK [spelling]** <I: [aha] okay okay> er like ((…))

(FCS8)

In excerpt 9, when talking from the position of a co-author, the interviewee first does not see any need for their colleagues to intervene in their written language, but then describes how the colleagues may sometimes comment on the use of expressions that may be *too british* or if the spelling used does not correspond to the agreed choice of variety. This intervention in the researcher's language use suggests that there is also a need for L1-English writers to adjust their language use in order to reach the required clarity (and correctness) criteria in the field.

Excerpt 10 further illustrates the need for adjustment to writing conventions in the field:

(10)

((...)) **so i have beside me a person who is english native and we write papers together and last one-two years i do not see in his writing when we write paper together so much more words that i didn't see in my writing so i'm guessing that he is actually also aligning himself to our field so one answer is that the field is also constraining vocabulary** because i started from by saying to you that i think that the vocabulary is constraint k- kind of constrained uh i- i- we are not writing for newspapers or s- some you know like uh other topics um and **we try to enforce clarity** ((...))

(SCS3)

In excerpt 10, a computer scientist is sharing observations of their L1-English co-author's language use. What is suggested in the excerpt is similar adjustment on the part of an L1 writer of English to the conventions of the field as described in excerpts 8 and 9. In this excerpt, the adjustment is described to be achieved by *constraining vocabulary*, which is further linked to the overall aim in the field of trying to *enforce clarity*. It thus seems that while the clarity

requirement described in the accounts is often linked to grammatical correctness, it requires writers to adjust their writing in ways that enhance understanding internationally – whether this then means avoiding *too british* expressions (excerpt 9), *constraining vocabulary* (excerpt 10) or writing in *shorter sentences* (excerpt 5).

To sum up, our findings suggest that clarity and correctness are regarded as the main requirements for "good" texts within the international computer science research community. While some researchers openly admit that "poor" English disturbs them (excerpt 7a), the clarity principle also suggests an openness to variety, at least in the manuscript evaluation phase (excerpt 7b). The question, of course, is whether this variety makes it to publication. Based on the interview accounts, it seems that if it does, it is not intentional – grammatical correctness is valued. It is also possible that the sheer number of non-standard grammatical features may play a role. According to Flowerdew and Wang (2016), it may be acceptable to have up to 10 non-standard grammatical features but not closer to 100 as in the manuscripts they studied.

On the other hand, there seems to be a willingness and a need to adapt the language of the texts to an international audience. Talking from the positions of a proofreader and a (co-)author, some of the (L1- and L2-using) computer scientists also reported changes in their own or their colleague's writing style – that they have moved closer to the writing style typical of their environment and/or discipline (excerpts 13–15). This shift towards increased clarity in their writing practices means that their texts may differ from those intended largely for English native language contexts. Thus, it seems that the process of writing and evaluating manuscripts in computer science allows for variation at an initial stage, but established genres such as the conference paper or research article are highly regulated as far as language is concerned. Generally, the computer scientists expect that the finished writing product is polished.

Overall, the computer scientists' accounts construct the importance of clarity and correctness in relation to discipline-specific concerns about how to best be understood by the international computer science research community. While this involves reliance on Standard

English grammar, it also means toning down, for instance, the "Britishness" of the language – and this adjustment is expected from all authors.

5. Discussion

In what ways do researchers describe the English used for research writing in their field? Our analysis suggests that there are some differences in the way that our study participants perceive what "good" writing in English in their field is like, and what they themselves report to practice as (co-)authors, readers/reviewers, and proofreaders. The discrepancy between the ideals and realities of research writing in English was particularly clear in the case of our historians. On the other hand, computer scientists described "good" writing in their field in a similar manner to what they reported about their own practices from the positions of (co-)author, reviewer, and proofreader.

In the case of history, there seems to be a discrepancy between what is described as an ideal text as opposed to the writers' pragmatic goals. The ideal text is described to be "beautiful" and "elegantly written", which our historians often associate with L1-English writers. It thus seems that "good" writing in the historians' accounts is embedded in discourses that emphasise the importance of the mother tongue or a universally recognisable standard (Mauranen, 2016). At the same time, the goal that our historians report to have set for themselves is to be able to write "correct and understandable" texts. It seems that, when comparing their own texts to those of L1-English writers, the historians perceive their own writing to be not as rich. However, the historians sometimes described such richness and the kinds of nuances they attached to L1 use in general as distracting them as writers (see excerpt 2) or as readers (see excerpt 4). This suggests that "good" writing in the sense of being understandable may be different from "good" writing in the sense of being elegant.

In computer science, our study participants' accounts emphasise the importance of clarity and correctness in their own and other texts in relation to the requirements of the international computer science research community. In that sense, there is not so much discrepancy between what they perceive as "good writing" in their field and what they report to practice as authors, readers/reviewers, and proofreaders. Both ideals and realities of research writing in computer science are described as striving towards "clarity" and "correctness", which implies reliance on somewhat restricted vocabulary (see excerpt 10) and toning down idiomatic native-like expressions, which one participant described as "Britishness" (see excerpt 9). In that sense, our computer scientists seem to be closer to "practicing what they preach" compared to historians.

What is more, while traces of discourses emphasising the importance of the mother tongue or a universally recognisable standard can be seen also in the computer scientists' accounts, interestingly, the standard described seems to be jointly negotiated within the field. The goal is not necessarily English as it is written for a largely Anglophone audience, but rather a text that conveys the meaning in an understandable way for the international computer science research community. In the light of our findings, however, this renegotiation of correctness (and other) norms (Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014) may not be a question of simply accepting non-standard forms. Nor can the issue be reduced to a question of the increasing number of L2 users of English occupying dominant positions in the field. Contrary to the suggestions of L2 users of English accepting non-standard forms, as illustrated in Gnutzmann and Rabe (2014) for mechanical engineering and suggested by Hyland (2016, p. 65) more generally, our L2-using study participants described correctness as a *huge issue* for texts to be published and reported to be using proofreaders to achieve the required and valued linguistic correctness in writing. It thus seems that L2 users of English can also uphold Standard English norms in their practices and reject change in this regard. At the same time, change may be taking place in other ways, for instance, in the form of somewhat more "restricted vocabulary" or reduced "Britishness" of the texts, which our study participants described as a means to accommodate to the international

research community. Combined together, these two trends – upholding a standard norm and reducing native-like idiomatic features – are pointing towards a need for mutual understanding within the computer science research community. As discussed below, there are disciplinary differences in what kind of English is considered "good" and "acceptable", and the decreasing importance of L1 norms is particularly visible in "the least context-dependent and rhetorically demanding science fields" (Hyland 2016, p. 65).

Our analysis of the research interviews suggests a tendency for shared discipline to predict similarity in the study participants' experiences and perceptions of the use of English in research publication. This observation about the importance of shared discipline over a shared national context supports Trowler's (2014; see also Becher, 1994) discussion of "family resemblances" (Wittgenstein, 1953) in relation to disciplines: the historians and the computer scientists in our study share a number of common features that render them recognisable as "historians" and "computer scientists" respectively. At the same time, they also display some specific characteristics in the national contexts; for instance, stronger concerns about having to write in English were typically expressed by both historians and computer scientists working in Sweden.

All in all, it seems that instead of moving away from standard to more diversity in academic writing in English, as Canagarajah (2006, 2013) encourages researchers to do when he proposes the use of code-meshing in research writing, our findings point in the opposite direction. One reason is that there are differences between what can be considered acceptable and appropriate in academic writing in less formal or rhetorically flexible contexts (e.g. using code-meshing for finding a personal voice in student essays) and what international journal publishers would expect from their submissions. Our data analysis shows that, in research writing for international publication, there seems to be a pull towards some form of standard language use. This standard can be jointly negotiated during the writing, reviewing, and proofreading process. It may also develop in different directions in different fields, but it is likely to be based on the principles of understandability and clarity.

6. Conclusions

We have identified some common themes in the researchers' construal of "good" writing within the two disciplines across three institutional contexts, which support the findings of previous research into disciplinary writing practices (e.g. Hyland, 2000). At the same time, we have detected the tension between the ideals and realities of research writing in English as L2. This tension can be connected to the local versus global dimensions of research communication in the examined disciplinary communities. It appears that the ideals of writing in English are sometimes associated with the "local" dimension of writing within the Anglophone context, i.e. by L1 writers of English for L1 readers of English, whereas the realities of research writing reflect the needs of the "global" dimension of research communication. It appears that, for both the historians and computer scientists in our study, this global dimension of research communication is associated with an increased need for clarity, understandability, and the use of some form of standard language in research writing. The participants in our study reinforce these needs when they refer to writing in English for international publication in their fields.

It is noteworthy that when our study participants talk about English and English-language requirements, the native versus non-native distinction is being reproduced and thus seems to matter for L2 writers even if they admit that a "basic expository text" is enough. We have also shown that the L2 (and some L1) writers in our study may have somewhat different perceptions of "good" writing in their field depending on whether they talk from the position of the author, the reviewer, or the proofreader. Contrary to the suggestions that L2 users of English are likely to accept non-standard forms, our study participants clearly attach high value to linguistic correctness in research writing. The fact that these L2 writers seem to be upholding correctness norms complicates the debate on "linguistic injustice" (Hyland, 2016), which is perceived as being caused primarily by L1-English-speaking journal editors and reviewers.

By analysing the interviews with researchers, we have been able to identify possible directions that writing for publication in English in the two selected fields may be taking in terms of language requirements. Our analysis of researcher perceptions about language use is relevant because researchers are the ones who also act as reviewers and editors in gatekeeping positions. An attitudinal change towards the use of standard language in academic writing would be necessary if some visible change in the use of English was expected. Further research on "text histories" (Lillis & Curry, 2010, 2015) in the two fields would be important to explore the issue further. The findings of this study can be used as a starting point for such an analysis. We also expect that, while our study is limited to two disciplines and three institutions in two countries, the findings may have bearing on, and be transferable to, other non-Anglophone academic contexts.

Our study sheds new light on the implications of the increasing L2 use of English in writing for publication. The findings suggest the importance of understanding disciplinary-specific requirements for English – and that the teaching of academic writing should draw attention to the different means through which writers can achieve clarity and understandability on a "global" scale.

Acknowledgements

This work was financially supported by Stockholm University's funds for collaboration with the University of Helsinki, and for Hynninen's part also by project funding received from the Kone Foundation [LaRA project, grant number 088787] and a personal grant received from the Ella & Georg Ehrnrooth Foundation. We would like to thank our study participants, who by sharing their time and experiences made this work possible. We also express our thanks to Lisa McGrath and Ezra Alexander for conducting some of the interviews in the Swedish context.

References

Becher, T. (1994). The significance of disciplinary differences. *Studies in Higher Education 19*(2), 151–161.

Bolton, K. & Kuteeva, M. (2012). English as an academic language at a Swedish university: Parallel language use and the "threat" of English. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 33*, 429-447.

Canagarajah, A. S. (2002). *A geopolitics of academic writing*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Canagarajah, A. S. (2006). The place of World Englishes in composition: Pluralization continued. *College Composition and Communication*, *57*, 586–619.

Canagarajah, S. (2013). *Translingual practice: Global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations*. London: Routledge.

Dewaele, J. M. (2017). Why the dichotomy 'L1 versus LX User' is better than 'Native versus non-native speaker'. *Applied Linguistics.* DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amw055

Drubin, D. G. & Kellogg, D. R. (2012). English as the universal language of science: Opportunities and challenges. *Molecular Biology of the Cell*, *23*(8), 1399.

Edley, N. (2001). Analysing masculinity: Interpretative repertoires, ideological dilemmas and subject positions. In M. Wetherell, S. Taylor & S. J. Yates (eds), *Discourse as data: A guide to analysis*, pp. 189–228. London: Sage.

EF Index 2016. The world's largest ranking of countries by English skills. 6th ed. Available at: http://www.ef.fi/epi. (Accessed 4 Feb 2017).

Elbow, P. (2002). Vernacular literacies in the writing classroom? Probing the culture of literacy. In C. Schroeder, H. Fox, and P. Bizzell (eds), *ALT DIS: Alternative discourses and the academy*, pp. 126–38. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Englander, K. (2006). Revision of scientific manuscripts by non-native-English-speaking scientists in response to journal editors' language criticism of the language. *Journal of Applied Linguistics, 3*, 129–161.

Flowerdew, J. (1999). Problems in writing for scholarly publication in English. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 8*(3), 243–264.

Flowerdew, J. (2007). The non-Anglophone scholar on the periphery of scholarly publication. *AILA Review, 20,* 14–27.

Flowerdew, J. & Wang, S. H. (2016). Author's editor revisions to manuscripts published in international journals. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 32*, 39–52.

Gentil, G. & Séror, J. (2014). Canada has two official languages—or does it? Case studies of Canadian scholars' language choices and practices in disseminating knowledge. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 13*(1), 17–30.

Gnutzmann, C. & Rabe, F. (2014). "Theoretical subtleties" or "text modules"? German researchers' language demands and attitudes across disciplinary cultures. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 13,* 31–40.

Hartse, H. J. & Kubota, R. (2014). Pluralizing English? Variation in high-stakes academic texts and challenges of copyediting. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 24*, 71–82.

Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Hyland, K. (2012). 'The past is the future with the lights on': reflections on AELFE's 20th birthday. *Ibérica, 24*, 29–42.

Hyland, K. (2016). Academic publishing and the myth of linguistic injustice. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 31*, 58–69.

Jenkins, J. (2014). *English as a lingua franca in the international university: The politics of academic English language policy*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Kuteeva, M. & Mauranen, A. (2014). Writing for international publication in multilingual contexts: An introduction to the special issue. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes 13*, 1–4.

Langum, V. & Sullivan, K. (2017). Writing academic English as a doctoral student in Sweden: Narrative perspectives. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *35*, 20–25.

Lillis, T. & Curry, M. J. (2010). *Academic writing in a global context. The politics and practices of publishing in English*. London: Routledge.

Lillis, T. & Curry, M. J. (2015). The politics of English, language and uptake. The case of international academic journal article reviews. *AILA Review, 28*, 127–150.

Lin, L. & Evans, S. (2012). Structural patterns in empirical research articles: A cross-disciplinary study. *English for Specific Purposes, 31 (3),* 150–160.

Lindström, J. K. & Sylvin, J. (2014). Local majority and minority languages and English in the university. The University of Helsinki in a Nordic comparison. In A. K. Hultgren, F. Gregersen & J. Thøgersen (eds) *English in Nordic universities: Ideologies and practices*. Studies in World Language Problems 5, pp. 147–164. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.Mauranen, A. (2012). *Exploring ELF. Academic English shaped by non-native speakers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mauranen, A. (2012). *Exploring ELF. Academic English shaped by non-native speakers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mauranen, A. (2016). English as a lingua franca changing culture-bound conceptions of good academic writing. Presentation given at the Sociolinguistics Symposium 21, University of Murcia, Spain, 15–18 June 2016.

McGrath, L. (2014). Parallel language use in academic and outreach publication: A case study of policy and practice. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes 13,* 5–15.

Olsson, A. & Sheridan, V. (2012). A case study of Swedish scholars' experiences with and perceptions of the use of English in academic publishing. *Written Communication*, *29*(1), 33–54.

Pérez-Llantada, C., Plo, R., & Ferguson, G. R. (2011). "You don't say what you know, only what you can": The perceptions and practices of senior Spanish academics regarding research dissemination in English. *English for Specific Purposes*, *30*, 18–30.

Rozycki, W. & Johnson, N.H. (2013). Non-canonical grammar in Best Paper award winners in engineering. *English for Specific Purposes*, *20*(2), 89-100.

Saarinen, T. (2012). Internationalization of Finnish higher education – Is language an issue? *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *216*, 157–173.

Saarinen, T. (2014). Language ideologies in Finnish higher education in the national and international context. A historical and contemporary outlook. In A. K. Hultgren, F. Gregersen & J. Thøgersen (eds) *English in Nordic universities: Ideologies and practices*. Studies in World Language Problems 5, pp. 127–146. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Salö, L. (2015). The linguistic sense of placement: Habitus and the entextualization of translingual practices in Swedish academia. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *19*(4), 511–534.

Salö, L. & Hanell, L. (2014). Performance of unprecedented genres. Interdiscursivity in the writing practices of a Swedish researcher. *Language & Communication*, *37*, 12–28.

SJR ranking 1996–2015. Scimago Journal & Country Rank. Available at: http://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php. (Accessed 4 Feb 2017).

Talmy, S. (2010). Qualitative interviews in applied linguistics: From research instrument to social practice. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *30*, 128–148.

Tribble, C. (2017). ELFA vs. Genre: A new paradigm war in EAP writing instruction? *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 25, 30–44.

Trowler, P. (2014). Depicting and researching disciplines: strong and moderate essentialist approaches. *Studies in Higher Education*, *39*(10), 1720–1731.

Wittgenstein, L. (1953). *Philosophical investigations*. London: Blackwell Publishing.

Wood, A. (2001). International scientific English: The language of research scientists around the world. In J. Flowerdew & M. Peacock (Eds.), *Research perspectives in English for academic purposes*, pp. 81–83. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Supplementary materials

A. Transcription conventions

Speaker codes:

I	Interviewer
R	Respondent

Transcription symbols:

te-	Unfinished utterances
(text)	Uncertain transcription
(xx)	Unintelligible speech
[text 1] [text 2]	Overlapping speech (approximate, shown to the nearest word, words not split by overlap tags)
<I: text>	Backchannelling within angle brackets when marked within another speaker's turn
,	Brief pause (1–2 sec)
.	Pause (2–3 sec)
<P: ##>	Pause, longer than 3 sec
@@	Laughter
@text@	Spoken laughter
C-A-P-S	Capital letters when words spelled out and for acronyms
<text>	Sighs, coughs etc. marked within angle brackets
((…))	Text omitted from transcription

B. Data extracts in Finnish

The original Finnish-language data extracts below are numbered as in the article. "H" refers to "haastattelija" (Engl. "interviewer") and "V" refers to "vastaaja" (Engl. "respondent").

(2)

V: ((...)) kyl sen huomaa että se on aivan erilainen silloin kun joku oikein, ammattilainen [tarkistaa] <H: [mhm]> ja harjaa sen [tekstin läpi @harjaa@] <H: mhm-hm @hm-hm-hm@> mutta tota nyt mä en oo vähään [aikaan] <H: [mhm]>, joutunut käyttämään <H: mhm> kielentarkastajaa

H: millä tavalla se näkyy et kielentarkastaja on käyny tekstin läpi,

V: öö tulee semmosia niinku sujuvia ilmaisuja idiomaattisia ilmaisuja mitä ei ehkä ite olisi tullut ajatelleeksi tai, öö tommoset artikkeli- öö virheet helpot virheet, mä yleensä kyllä niinku testaan niitä ja googlen kanssa katon myös et mikäs täh- mikäs artikkeli tähän nyt kuulukaan, [nehän on aina niinku suomalaisille aika hankalia nää] <H: [mhm-hm mhm-hm mhm-hm mhm mhm], to for [@@] <H: [mhm mhm] from, <H: joo> mutta tota, ehkä se liittyy semmoseen niinkun eleganssin kaipuuseen <H: mhm-hm> missä on aika vaikee suomalaisen e- pärjätä jolleki [shakespeare-tutkijalle] <H: [mhm-hm] mhm mhm> me just eilen e- muutama päivä sitte puhuttiin yhen kollegan [kanssa] <H: [mhm]> siitä että että öö toisaalta se on hyväkin ettei oo [semmosta] <H: [mhm]> liikaa niinkun hienoa retoriikkaa [jonka taakse sitte tota piiloutua] <H: [mhm mhm] mhm> et vaan pitää yrittää niinkun kommunikoida ne [ideansa melko selkeästi ja,] <H: [mhm mhm mhm-hm]> ehkä li- ilman krumeluureja <H: mhm-hm>, ku sitte taas semmonen niinkun, kyllähän se on ihanaa kuunneltavaa ja luettavaa [semmonen oikein elegantista soljuva teksti] <H: [mhm mhm mhm mhm]>, jossa on kaikki kohdallaan mut, se ei oo meidän @ensimmäinen kieli@ <H: mhm> niin tota täytyy yri- pyrkiä semmoseen ymmärrettävyyteen <H: joo> ((...))

(FH4)

(3)

H: miten sä (sanoisit) että minkälaiset englannin kielen vaatimukset historian alalla on,

V: no ne on sellaset et et ö- py- sä pystyt kirjottamaan selvää asiatekstiä <H: joo> niinku et et ei ei ei voi sanoo et ne olis mitenkään hirveen niinku (ei siin) no siin vaaditaan et sä pystyt kirjottaa sellasta sellasta tota siis virheetöntä tai sen ei tarvi olla alun perin virheetöntä [(ku sit) se oikoluetetaan jossain vaiheessa et ennen julkasuu] <H: [nii joo joo joo]> julkasuu tota mutta mut ei siin vaadita niinku sinänsä se on niinku ide(a) näis on yleensä sellanen perusasiateksti et siin ei niinku vaadita sinänsä niinku ihan äärettömän rikasta (tota) kielenkäyttöö et näkeehän sen että et kun natiivi e- e- kielen puhuja englannin puhuja ni kirjottaa tekstii niin se usein se niinku esimerkiks kieli voi olla rikkaampaa <H: okei> myös tämmösessä akateemisessa mielessä et se osaa käyttää hienompia ilmaisuja [ja muuta] <H: [joo]> mutta tota, mutta mut et kyl se riittää semmonen perusasiateksti <H: [joo]> [kuhan] se on niinku virheetöntä ja muuta ja mut siihenki voi todella käyttää [ulkopuolist] <H: [joo]> oikolukijaa <H: joo> joka on ihan ok <H: joo> ((...))

(FH9)

(4)

H: [okei joo], onks toi va- vahva vielä niinku historian puolella just tää et äidinkielisen tän tää natiivienglanti et onks se niinku se standardi mitä mihin pyritään,

V: siis, mä en tiedä et sehän ei varmaan voi olla natiivienglantia ((...)) toisinaan on pakko myöntää että kun saa käteensä jotain todella niinkun sofistikoitunutta brittienglantilaista tekstiä ni [sitä] <H: [joo]> se on jo pikkusen niinkun, et et et siis monet ei- ei-natiivipuhujat kirjottaa siis sujuvampaa @eikun semmosta niinkun@ saavu- ei-natiiville [niinkun avautuvampaa englantia] <H: [joo joo joo]> kuin kuin sitten et yhdysvaltaiset kirjottaa he- paljon helpompaa englantia [mun mun @kokemuksen@ mukaan] <H: [okei joo]> että britit jotkut britit kirjottaa edelleen vähän [semmosta] <H: [joo]> niinku koukeroisempaa <H: just> mut mä en pysty arvioimaan et onko onko meidän ihanne niinku toki meidän ihanne on siis se että meidän englannin kieli ei ei mu- muodostuis siihen semmoseks jotenkin etään- semmoseks tekijäks siin tekstissä et se veis huomion siltä mitä halutaan sanoa siihen mi- mi- millä [tavalla] <H: [joo]> mi- millä kielen muodoilla se on [sanottu] <H: [joo] joo> et kyl mä ite tavottelen niinku semmosta, et mähän en voi kirjottaa niinku joku joku brittiläisen sisäopiston kä- [sisäoppilaitoksen] <H: [mhm-hm]> käyny käyny niinku [ylähuoneen lordi @@] <H: [mhm-hm mhm-hm @@]> mä en ikinä tuu hallitsee sitä kieltä semmosilla niinku vivahteiden tasolla mut mä pyrin kirjottamaan sitä niin että se ei muodostuis mun ja, lukijan väliin semmoseks <H: [joo]> [niinku] tekijäks joka veis tarpeettoman paljon [huomioo siltä mitä mä haluun sanoo]

H: [joo joo] joo joo kyllä kuulostaa tosi k- m- niinkun @järkevältä@ niinkun joo kyllä joo

V: ja sen takii must on tärkeetä että siinä ei oo ihan kauheesti mitään, tökeröitä kielioppivirheitä ((...))

(FH3)