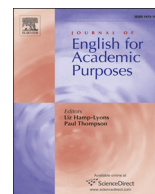




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# Journal of English for Academic Purposes

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## 'English is my default academic language': Voices from LSP scholars publishing in a multilingual journal<sup>☆</sup>



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### A B S T R A C T

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This paper investigates research publication practices in the field of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) and aims to raise awareness of the current use of English by LSP scholars (Anglophones and non-Anglophones) who need to gain visibility in international academia and recognition in their home educational contexts. This article draws on the JCR-indexed LSP journal *Ibérica* and the submissions from a group of Anglophone and non-Anglophone scholars who have contributed to the journal with English-written articles despite the fact that *Ibérica* is a multilingual journal, encourages submissions in four other languages, and assesses all manuscripts on an equal basis regardless of the submission language. In order to broach the “publish in English or perish in academia” dilemma through the eyes of this particular journal the replies from a five-item questionnaire delivered online are illustrated and discussed. Answers provided by 161 respondents support many of the statements already explored in the literature (particularly as regards threats and opportunities of English as a common language in academia) but also bring to the fore new views and concerns which are worth investigating in depth.

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### 1. Introduction

There is a growing body of literature that echoes the concerns of different groups of researchers with academic publishing, particularly the difficulties and challenges that non-Anglophone scholars face when writing for international publication and trying to place their work in the mainstream journals “which are invariably in English” (Flowerdew, 2008, p. 77). Such difficulties and challenges (for a detailed review, see Uzuner, 2008) may be related to: (i) the English language itself (insufficient command or inability to reach an acceptable academic style in that language); or (ii) non-linguistic impediments (such as lack of resources, obstacles for accessing information, etc.) that limit the participation of these researchers in global scholarship.

Focussing on the European context and regarding language-related difficulties and challenges, Curry and Lillis (2004) examined the publishing experiences of fifty scholars in the fields of education and psychology; Duszak and Lewkowicz (2008) looked at the experiences of Polish academics from different scientific backgrounds and their attitudes towards publishing research in English; Bennett (2010) assessed Portuguese researchers' perceptions of and attitudes towards the question of linguistic imperialism in academic writing; and, more recently, Ingvarsdóttir and Arnbjörnsdóttir (2013) have described the views of Icelandic academics from rather different disciplines about the increased pressure to academic

<sup>☆</sup> Preliminary results obtained from a smaller sample ( $n = 95$ ) were presented as a part of the plenary address given at the English as a Scientific and Research Language Conference (University of Zaragoza, Spain, 1–2 December 2012).

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publishing in English. Within the Spanish context, Ferguson, Perez-Llantada, and Plo (2011), Moreno, Rey-Rocha, Burgess, López-Navarro, and Sachdev (2012) and Pérez-Llantada (2012) have surveyed the attitudes and perceived difficulties of Spanish academics from the “hard” and “soft” sciences to English as an international language of academic publication. In all cases there is a common widespread sense “that non-Anglophone scholars are linguistically disadvantaged relative to native-speaking academics when it comes to publication in English” (Ferguson et al., 2011, p. 45).

As regards non-linguistic impediments, Canagarajah (1996) identified several “non-discursive requirements” that interfere in publication and classified them into three distinctive groups: material, financial, and social. This scholar, and others like Ferguson (2007), Salager-Meyer (2008, 2009), Ammon (2001, 2012) or Carli and Ammon (2007), have been very critical towards the inequalities (that often lead to discrimination and isolation) of researchers working in the “centre” versus those working in the “periphery” or “off-network”.

This paper elaborates on the supremacy of English in the publication and global dissemination of research within the field of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) and aims to raise awareness of the use of English by LSP scholars who need to gain visibility in international academia and recognition in their home educational contexts. More particularly, it pays a closer look to the language behaviours and attitudes of contributors to the LSP journal *Ibérica* with the principal aim of gaining an understanding of the reasons underlying the high inflow of submissions in English when the journal has a multilingual policy and accepts contributions in other four European languages.

Here, the usual opposition native English/non-native English has been avoided as much as possible so as to present LSP scholars as a distinctive academic group with common purposes, similar challenges and shared views and concerns. Also, the acronym ERPP (English for Research Publication Purposes), first introduced by Cargill and Burgess (2008), has been used to refer to “a branch of EAP addressing the concerns of professional researchers and post-graduate students who need to publish in peer-reviewed international journals” (Cargill & Burgess, 2008, p. 75) and as an alternative term to phrases recurrently appearing in the existing literature like “English for academic publishing”, “English for research writing” or “English for scientific research”.

In the first section of this paper I discuss the hegemony of English for scientific research and academic publishing among European scholars against the background of a multilingual Europe, and pay particular attention to ERIH, a reference index which is exclusive to the Humanities. In the second section I narrow down the focus on the context of the LSP journal *Ibérica* (ISSN 1139-7241), published in Spain and having Europeans as its most immediate audience – both readers and article writers. Last, from the replies to a five-item questionnaire I discuss the views expressed by 161 contributors to the journal towards a submission in English over other national languages, threats and opportunities posed by ERPP, attitudes towards multilingualism in academic publishing and, finally, the perceived value of research published in English.

## 2. The hegemony of English for scholarly publishing in multilingual Europe

This paper sets its context of study in Europe primarily, although not exclusively. As will be detailed in the following section, the target journal of this study was initially launched by a group of European scholars, it is hosted by a European Association and the surveyed contributors attest a higher presence of European languages – 148 respondents (92%) have a European language as a mother tongue versus 13 respondents (8%) with mother tongues spoken outside Europe.

There are at present 23 official languages in Europe; however, there exists concern of English becoming dominant over other languages, particularly for international communication and scholarship, and a widespread belief that “a self-reinforcing upward spiral” is operating in favour of English as the first foreign language, both in Europe and worldwide (Council of Europe, 1997, p. 52). With this backdrop, the Council of Europe has endeavoured to protect linguistic diversity across Europe and set multilingualism as a key policy goal; however, to date, no specific supranational initiatives have been launched in order to regulate the overwhelming presence of English in academia and for research purposes at a European level.

In his analysis of the key aspects of the use of English in Europe, Truchot (2002) claimed that this language is clearly predominant in scientific activity. As he portrays, English is tending to become the sole language used “for discussions in symposia, congresses and similar events” (p. 10). Moreover, its use spreads over work exchanges in laboratories with foreign researchers as well as over the organisation and dissemination of research through publications, networks programmes and institutions to the extent that scientific programmes “are managed entirely in English, from invitations to tender to completion” (p. 11). Indeed, it is in the context of an apparent resistance to the dominance of English across European scholarship, its *de facto* predominance, and the preservation and promotion of linguistic diversity through a common EU multilingual policy that the focus of the debate is located.

Outside the scope of the EU policy some steps have been taken in the light of scientific publishing to reduce the encroachment of English, to take into consideration the linguistic diversity of published research and to diminish the impact of US databases as the baseline for the collection and circulation of quality research. For the purposes of this article I shall briefly broach the issue of scientific publishing within the Humanities with the development of the European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH).

ERIH is a reference index created by European researchers under the auspices of the European Science Foundation (ESF). ESF was established in Strasbourg in 1974 as an independent, non-governmental organisation that creates a common platform for cooperation in Europe and across different domains of science. One of the objectives of ERIH is to highlight “the vast range of world-class research published by humanities researchers in the European languages” (ESF, 2011). In order to

**Table 1**  
English-only journals in ERIH revised lists 2011, area of Linguistics.

| ERIH category | No. of records | No. of English-only journals | % of English-only journals |
|---------------|----------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| INT1          | 81             | 76                           | 93.8                       |
| INT2          | 193            | 130                          | 67.3                       |
| NAT           | 251            | 20                           | 8.0                        |
| Total         | 525            | 226                          | 43.0                       |

Figures are approximate and have been manually extracted from the ERIH revised lists (ESF, 2011). The language of the journal title has been the main criterion for classification, although the websites of particular journals have been accessed in case of confusing or double titles.

counterbalance the problem of the low visibility of European Humanities research “in the context of a world dominated by publication in English” (ESF, 2011), the ERIH initial lists were released in 2008 and updated in 2011 as ERIH revised lists. ERIH lists cover journals published in most European languages to provide a satisfactory coverage of European Humanities research as well as an impact measurement that overcomes “the inadequacy of existing bibliographic/bibliometric indices, which [are] all USA-based with a stress on the experimental and exact sciences and their methodologies and with a marked bias towards English-language publication” (ESF, 2011). Journals are rated into two main categories: NATIONAL and INTERNATIONAL journals, the latter further classified into two sub-categories INT1 and INT2. Since ERIH lists have been agreed upon by the representatives of ESF member organisations (some of which are European Ministers with government responsibilities on education or research policies), this reference index has become mandatory among many national agencies throughout Europe for researcher assessment procedures.

According to ESF (2011), 27% of journals covered by ERIH lists are multilingual and 41% non-English, and this arouses great expectations of academic equality among European researchers who wish to disseminate their research in their national language: first, all journals contained in the lists (be they multilingual, English-only and non-English journals) apply best scholarly practice and fulfil threshold academic standards that consistently ensure high-quality scientific content; second, European research published in ERIH outlets is identified as qualitative and competitive in the global academic scene; and third, the language of publication does not marginalise a particular journal as a transmitter of scientific research. All this holds true in theory; however, a closer look at, for instance, the particular field of Linguistics in the ERIH revised lists 2011 (see Table 1) reveals that the journals rated as INT1 (i.e., with the highest scholarly significance) are English-only, mainly US-based, journals (76 out of 81 records), that English-only journals from inside and outside Europe prevail as well for INT2 (130 out of 193 records) and that most multilingual and national language journals published of European origin are classified as NATIONAL (here, only 20 out of 251 records correspond to English-only journals).<sup>1</sup> Figures such as these strengthen the statements expressed by many scholars that, despite multilingual policies, in scientific research “English is perceived as a *sine qua non* for accessing information and communicating with fellow academics internationally” (Seidlhofer, 2010, p. 358).

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Context of the study

This study examines the publishing practices of contributors to *Ibérica*, the journal of AELFE, the European Association of Languages for Specific Purposes, founded in 1992 by a group of Spanish and Portuguese scholars (URL: <http://www.aelfe.org/?s=presentacio>). The first yearly volume was published in 1999 and from 2003 it is published twice a year – 25 volumes to date (Spring 2013). *Ibérica* publishes research articles, research notes, interviews and reviews and is aimed at teachers, scholars and researchers interested in modern languages as applied to academic and professional purposes (LSP).

Even though the journal was initially launched to fill a domestic research niche, its progressive indexing in reputed lists has contributed to its gradual international recognition among LSP researchers. In 2008 the journal was accepted for coverage in *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*, *Social Sciences Citation Index*, *Social Scisearch* and *Journal Citation Reports/Social Sciences Edition* (all of them from ISI Web of Knowledge). In 2009 it joined the *SCImago Journal and Country Rank* (SJR) from SCOPUS. In 2011 the journal was distinguished as “excellent scientific journal” after a quality audit conducted by the FECYT, a scientific body belonging to the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. Such seal of excellence has recently (June 2013) been renewed for a three-year period.

AELFE is multilingual by nature, and in line with this, *Ibérica* encourages submissions in five languages (English, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish) and assesses all manuscripts on an equal basis regardless of submission language. However, a closer look at the origin of proposed manuscripts (whether eventually published or not) shows that they come from a majority of non-Anglophone speakers who submit their papers in English. As shown in Table 2 for the period 1999–2012 and the publication of 24 volumes, *Ibérica* has managed a total number of 272 proposed manuscripts. Of these, 69.1% of submissions have been in English, 27.2% in Spanish, 2.6% in French, 0.7% in German and 0.4% in Portuguese. Therefore, it may be concluded that English has been the most preferred option for research publication in this journal.

<sup>1</sup> By way of example, this *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* is rated as INT2 and *Ibérica* as NATIONAL.

**Table 2**  
Submission languages to the journal *Ibérica* for the period 1999–2012.

| Language   | No. of submissions | Percentage of submissions |
|------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| English    | 188                | 69.1                      |
| French     | 7                  | 2.6                       |
| German     | 2                  | 0.7                       |
| Portuguese | 1                  | 0.4                       |
| Spanish    | 74                 | 27.2                      |
| Total      | 272                | 100.0                     |

**Table 3**  
Number of respondents per native language.

| Native language | No. of respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Spanish         | 80                 | 49.7                      |
| English         | 32                 | 19.9                      |
| Others:         | 49                 | 30.4                      |
| Chinese         | 5                  | 3.1                       |
| Catalan         | 4                  | 2.5                       |
| Danish          | 4                  | 2.5                       |
| French          | 3                  | 1.9                       |
| Polish          | 3                  | 1.9                       |
| Serbian         | 3                  | 1.9                       |
| Swedish         | 3                  | 1.9                       |
| Basque          | 2                  | 1.2                       |
| German          | 2                  | 1.2                       |
| Italian         | 2                  | 1.2                       |
| Lithuanian      | 2                  | 1.2                       |
| Persian         | 2                  | 1.2                       |
| Turkish         | 2                  | 1.2                       |
| Afrikaans       | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Bulgarian       | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Croatian        | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Ewe             | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Finnish         | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Hindi           | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Hungarian       | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Portuguese      | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Punjabi         | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Romanian        | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Russian         | 1                  | 0.6                       |
| Slovene         | 1                  | 0.6                       |

*Total no. of authors contacted = 234*  
*Total no. of replies returned = 161 (68.8% of authors addressed)*

### 3.2. Questionnaire and participants

A questionnaire was distributed via email among all those scholars who had submitted a paper in English to the journal between the years 1996 and the first term of 2013 – be they accepted and eventually published, or rejected.<sup>2</sup> The purpose was to find out the views of these LSP scholars on the use of English as a scientific language for publication purposes, particularly for “their” publication purposes when submitting their papers to this journal. A total of 234 authors were addressed and 161 completed questionnaires returned. This amounts to 68.8% of replied questionnaires.

The questionnaire contained five items and aimed at:

- (1) providing a profile of the contributor to the journal in terms of native language and country of origin;
- (2) obtaining first-hand information about the underlying reasons for submissions in English, given that many contributors could have opted for other languages, which might even be their mother tongues or other languages they are also proficient in;
- (3) looking into LSP scholars’ attitudes and perceptions towards the role and position of English for scientific communication and research publication purposes; and,
- (4) gaining awareness of the research publication practices and habits of LSP scholars for future direction in the journal policy.

<sup>2</sup> Informed consent was obtained from study participants and the final purpose of the replies was explicitly stated when introducing the questionnaire.

The research questions in the questionnaire were aimed at eliciting information on: (i) the language background of contributors (Q1); (ii) the reasons why they have submitted their proposed paper in English (Q2); (iii) the contributors' view on the current position and use of ERPP in comparison with other languages (Q3); (iv) the opportunity of the journal becoming an English-only journal (Q4); and (v) the perceived value of English for research writing in their home countries (Q5).

Answers to Q1 (“Are you an English native speaker? If not, what is your native language? Are you proficient in any other foreign language different from English? Which?”) showed that the majority of respondents were non-Anglophone scholars from up to 26 different native languages (129 authors). Among these, Spanish scholars made up the largest group by far (80 authors) followed by Anglophone scholars (32 authors). Table 3 shows the number and percentage distribution of respondents per native language. Although replies have been returned from countries in the five continents, from the native languages provided it may be inferred that most respondents come from European countries and that the journal mainly serves a European-based audience. Regardless of the variety of native languages, a large percentage of contributors is proficient in foreign languages other than English (mainly French, German or Spanish), which are also acceptable for publication in the journal.

#### 4. Findings and discussion

This section presents the results from the survey by placing the focus on the reasons for a submission in English in preference to other languages, respondents' interpretation of the predominance of ERPP in terms of threats and opportunities, respondents' attitudes towards multilingualism in academic publishing, and their perceived value of ERPP.

##### 4.1. The reasons for a submission in English in preference to other languages

In Q2 respondents were asked: “*Ibérica* is a multilingual journal but you submitted your manuscript in English. Did you at any stage entertain the idea of submitting your ms in a language different from English? If yes, which language? Why did you eventually give up that idea? If not, why did you submit in English as your first choice?”

Replies show that only eight respondents at some stage of the publication process entertained the idea of submitting their papers in a language different from English, but eventually changed their mind. The reasons maintained are in line with the replies provided by the group of scholars who submitted their work in English as their first choice ( $n = 146$ ). As shown in Fig. 1, seven reasons stand out to signify that rather than a simple choice of language, it is “the result of a complex and multifaceted process of decision making, shaped by social actions, practices, ideologies and the resources available to those who wish to publish” (Duszak & Lewkowicz, 2008, p. 108). All these reasons or complexities, some of them discussed by Uzuner (2008) in his review paper on non-Anglophone scholars, are examined and illustrated below with authors' comments.

The main reason for submitting a paper in English to this journal (26.1%) is that authors want to have a wider readership, they want their research to be circulated and reach the greatest number of researchers around the globe, and they care about how far their research can reach in terms of *quality*. Indirectly, there is a felt need for wider recognition and acceptance by peer academics. Authors adopt a “reader-oriented stance” because “the choice of English reflects a desire on the part of authors to reach out to a wider community” (Morley & Kerans, 2012, p. 133), they care about the potential quality of their research and how much and to what extent it can contribute to knowledge advancement both home and abroad. Under this reason lies a clear interest on the authors' part to disseminate their research *effectively*, they are not satisfied with simply being read, they wish to be cited extensively and by foreign authors. It seems, as Mauranen has put it in an interview to

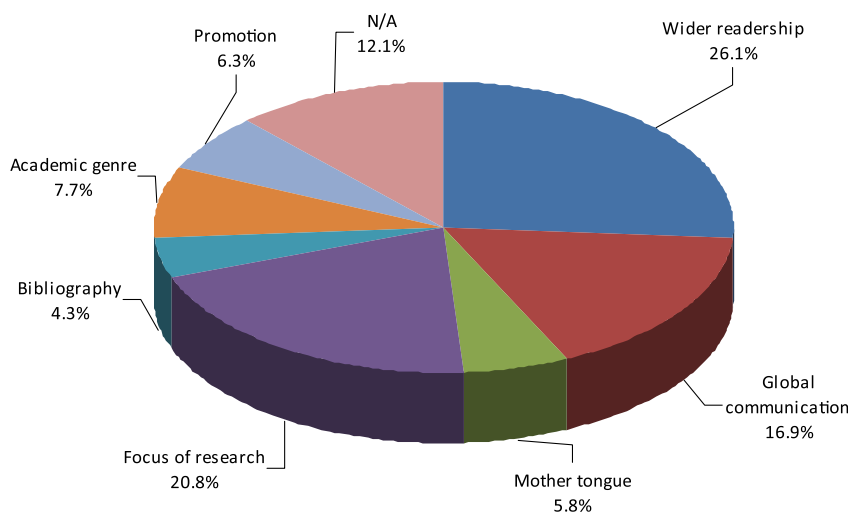


Fig. 1. Reasons for submitting a paper in English.

Kuteeva (2012, p. 291), that if scholars feel that they have something important to say, “if they do it in English, it will make a louder noise in the world”.

We are holders of the belief that a paper in English will attract a wider readership and a greater number of citations [R155]<sup>3</sup>

Another reason pointed out by 20.8% of respondents is that the English language itself is the focus of the research and the area of study. It seems reasonable that if a particular language or issues related to a particular language prompt a piece of research, this piece be written in that language. Some scholars have found similar results within the broader field of the Humanities and Social Sciences because it is precisely this domain that is “more closely tied to language, so there is a greater need to deal with such issues in the language with which they are identified” (Flowerdew, 2013, p. 9).

The research reported in the paper was related to a corpus of Biology compiled in English [R58]

A third important reason provided by 16.9% of respondents is the understanding of English as a common language, a *lingua franca*, the language that is most understood, the language of international communication, the language of science and technology. Unlike the first reason (to get a wider readership), this time authors care about how far their research can reach in terms of *quantity*, not quality. Comments are more neutral if compared with the first reason whereby authors did not want to be understood by a lot of people; they wanted their research to be understood by the greatest number of researchers.

Publishing in Danish would mean that the ms was only practically available to Scandinavians and the occasional Scandinvist [R12]

Next, the research article in English as an academic genre of its own precludes the possibility of writing in another language; for 7.7% of respondents, writing research articles in English is a skill with no parallel in their native language. Authors explain that they are more familiar with the structure and organisation of a research paper in English than in their own native language and so they feel more confident during the whole publication process in English. Researchers have developed greater awareness of the research article as a piece of structured writing or genre through the English language rather than through their native language, thus supporting the “‘go native’ trend” (Pérez-Llantada, 2012, p. 43) or the need to be more in keeping with the “mainstream conventional discourse styles” (Hamel, 2007, p. 68).

I can write academic texts in English but not in any of my other languages. For example, the language I speak with my parents is Turkish, but I could never write an article in Turkish or discuss my research topic in Turkish without using English terms [R114]

The following reason, English as a bonus for academic promotion and tenured positions (6.3%), is directly related to the previously discussed effective dissemination of research. As authors argue in their comments, they do not write in English because this will directly grant them promotion in their home educational institutions; they do it because accreditation systems reward publications in international reputed journals which are mainly in English. This implies, as will be discussed in some of the following sections, that English is a contributory factor for hiring and promotion decisions which prioritise publications in English.

The Spanish national research evaluation system (ANECA) rewards with more credits publications in English [R39]

Reason number six is surprising to the extent that it has been provided by native English speakers only (in particular, 5.8% of total respondents and 37.5% of Anglophone respondents). As argued, they write their papers in English simply because it is their mother tongue, and no other additional reason. It is also surprising that, although native speakers of English, many of them live and work in a non-Anglophone country and have stated in Q1 to be proficient in some other language for publication in the journal. These comments might show that Anglophones are aware of their advantageous position in ERPP, which provides them with academic confidence.

I never for one moment contemplated writing in any other language but English. In the first place because English is my native tongue and secondly because English is the language of science whether we like it or not [R138]

Last, because the sources and bibliography that authors handle for their papers are written in English, it seems more logical, even “easier”, for some respondents (4.3%) to write their paper in English. Authors are more familiar with the English terminology and phraseology that recurrently appear in publications, and therefore feel confident enough with that language.

Most of the research articles I am working with are written in English [R148]

#### 4.2. The opportunities offered by ERPP

Q3 asked: “How do you feel about the current position and use of ERPP? As a threat to other languages or as an opportunity in view of global benefit? Please, comment”.

<sup>3</sup> Codes in brackets are an internal reference that identifies the respondent.



Replies attest the ambivalent nature of scholars' attitudes to English as the dominant international language of science (Ferguson, 2007; Ferguson et al., 2011; Flowerdew, 2013; Tardy, 2004). For a majority of respondents ( $n = 73$ ; 45.3%) ERPP is an opportunity, for a minority ( $n = 17$ ; 10.6%) it is only a threat, and for a considerable number ( $n = 53$ ; 32.9%) it is both a threat and an opportunity – the remaining 11.2% ( $n = 18$ ) did not provide clear answers. As one respondent explained, “the ‘threat-opportunity’ dichotomy is too simplistic to account for a wide variation in the use of English in the non-English-speaking countries and across disciplines” [R68]; therefore, what follows aims at furthering the discussion on the ambivalence of the issue and not at simply categorising replies into pros and cons of ERPP.

As shown in Fig. 2, ERPP is, above all (34.1%), a useful and practical means of communication, a sort of Esperanto, a lingua franca for global communication, a meeting point for a global community. Comments gathered confirm that, even in academia, “[r]eference to English as a *lingua franca* generally seems to imply that the language is a neutral instrument for ‘international’ communication between speakers who do not share a mother tongue” (Phillipson, 2008, p. 250).

I understand communication is more efficient worldwide if we use one common language [R4]

For an equal percentage of respondents (27.5%), ERPP is an opportunity for both international recognition and cooperation. The first justification is directly related to the main reason for a submission in English over other languages accepted in the journal. ERPP is the vehicle for endorsing one's research with more international visibility, it helps to better disseminate one's research, it means greater reach, wider readership and, consequently, promotion and a more robust professional position.

It ensures much greater visibility to research publications internationally, which is a ‘must’ in today's competitive academic world [R9]

Likewise, ERPP leads to global benefit because researchers can share results, practices, experiences at an international level, increase collaboration among peers and build transnational networks. Here, ERPP acquires an *inclusive* rather than exclusive perspective; it allows for international cooperation and the free exchange of knowledge, it marks a competitive edge in academia, common projects can be designed and implemented, and results can be analysed and transferred from a common and global perspective. Multilingual network participation has been identified in the literature as a key resource for publishing (Curry & Lillis, 2010), and for Kennedy (2012, p. 53) English as global language for project development is precisely one of the “drivers” of English for Specific Purposes.

You target a much wider audience with common research interests and are able to collaborate with other academics that do research and teaching in ERPP. By this means you can compare your local context and other local contexts and observe both local and general (global) trends [R25]

Four more opportunities have been identified in Fig. 2, although showing lower percentages. ERPP is a practical issue to 4.3% of respondents and for a variety of reasons: it is practical for certain speakers because they just have to learn one foreign language, it is practical for editors and it is practical because it could be said to return knowledge to its source – this last issue is related to one of the reasons for submitting a paper in English (i.e., the use of English references for writing the piece of research).

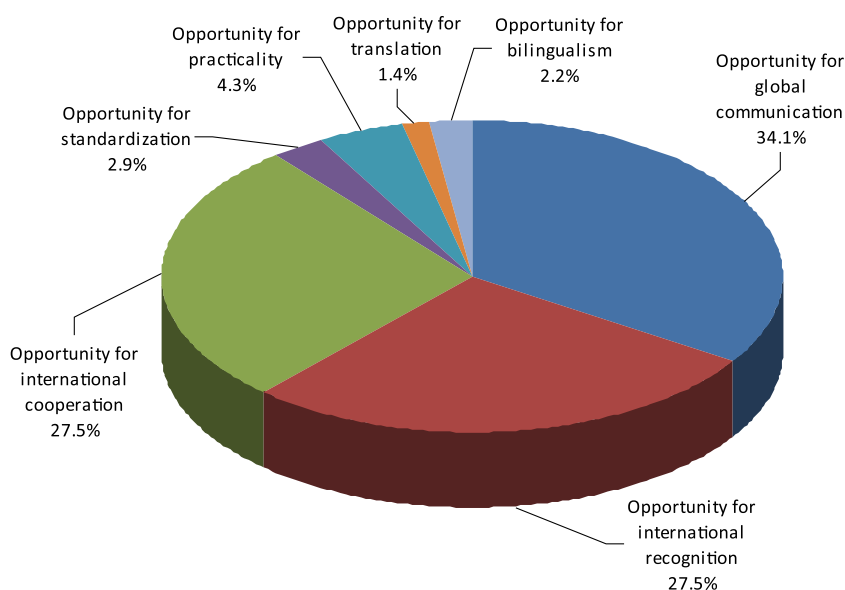


Fig. 2. Opportunities offered by ERPP.

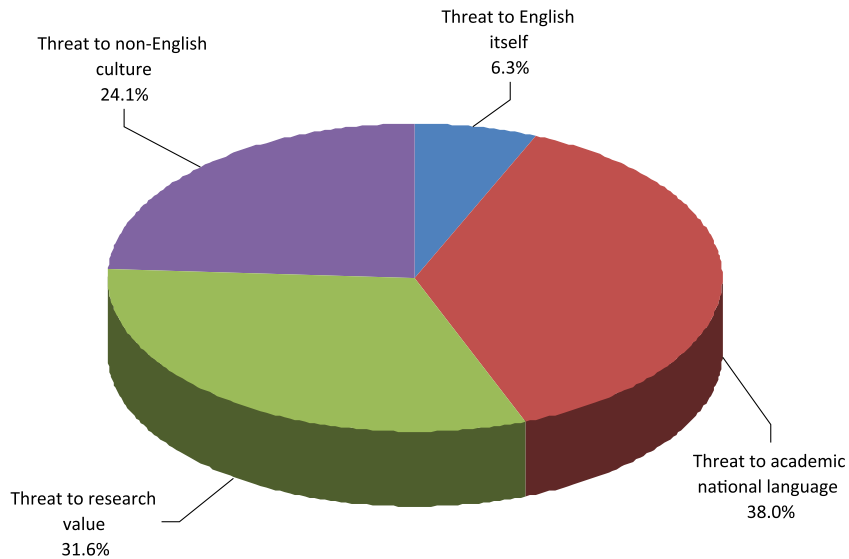


Fig. 3. Threats posed by ERPP.

Scandinavians in general perceive it as a benefit that they have to learn one international language rather than three or four [R19]

It overcomes the difficulties of getting reviewers and managing workflow for a journal which publishes in “all” languages [R60]

For a group of respondents (2.9%) ERPP helps to standardise academic practices and, hopefully, is expected to provide academic production with more transparency; that is, the rules of the game as far as assessment/review processes, etc., are clear and common to the whole of academia, and the players (writing scholars) can play at the same level in this regard. This standardisation opportunity is a good point to take into consideration, more particularly when it is the case that standard practices and procedures are a relevant measure for quality; however, for this to be a realistic option, the standardised benchmarking practices accepted worldwide should not just be those set out by Anglophone gatekeepers and English-only journals because they would provide “another mechanism for an English stranglehold on scientific scholarship” (Tardy, 2004, p. 250).

The more is published in one language and in one uniform set of journals, the more transparent is the academic production [R12]

For some respondents (2.2%) a positive side of ERPP lies in the fact that it fosters bilingualism among non-Anglophones, with the cognitive benefits that this entails<sup>4</sup>; or put it the other way round, if the role of English in today’s society were not such, people would not make an effort to learn it as a foreign language. In this sense, Anglophone scholars, if monolingual, are deprived of the cognitive benefits enjoyed by non-Anglophone scholars, required to master English as an additional language. A similar resulting picture of monolingual Anglophones and bi- or multilingual non-Anglophone scholars has already been drawn by Ammon (2006) or Hamel (2007).

The use of English as a global language for communicating increases bilingualism and strengthens our identity as citizens of the world [R54]

And last, ERPP favours translation practices into and from English, for 1.4% of respondents argue that translators, as professionals, can take advantage of the situation.

Many researchers would need translators [R102]

#### 4.3. The threats posed by ERPP

The fact that English is the native language of a minority group of scholars and an additional language of a majority group “brings with it particular advantages for the former group and disadvantages for the latter” (Flowerdew, 2013, p. 3). But such

<sup>4</sup> Studies like Adesope, Lavin, Thompson, and Ungerleider (2010) have found that bilingualism may be reliably associated with cognitive outcomes such as increased working memory and metalinguistic awareness, among others.



disadvantages cannot be simply reduced to less likelihood of succeeding in academia – even if it is accepted that English-medium publishing is one of the keys for scholarly success. Disadvantages may, in certain cases, cause harm or danger, thus turning into threats.

Replies to Q3 reveal four main threats in the use of ERPP (see Fig. 3). Three of them recurrently appear in related literature but, on top of these, one has been strongly pointed out by some respondents, most of them Anglophone scholars: the threat to the English language itself (6.3%). Comments yield respondents' concern with the misuse of their native language due to non-proficiency of the language user and it is at this point that respondents give preference to “standard English” over “lingua franca English”, “international English”, “Euro-English” or “English as an additional language” varieties.

The other problem I see is the possible linguistic impoverishment of some academic works, as non native speakers may write English but without the sophistication of native speakers [R125]

The other three threats identified have been investigated and debated in the literature. In the first place (38.0%), the spread of English may threaten academic national languages, especially small languages such as Slovene or Danish, whose terminology and scientific language is undermined and will not develop together with the advancement of science. It is what literature depicts as “incipient global diglossia” (Ferguson, 2007, p. 7) because English is used in academic circles and for disseminating written research, and national languages for communication outside academia. It stands out, however, that not only respondents from small languages express this fear, but also Spaniards or French whose languages are said to enjoy a relevant presence worldwide both as a native or foreign language.

The development of terminology and the language of science as well as research papers as a genre can fully be developed in other languages only if papers are published also in languages different from English [R6]

In most cases, replies do not augur well for the use of national languages in academic publishing and in many ways resemble the pictures portrayed by Swales' (1997) “*Tyrannosaurus rex*”, Phillipson's (2008) “lingua frankensteinia”/“linguicide”, or Flowerdew's (2008) “stigmatization”. Respondents discuss this particular issue in catastrophic terms so that expressions like “push out”, “crowd out”, “isolate”, “marginalize”, “be found out”, “barrier”, “unfair disadvantage”, “tyranny”, “oppression”, “attrition”, “disappearance”, “segregation”, “devastation”, “slow suffocation” or “national language killer” are found in the comments provided.

In the second place (31.6%), a threat to the proper value of research has been identified. Respondents argue that English published research is *per se* overrated and non-English published research is often less valued simply because of the submission language and regardless of its potential quality. Also, as replies to Q2 have attested, contributors have put forward their perceived arguments that lead them to conclude that publishing in English is an asset and helps authors win through. Nonetheless, as some studies have shown, this may not be necessarily true since there are many other non-linguistic factors that play a role in the final acceptance or rejection of a paper (Curry & Lillis, 2004; Pérez-Llantada, 2012; Salager-Meyer, 2008; Uzuner, 2008).

English is now often seen as the only relevant “international” language, to the extent that English is synonymous with “international” in many contexts, and “publishing internationally” is therefore also often understood as publishing in English. And since “international” is already used to signify quality, this means that English = quality. Apart from the obvious misrepresentation of quality in English-medium versus non-English-medium journals (etc.) that can result from this simple (and simplistic) equation, this may lead to researchers not communicating their research in the language or languages which they know best (which probably does not benefit the quality of their publications) [R27]

Interestingly enough, at this point a respondent raises the issue of “credibility” as an inherent feature of English published research: “Credibility may be another thing. I have certainly heard it said among scholars that if you publish in a language other than English, there is something strange about the study! Whether this is true or not, I am not sure” [R147].

Last, for 24.1% of respondents there exists a threat to other languages and cultures, a feeling of “imperialism of knowledge” (as some respondents pointed out), of “domain loss” (Ferguson, 2007; Phillipson, 2008) in the sense of loss of culture, loss of identity, loss of ideology, loss of meaning, loss of knowledge transfer – all these leading to the silencing of national cultures and the curbing of their development; on the contrary, the ideology, cultures or identity of Anglophone countries shape the formation of academic discourse leading to what has been defined as “discourses of knowledge” (Bennett, *in press*) so that, again, good research can only be that published in English.

Despite the increasing presence of researchers whose first language is not English, the dominance of English may be covertly bringing with it a dominance of interest, focus, ideology, etc., that is more in keeping with the Anglo-Saxon world [R66]

#### 4.4. Attitudes towards multilingualism in academic publishing

As stated above, *Ibérica* welcomes submissions in five languages: English, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish; however, the highest percentage of proposals (69.1%) is in English (see again Table 2). Q4 (“Should *Ibérica* remain as it is – i.e., a multilingual journal – or become an English-only journal? Please, comment”) tapped this group of LSP scholars for their views on the potential suitability of multilingual outlets for academic publishing: 11.8% of respondents hold the view that *Ibérica*

should become an English-only journal; 75.2% wish the journal to continue its multilingual policy and the remaining 13.0% are unable to provide a clear answer. The general perception for the first group is that articles will reach a wider readership and, therefore, the impact factor of the journal and the citation index of their works will be boosted if the journal is only and fully published in English. Also, for those bilingual respondents with a native language different from that accepted in the journal plus English, a paper that is not published in English means “lost research” or, as Gibbs (1995) labelled it, “lost science”.

There are papers in *Ibérica* I cannot read because they are published in a language I’m not proficient in. Therefore, I think it should become an English-only journal [R140]

Comments stating that *Ibérica* should not change its submission policy and remain as it is contain expressions like “democracy”, “freedom (of choice of language)”, “rights”, “citizenship”, “diversity”, or “identity”, which in many ways resemble the European plurilingual discourse and are in line with some of the threats already identified. As Fig. 4 shows, there are three main reasons for remaining multilingual.

First, the need to diminish the threat impact upon native languages and, hence, preserve national academic languages (66.7%). A multilingual journal, so respondents state, contributes to providing a publishing space for non-English researching scholars and nurturing research in other languages. It provides researchers with the opportunity of looking and comparing other academic styles different from English and preserving their own. Respondents argue that because *Ibérica*, “despite” being multilingual, is already indexed by the most prestigious international lists and has reached a recognised scholarly position, it can afford to be open to submissions in some languages different from English.

To encourage researchers from different language backgrounds (...) encourage multilingual research groups, especially in a European context (...) In order to encourage diversity in research, multilingual journals and journals in a language/s other than English should be supported and valued [R112]

Second, the need to preserve *Ibérica*’s most outstanding feature (29.4%) so that multilingualism is kept not only because it is an inherent feature of the journal but also because it mirrors, at least to some extent, the linguistic diversity of its most immediate European context.

Multilingual, please. I think it’s a heritage that should be preserved (...) Multilingualism within AELFE and *Ibérica* should be preserved and encouraged. There are too many English-only academic forums already. I’m proud of the multilingual character of *Ibérica*/AELFE [R89]

Last, for 3.9% of respondents the multilingualism of the journal is expected to preserve the good use of the English language as it will not become deformed by generally accepted uses of inappropriate forms. In this sense, some contributors have shown concern.

I prefer to read well-written articles in other languages than clumsy translations (I’m not saying that the English in *Ibérica* is particularly clumsy, please don’t be offended – It’s a general comment on research publications) [R5]

Multilingual journals have been identified in the literature as a deterrent to the spread of ERPP for various reasons: the predominance of multilingual publication outlets would include contributions from various non-Anglophone quarters and, consequently, deter skewed scientific development (Ammon, 2012); multilingual journals preserve the presence and vitality of native languages at the same time they avoid irreversible language attrition and contribute to maintaining a plurilingual perspective in the field of science (Hamel, 2007); and, thanks to multilingual journals researchers in periphery countries become fully integrated members of the worldwide network of science and their national language research does not become invisible and get lost (Salager-Meyer, 2008, 2009).

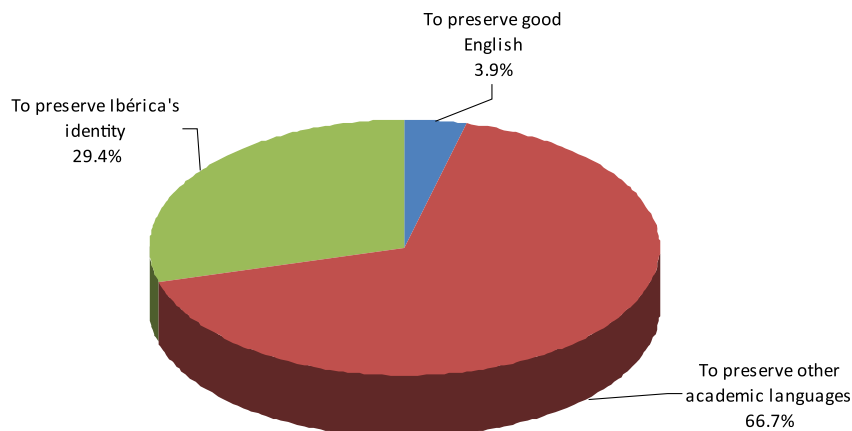


Fig. 4. Reasons for remaining multilingual.

#### 4.5. Perceived value of ERPP

The last question was designed to reinforce Q3 by setting the institutional framework against the respondents' views: "In your country, how is research published in English valued in comparison with that published in your home language? Have any laws been enacted in your country so as to protect your national language against the spread of English or, on the contrary, to foster the use of ERPP? Please, comment".

As shown in Fig. 5, replies to Q5 confer higher prestige to publications in English (53.8%). Institutional reward systems and national agencies responsible for conferring promotion and tenure at universities as well as providing funding, hiring researchers and granting continued employment credit work in English over that published in other languages (even the home language of the particular institution). In view of this, authors resort to English so as not to feel excluded from the field of university research, the English language itself gains an additional value over other languages which, in consequence, become devalued simply because they are unable to act as transmitters of scientific research (Truchot, 2002).

For a group (15.2%), publishing in English or in their national language is equally valued. Their justification is that the choice largely depends on the topic of research or the primary target groups so that publications within English Linguistics will naturally require publication in English outlets, publications about the French language will be more naturally accepted in French publications, and so forth. In this sense, comments provided in the replies share Mauranen's words in her interview to Kuteeva (2012, p. 291) that even though the most wide-reaching international language is English, "[i]t's not the only one, obviously, so multilingual publishing is probably going to stay in the humanities for longer than it did in many other fields".

The vast majority of high-impact journals are Anglophone. I suppose that in the areas of linguistics and literature, the specific discipline will have much to do with this, and so the most prestigious journals for Hispanists, for example, will be Spanish journals [R78]

An interesting finding is that for some respondents (12.7%) it is not the language that indicates the value of a piece of research, but the journal or book in which that piece has been published. If a paper or chapter comes out in a highly recognised journal or publishing house, this fact will prevail over the use or non-use of English. But again, because Anglophones are the gatekeepers of the lists and databases covering such prestigious outlets we are compelled to cope with the "self-perpetuating cycle" (Tardy, 2004, p. 249) of English in academic publishing: as the English language is used and English-language articles are cited more frequently, it generates more English-written publications and national languages are displaced for the generation of knowledge and publication at the same time English gains prestige and importance. The only solution is, thus, to promote scientific multilingualism and increase the visibility of multilingual publications in international databases and index lists.

In my opinion, the problem is not the language used for publication, but, rather, that what is valued more highly by the evaluating institutions is the publication in journals with high impact. As we know, most of these journals publish in English only. This makes scholars choose English because otherwise they cannot opt for these high impact publications [R101]

Finally, the value of national languages for research publication (3.2%) prevails with three particular languages and three particular contexts: Spanish in Venezuela, Basque in the Basque country (Spain) and Persian in Iran. And, in general terms, there are no formal regulations or Acts of Parliament (except for the *Deklaration om nordisk språkpolitik* or *La Loi Toubon* that protect Nordic and French languages, respectively) enacted either in favour of or against the use of lingua franca English or ERPP.

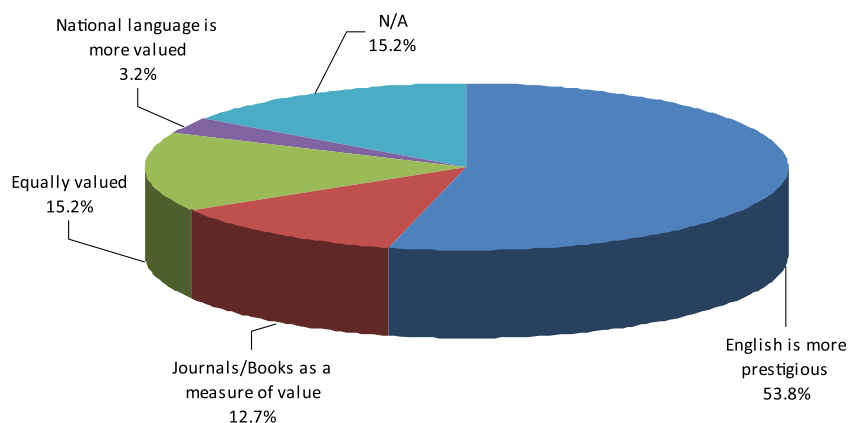


Fig. 5. The value of research published in English.

## 5. Conclusion

Following Flowerdew (2013, p. 9), this surveyed group of LSP scholars could be considered “in a different light from other disciplines”, because they are applied linguists and many of them belong to the field of English-language teaching; therefore, they are expected to have mastered the field of “publishing in English” to the highest level (some respondents have stressed: “I’m an English teacher”). The replies gathered, however, show that the surveyed group of LSP scholars shares most of the concerns about ERPP expressed by other scholars in both similar and rather different fields of research, and to some extent expands Mauranen and Metsä-Ketelä (2006, p. 2) claim that “it is precisely in applied linguistics that it is hardest to accept the implications of English as the globally dominant lingua franca and a language which is predominantly used among non-natives”. Findings show that even though some respondents take a positive stance towards ERPP there still exists some resistance to the hegemony of English for research writing.

English is widely accepted as the international language of research and academic publishing because external pressures design the rules of the game and shuffle the pack. In a recently published volume of *Ibérica*, Hyland (2012, p. 37) was straightforward about global publication and the pressure to publish, and cited this journal as an example of the ERPP general trend:

The expression “publish or perish” has probably never been as cruelly applicable as it is today. Universities in many countries now require their staff to present at international conferences and, more crucially, publish in major, high-impact, peer-reviewed Anglophone journals as a pre-requisite for tenure, promotion and career advancement. Academics all over the world are increasingly less likely to publish in their own languages and to find their English language publications cited more often. *Ibérica* itself, an international, peer reviewed journal with a European editorial board and published in English is a good example of this trend.

English published research has indirectly gained an institutional value that *per se* adds a bonus to the piece of research and apparently gives no option to national languages, at least in the research publication scene. Nonetheless, even though comments highlight the autocatalytic nature of ERPP and depict a chain reaction of events that leads to the picture “journal publishing in English = greater quality, greater credibility”, there seems to be a general agreement on the need to encourage multilingual outlets so as (i) to counterbalance the spread of English as the only recognised language of academia; (ii) to provide a visible space for scholarly publication in languages different from English; (iii) to avoid national language attrition, to keep national language research styles; and (iv) to raise non-English published research to the same quality standards governing current Anglophone publication practices. The replies gathered in this study also bring to the fore new views and concerns which are worth investigating in depth; the fact, for instance, that the existence of multilingual journals is the option to preserve the English language itself from non-standard uses or avoid monolingualism among Anglophones are issues that would benefit from further exploration.

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