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Trajectories of knowledge and desire: Multilingual women scholars researching and writing in academia

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the significance of gender in research and academic writing for publication. It reports on a gender-focused, interview-based study with 10 multilingual women scholars, set within a longitudinal research project in which they have participated for between 11 and 14 years. The scholars work in two disciplinary fields, education and psychology, and come from four national contexts: Hungary, Slovakia, Spain and Portugal. The paper argues that gender remains an 'occluded' (after Swales, 1996) category in research on academic writing for publication but is implicated in practices around academic knowledge making in important ways. Key themes emerging from the data are discussed: the passions driving intellectual work; academic inscription practices; networks of collaboration; being a carer; academic service work; the body in academia. The value of exploring women scholars' perspectives and practices through the lens of *trajectory* is underscored, offering as it does glimpses of how they enact agency at specific moments of their academic lives, in an increasingly rigidly governed and evaluated social space.

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to critically explore the significance of gender in relation to the experiences of multilingual women scholars, centring in particular on their research and academic writing for publication. The main question we explore is:

To what extent, and in what ways, is researching and writing for academic publication a gendered practice?

In this paper we use 'gendered practice' to signal: 1) that gender is (re)-enacted through relations of everyday of living and working, including through specific instances of language use, in line with approaches in sociolinguistics and literacy studies (e.g. Cameron, 1998, 2009; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Hamilton & Pitt, 2009; Ivanič, 1998; Ochs, 1992); 2) that, whilst contested, gender as an aspect of language practice continues to be *primarily* configured, in everyday and academic discourse, in binary terms, that is as male/female[1]; 3) that gender, as a dimension to being, is material as well as discursive in nature (for overviews and discussions, see Hultgren, 2017; Litosseliti & Sunderland, 2002; Mills, 2012; Threadgold, 1997). This last point is important for, whilst signalling gender as constant (re)enactment, worked at and performed discursively, such (re)

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[1] Whilst debates continue about the significance of treating gender/sex as a biological, discursive and/or material phenomenon, a binary orientation to gender/sex prevails across applied and sociolinguistics. But for critical discussions see Cameron, 2009; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003.

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enactments take place in, and against the backdrop of, historically situated practices where there is a bodily, material and ideological reality to being (and being ascribed) a woman or a man (Beauvoir, 1997 [1949]; Clegg, 2006; Moi, 2008, pp. 23–34). The paper seeks to explore the significance of gender in academic research and writing for publication, an under-researched area, with a focus on the lived realities of multilingual women scholars.

The paper draws on an interview-based study with 10 women scholars set within a longitudinal study exploring their perspectives and practices of writing for publication over a period of between 11 and 14 years. It begins by reviewing research on writing for publication, focusing particularly on *categories of being* that have been foregrounded in such work and signals gender as an 'occluded' (after Swales, 1996) category. The next section outlines the specific study on which this paper is based, followed by the main part of the paper which is an analysis of key themes emerging from the data. The paper concludes by arguing that gender as a lived experience is a powerful dimension to women scholars' intellectual lives and foregrounds the importance of the notion of *trajectory* in exploring and understanding their desires and agency.

2. Where is gender in research on writing for publication?

The field of research writing for academic publication, drawing predominantly on the interrelated fields of applied linguistics and writing/literacy studies, and focusing primarily on the writing of multilingual scholars, has been growing steadily over the past 20 years (see Kuteeva and Mauranen, 2014, SI JEAP; for an overview of research on writing for publication by multilingual scholars, see Lillis & Curry, 2016). Key issues addressed by such research include the experiences of multilingual scholars (e.g. Pérez-Llantada, Plo, & Ferguson, 2011; Tian et al., 2016) and graduate students (e.g. Tardy, 2005); the involvement of 'literacy brokers' (Lillis & Curry, 2006b) and differentiated access to material resources (Canagarajah, 2002); textual aspects of genres written for publication (e.g. Moreno & Suárez, 2010); analyses of institutional and governmental policies related to academic publishing (e.g. Englander & Uzuner-Smith, 2013; Lee & Lee, 2013); and pedagogical approaches to supporting text production (see Cargill & Burgess, 2017; Curry and Lillis, 2013; Curry & Lillis, 2017). Unsurprisingly, given the focus in this field on multilingual scholars' writing in the context of the dominance of English, the categories used to describe and ascribe the significance of particular aspects of writers' identities have foregrounded language (e.g. first/second, native/non-native, second language, monolingual, bilingual), often aligned with geopolitical descriptors such as a nation state or notions such as '*culture*'. Other key categories relate to disciplinarity and stage of expertise within the academy—novice/student, expert/academic.

Gender has rarely figured in this growing research field on academic writing for publication, with some key exceptions. Belcher (2009) explored gender as a main aspect of the 'growing diversity of scholars writing in English' in her study tracking the distribution of authorship and investigating authors' statements of a research '*gap*' in 113 articles published in three journals over 12 years. Contrary to her expectations, Belcher found that the increasing diversity among contributors in terms of gender and geolinguistic location was not paralleled by a greater attendant rhetorical diversity in texts, with most writers adopting dominant conventions. Tse and Hyland (2008) and Hyland and Tse (2012) compared male and female academics' rhetorical practices in two 'supporting genres' (Swales and Feak, 2000, p.8), book reviews and biographical statements, and found differences on the basis of gender and disciplinary in the former, and differences aligned with gender and seniority in the latter (Hyland & Tse, 2012). For example, Hyland and Tse (2012) found that in 600 biographical statements by authors of articles in philosophy, applied linguistics, and electrical engineering journals, male scholars mentioned their publications and other achievements more than females, with women scholars giving more information about their educational qualifications and research interests. Tardy and Matsuda (2009), in a survey of 70 members of editorial boards of six journals in the fields of language and literacy that use double-blind peer review, found that 84% of respondents 'guessed' about an author's identity, with 27% speculating about gender.

A different strand of research, focusing on academics writing across their careers, has foregrounded gender to varying extents (e.g. Carnell, MacDonald, McCallum, & Scott, 2008; Casanave & Vandrick, 2003; Olson & Worsham, 2003; Prozesky, 2008). Kirsch (1993) put gender centre stage in her interview-based study of 15 successful faculty female members in five disciplines and four career stages at one U.S. university. She argues that scholars' experience and rank were the most salient aspects of claiming authority in their writing, and that most women did so by adhering to disciplinary conventions, a finding echoed in Belcher's study, above. The importance of challenging dominant conventions is emphasised in work foregrounding feminist thinking (e.g. Hamilton & Pitt, 2009; Royster & Kirsch 2012), with work also underlining the significant difficulties of making such challenges (e.g. Anzaldúa, 1987).

Research from another tradition, bibliometric studies, has foregrounded gender in relation to publication productivity, showing consistently that women tend to have lower productivity than men (e.g. Freitsch, Haller, Funken-Vrohlings, & Grupp, 2009; Kwiek, 2015). The fact of lower publications productivity by women scholars seems incontrovertible (when name is taken as an index for sex) but reasons for this finding and indeed what counts as academic 'productivity' are debatable (see Nygaard and Bahgat, 2018). Some explanations for 'lower productivity' have foregrounded the gendering of academic labour, with women shown to be carrying out a considerable amount of mentoring, service and administrative work as well as having greater teaching loads than men (Aiston & Jung, 2015).

Finally, there is a longstanding strand of work in the tradition of feminist inquiry, which foregrounds gender in relation to women's academic/intellectual work, discourse and writing. A key writer in this vein is Simone de Beauvoir, one of the first generation of European women to be allowed to participate in academia at the same level as men (Moi, 2008, p. 59) and who across her works engages with the problematic of what it means to be a woman intellectual in a society where academic

institutions and legitimised academic knowledge have historically been male strongholds (see Beauvoir, 1997 [1949]; Moi, 2008, pp. 23–34). Other women scholars have foregrounded the problematic of making meaning/knowledge with symbolic and semiotic resources that have been forged out of masculinist histories and values, exploring what it means to inscribe and re-inscribe as a woman: inscription here signals not only the writing of knowledge but also the writing of subjectivities (e.g. Irigary, 1993; Kristeva, 1986; Liu, Karl, & Ko, 2013; Spender, 1980; Threadgold, 1997), including postcolonial dimensions and consequences of inscription (e.g. Anzaldúa, 1987; Motha & Varghese, 2016).

Our aim in this paper is to bring to bear understandings and questions arising from these different but overlapping strands of work to explore multilingual women scholars' accounts of the experiences and challenges of researching and writing for publication.

3. The study on which this paper is based

This paper reports on a specific study within a larger project, Professional Academic Writing in a Global Context (PAW), which since 2001 has explored the experiences of 50 multilingual scholars in four national contexts (Hungary, Slovakia, Spain, Portugal) working in the fields of psychology and education, within the context of the global status of English. The methodology involves a longitudinal 'text-ethnographic' approach that traces the production of scholars' texts through multiple drafts, against a backdrop of rich ethnographic data including observation field notes, multiple interviews conducted with scholars about the production of specific texts and documentary data at institutional, national and international levels (for methodological details, see Lillis, 2008; Lillis & Curry, 2010; for key findings from the study, see Curry & Lillis, 2004, 2010, 2014; Lillis & Curry 2006a, 2010; 2015).

3.1. Agency and desire in the PAW study

In exploring agency and desire within the PAW study, key identity markers or categories of being largely echo those used in the field of academic writing research more broadly: *linguistic experiences and practices*—multilingual, English, English as a second or third language, specific languages (e.g. Spanish, Slovak); *work and position*—scholars, researchers, academics, professors; years in the academy; and *disciplinary field*—psychology, education. In addition, our work has foregrounded a number of referentially and ideologically loaded categories relating to place and space: for example, nation states (Spain, Hungary, Portugal, Slovakia); regional descriptors (Southern/Eastern/Central Europe); and geopolitical categories such as periphery, semi-periphery, non-Anglophone context, local, national, international, intranational, transnational. Some of these categories were built into the research design (e.g. the decision to focus on the experiences of scholars in non-Anglophone centre contexts) and included concepts from other scholars (notably Canagarajah's (2002) iteration of Wallerstein's (1991) socioeconomic concepts of the centre/periphery), whereas some categories (e.g., local, intranational) emerged as significant through the research process and have been used in our representations of scholars' practices.

3.2. Gender as an occluded category

Whilst the aforementioned categories of being are significant, they are not discrete from each other or separate from other dimensions to lived experience that have not been explicitly in focus in the PAW study. Gender is one such dimension, in that it is has not been ours or the participants' explicit focus of gaze; however, traces of gendered materialities and practices emerged in the course of the study, evident in the research process itself as well as in women scholars' experiences, the focus of this paper. Thus, for example, some research interviews with women scholars were organised at times and places around their caring responsibilities, such as in their homes, late at night after the children were in bed or close to where a woman was caring for elderly parents. Gendered dimensions to scholars' experiences included explicit comments about scholarly life, such as 'men being all show and women doing all the work' (field notes, 2002), the difficulties of being a young woman scholar in a department where middle-aged men dominated and tended to treat young women paternalistically (field notes, 2004). Other aspects that were evident from accounts and observations but not explicitly discussed were some instances of female participants' sexual(ised) interactions with senior male scholars.

As women scholars, we were also conscious of the danger of making gender an occluded dimension (Swales, 1996) to writing for publication practices. We were aware of work on gender, discourse and academic knowledge making (outlined above), the fact that women's participation in formal academic institutions is historically recent, and current statistics which show women's lower position within institutional hierarchies and national evaluation regimes (e.g. the U.K. Research Excellence Framework, http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2015/201517/). We therefore decided to carry out a gender-focused study within the PAW longitudinal project focusing on women's experiences of research and academic writing for publication.

3.3. The data on which this paper is based

The methodological approach used to generate, analyse and represent data was in line with the text-oriented ethnographic approach used in the study overall, with a focal point being the individual '*case*' or scholar. This approach attaches particular value to emic perspectives, particularly where cyclical 'talk becomes part of sustained engagement in specific

research sites and is set alongside other types of data' (Lillis, 2008, p. 362). The gender-focused interviews conducted for this paper involved 10 women scholars from the larger PAW study, and took place within the context of multiple interviews over a period of between 11 and 14 years, thus constituting specific moments of 'long conversations' (Maybin, 1994; Lillis 2008, pp. 362–367).[2] The preamble to each interview located the interviews within our ongoing conversations; for example, where references had previously been made to gender and/or to being a woman scholar (in interviews, emails or observations), these were raised by the researcher (see Appendix). In addition, we collected participants' current curricula vitae to analyse their publications over time, along with additional documentary data that participants considered relevant, for example, gender-related initiatives they were involved in at their institutions, current papers they were drafting, recent reviewer feedback.

We consciously sought to interview women scholars who might represent the range of diverse experiences evident in the PAW study, in terms of age, academic rank/title, discipline and national location, and of the 15 we contacted, ten chose to participate.[3] Currently, they all currently have permanent contracts, although they hold different positions within academia with varying lengths of time (see Table 1). Analysis involved an iterative engagement with the data, with each of the two researchers carrying out separate initial coding of interviews (focusing on content and discourse of the gender-focused interviews) and drafting individual profiles (based on the interviews and multiple data sources from the longitudinal study), followed by researcher co-checking, discussion and refining of analyses. Working back and forth from vertical (understanding the individual case) to horizontal (identifying patterns across cases) orientations to the data (Barton & Hamilton, 1998, p. 70) enabled us to generate themes that emerged as significant across the dataset. Data analysis and written accounts were also shared with participating scholars for their comment.[4] The study works within the tradition of ethnographic inquiry where the value of analysis lies in offering '*rich insights*' into a particular phenomenon (Mitchell, 1984).

4. Women scholars at work

4.1. Driving passions for intellectual work

Scholars were passionate about their research interests and when we asked whether these were shaped by being a woman (see questions 1 and 2 in Appendix), on first reflection all participants said no. However, in the course of relating their intellectual and academic journeys, nine explicitly signalled the significance of gender in their research trajectories.

Kriszta initially states that her research interests had nothing to do with 'being female' but signals (tentatively, through repeated use of 'maybe') how her personal experience informed one key strand of her research interests:

> I have never thought that my academic interest or motivation was based on, especially at the beginning, on my being female. Obviously the [X] topic was strongly influenced by my own experiences in childbirth, and maybe the motivation or the energy that I put in this topic is related to my personal experiences, maybe.

Table 1
Brief Profile of scholars (ordered in terms of years in the academy).

Scholar	Current position*	Years holding an employed position in the academy	Academic field	Geographical region**
Aurelia	Emeritus professor	38	Education	Southern Europe
Carla	Associate professor	30	Psychology	Southern Europe
Ines	Associate professor	29	Education	Southern Europe
Kriszta	Professor	28	Psychology	Central Europe
Diana	Associate professor	23	Education	Southern Europe
Sonja	Professor	23	Education	Central Europe
Luisa	Assistant professor	19	Psychology	Southern Europe
Ornella	Associate professor	16	Psychology	Central Europe
Africa	Assistant professor	10	Education	Southern Europe
Andrea	Assistant professor	10	Psychology	Central Europe

*Academic titles vary across states and institutions. Here we use the USA terms of assistant, associate and full professor as approximations to levels of categories in scholars' contexts.
**Region rather than country is named for purposes of anonymization.

[2] Gender-focused interviews took place in English over one or two meetings. Length of interview ranged from between one and three hours. Interviews with eight of the 10 scholars took place online. Interviews were transcribed using standard orthography; repetitions and hesitancies are cut. Cuts in content are indicated by —. Contextual detail is indicated by [ ]. Material that might identify participants or their research areas is replaced by [X]. All names used are pseudonyms.

[3] Of the five who decided not to participate, two indicated that they did not want to discuss views they saw as confidential.

[4] We see such comment as going beyond 'member checks' but as part of 'long conversations' with participants.

Luisa, like Kriszta, states that her choice of scientific area and other specific decisions were not shaped by being 'female'. However, in talking about her research trajectory, she notes that she began her research in a field dominated by men and later moved to an area dominated by women:

> I felt better with them. And I have to say that because they were women also. Not just because they were women, but I felt more comfortable with them.

She talks of how the men in the previous field had made her feel like *a little girl*, in contrast to the women, with whom *I felt more in the same level*. Being made to feel like a '*girl*', not least by being referred to as such, is echoed by another scholar: Andrea, who says that she finally commented on this labelling when she returned to work after maternity leave *I said but I'm not a junior anymore—I'm 40*.

As with other scholars, Aurelia does not see her 40-year line of research as linked to gender, but in locating the origin of this passion in her childhood, she foregrounds its significance to working-class girls:

> All this, yes, has got a reason, a reason which comes back when I was a girl and a child in the place where I lived—because I found out in the beginning that girls were most disadvantaged when they are part of the working class, not of the middle class.

Aurelia talks about always having in mind the extreme poverty she witnessed in childhood and being *sensitive* to issues of disadvantage. In reflecting on the origins of her intellectual passion, she states:

> I can't tell you this has nothing to do with being a woman. But I won't be able to tell you that this is because I was a woman.

For some scholars, gender was not explicitly signalled in accounts of the imperatives behind work, but was identified as a growing interest during later parts of their research trajectories. Africa states that her initial choice of scholarly focus was not shaped by gender, but after some 10 years of working in the field of education and having secured a permanent position, she shifted her lens:

> Years focusing on class made me focus too much on class and forget race and gender.

She is currently designing a longitudinal research project with a small group of women scholars. Reflecting on the significance of this shift both in terms of focus and process, Africa states:

> You know what's the best part of it? That it's meaningful. Sometimes things that I have been doing is, like, meaningless because you had to do, you had to publish, you had to publish anything. You had to get involved in any research project that was offered to you. And now I feel I can choose, I feel like I can pick and I can decide what to do.

Smaller gender-focused initiatives had also been developed by other scholars. Diana recently explored developing a project on women and identity, shaped in part by the decline of programs for, and research interest in, her ongoing research topic at her university and partly from a desire to collaborate with graduate students and local and transnational colleagues. Similarly, Carla recently collaborated on a gender-focused project, exploring publishing productivity rates within her area of psychology by writing an article with a long-time (male) collaborator.

Gender, whilst often signalled initially as not significant thus emerges through long conversations as a salient dimension to women scholars' research work and intellectual trajectories.

4.2. Inscribing academic knowledge

The well-documented pressure not only to publish, but to publish in English (e.g. Lillis & Curry 2010, 2015) in order to secure academic legitimacy, is underlined by all the women scholars (for overview of publication profiles, see Table 2) and a gendered dimension to academic text production, value and uptake is also signalled.

Several scholars commented on the different status of men and women's work. Luisa notes that although her research field is dominated by women in terms of numbers, which she calculates at 90%, men publish the *top papers* in the field and give the major conference plenary talks.

> This is something that we have noticed but we have talked about it informally, not formally.

A distinction based on gender was also made by Sonja who, in an applied field predominantly constituted by women, notes that the men do 'theoretical' work. Africa, with regard to the status of different types of academic labour, talks of men being 'allowed' to do theory whilst women do empirical work. She links this difference with how male scholars are nurtured in academia through existing networks:

> And in social science it's like the newborn is cuddled because he's outstanding, can't you see? — But what's he doing? What's the empirical research he's conducting? He's conducting none. He just says what he thinks.

Differential status of academic work was also indicated in comments about the gendering of uptake of scholars' publications, sometimes alongside the issue of locality (see Lillis & Curry, 2010, Ch. 6). Ines states that her publications, co-authored with women scholars in her research group do not get cited

Table 2
Scholars' academic publishing records in key genres.

Scholar	Publication category	Local national language	English	Other languages	Totals
Aurelia	Books	1	5	2	8
	Articles	63	19	2	84
	Book chapters	2	12		14
Carla	Books	–	–		0
	Articles	9	16		25
	Book chapters	1	–		1
Ines	Books	8	1	2	11
	Articles	40	10		50
	Book chapters	7	9		16
Kriszta	Books	4	1		5
	Articles	17	17		34
	Book chapters	13	5		18
Diana	Books	–	–		0
	Articles	–	6		6
	Book chapters	–	4		4
Sonja	Books	–	–		0
	Articles	4	4		8
	Book Chapters	3	1		4
Luisa	Books	–	–		0
	Articles	5	5		10
	Book chapters	6	–		6
Ornella	Books	–	–		0
	Articles	4	10		14
	Book chapters	7	1		8
Africa	Books	2	–		2
	Articles	13	6	2	21
	Book chapters	11	5		16
Andrea	Books	2	–		2
	Articles	11	3	1	15
	Book chapters	11	3		14

> mainly because we are [from southern Europe]–[but also] because we are women, people don't use them.

Lack of acknowledgment of intellectual contributions through citations was also noted by Aurelia who considers that even if her work is circulated, it is not acknowledged in citations:

> They never quote us in their articles and they are men—.They want to put themselves in the position of being the people that should be heard because they are men who are perhaps doing academic careers.

Paternalism is evident in some accounts of writing for publication and mentoring (see 4.3 *Networks* below). Kriszta, accounting for the significant change made in the argument of a paper she and women colleagues submitted to an Anglophone-centre publication, refers to the help of the male journal editor as being like that of *a friendly grandfather* (discussed in detail in Lillis and Curry, 2006b). She and her colleagues welcomed this paternalistic intervention because it secured them a much-needed English-medium publication (for paternalism in academia, see Gerschlager & Mokre, 2002).

In terms of the conventions, linguistic media and genres for inscribing academic knowledge, gender is also implicated in the scholars' accounts, most obviously through indexing Enlightenment values underpinned by a binary lens to knowledge making (e.g. objective/subjective, rational/emotional discourse, the subject in knowledge making/the subject of knowledge making, see Lillis, 2001). All scholars, regardless of discipline or particular paradigm, write in what they consider to be the conventional research article genre. Some scholars, Aurelia and Ines, do so because they consider this conventional genre essential for communicating research or, as in the case of Ornella, the most effective vehicle for ensuring the necessary objectivity required:

> If you want to succeed, you have to be objective.

Andrea also writes in what she describes as *the old-fashioned natural sciences way* but for pragmatic rather than epistemological reasons, stating that it takes less time and is more likely to be read and legitimised. However, when talking of a paper she co-authored using alternative conventions involving three *intertwined stories*, she states:

> It's the best paper we ever wrote—we really put a lot of thought into that, and no one has ever cited it. I would like to write that way but now I have to take that it has to be reported in the old fashioned natural sciences way. —Well I've just adapted to what is expected. Because I know that if I want to have some publications I need to do it this way really pragmatically. And I don't suffer doing that.

Kriszta, whose research is predominantly experimental, like Andrea, sees the 'standard' positivist article structure as the easiest form to write within but would prefer to write differently:

> Personally, I would be much more happy doing [a] qualitative style.

Luisa, who similarly works in an experimental paradigm, would like to write differently because she is concerned about the fragmentation that happens in experimentally oriented studies, with findings reduced to one or two variables, fearing the *whole* gets lost. She is also concerned about the *coldness* of experimental research. She would like to combine methodologies and discourses:

> If you are passionate with your ideas and you want to share this passion because you think they will increase knowledge and so on, why not us poetry as a vehicle to share ideas?—I mean, you should use whatever you think is necessary.

But at the same time,

> you want to be accepted and not to be rejected so. If you say OK this is the game we have to play, let's do it.

Africa is highly critical of the dominant research article genre that scholars are expected to write within, arguing that this form does not allow for complexity of analysis and amounts to what she describes as *fake* intellectual work. Like Africa, Diana is *completely tired* of the article form.

> I want more freedom to write, and I really want to do different things— I would like to write on the issues that I am writing but with more freedom.

The desire to write differently involves different decisions for scholars at different moments in their research and writing trajectories, with some always having a larger number of publics in mind and some deciding to stop writing academic texts altogether and/or to stop writing in English. Africa has always written texts directed at teachers in addition to academic research texts, seeing this as an essential part of her academic work and enjoying the greater semiotic freedom such texts allow (for example, including cartoons). She sees publishing in several languages as a definite *intellectual advantage*. Two scholars, Aurelia and Ines, have an explicit commitment to publishing in both the local language and English, emphasising the need to use several languages in order to engage with local as well as transnational scholars, students and teachers. Aurelia, at a mid-point in her career, took a specific decision to write for public media in the local national language rather than academic articles, as a way of trying to shape public understanding about the educational problems she was researching. Similarly, Andrea is *not that much interested in the high impact publications right now* and is doing workshops which she says are not *academically high rank activity* but which she sees as equally important. Sonja reflects on the *dramatic change* in her publishing activity over time: whereas early in her career she had to write for international journals in order to *collect points* now she has the *freedom* to write what she considers to be *more meaningful*, explicitly writing in the local-national language rather than English (*who's going to read it*?) to reach a larger, national readership. Diana likewise has recently decided to stop publishing in English, writing predominantly in the local national language. However, when writing in collaboration with junior female colleagues, Diana continues to use English.

The cultural capital constituted by academic publications—particularly English medium—for academic careers, securing grants, and promotions has been strongly emphasized (Li & Yang, 2017; Lillis & Curry, 2010). Some women scholars signal a gendered dimension to the actual exchange value of such capital. Whilst stating that discrimination on the basis of gender cannot legally happen in state universities, Aurelia tells of her application to become a professor, in competition with a man. He was appointed and she challenged the decision on the grounds that objectively she had a far superior profile —including more academic publications in terms of both quantity and quality—and won a legal battle after three very difficult years. However, the original post was of course already occupied. She became a professor shortly after the legal decision by occupying a professional position left by the premature death of a colleague.

Aurelia's account of the event foregrounds gender but her evaluation of this event problematizes whether this episode is to do with gender:

> Now I'm not telling you that this is because he was a male and I was a female— it's the fact that he was that particular male.

Scholars' accounts of their academic inscription practices signal the impact of gender in a number of ways including what some feel to be the differential value attached to their published work, as compared with men, and the restrictions indirectly imposed on the particular enunciative positions they can occupy (Africa's comments about theory). The significance of gender in relation to uptake is sometimes aligned with the politics of locality (Ines and Kriszta). All scholars write within the dominant research article genre but across paradigms signal a desire to write differently. This desire is enacted in a number of ways, including writing research in different genres (narrative, poetry) in local national languages (in addition to or instead of English) and re-directing academic production activity towards other publics (the media, practitioners). Decisions about doing academic production differently are weighed up against the need to publish in the dominant genre in order to meet the requirements of evaluation regimes, although the capital that such publications may constitute in actuality is not gender free.

4.3. Networks of collaboration

The importance of networks for generating and sustaining research and publishing activity has been well documented in the PAW study (Curry & Lillis, 2010; Lillis & Curry, 2006b) and in other research (Jeffrey, 2014). The gendered dimensions to such network activity across intellectual and academic trajectories is signalled in participants' accounts.

Kriszta has researched and published for many years with a group of women scholars, one of whom is internationally renowned and had been Kriszta's PhD supervisor and later mentor. Kriszta saw the fact of them being a women-only research group as a *coincidence*, although she recounts that they used to joke about the fact that they were a women-only group and were as good as men:

> We were proud that maybe in the sense that in spite of being women, we can solve such complex things.

Several of the scholars have established—or are in the process of—establishing their own research networks, and in accounts of these they foreground gender. Since gaining a permanent position, Africa is leading a predominantly women's research group who, most importantly for her, *cherish studying*. Reflecting on why she enjoys working with women, Africa states:

> I know it's not because they have a vagina, I know that—But what have these women in common? They do care about people around them. So having a caring position, to me, is essential.

The importance of collaborating around writing is emphasized by Africa who, now as someone with a permanent position, does not see herself as needing publications but recognises that more junior colleagues do, particularly in an academic context where she feels men are more likely to be supported. Africa foregrounds the value of '*care*' in the way she engages with colleagues' writing for publication:

> So this kind of care —I write articles with my colleagues, and my colleagues are going to get the first name in the article. So I give the first position to people who need it in order to get to stable position. I think that's a caring way of being.

Aurelia has led a research network for many years. She comments that she has always been surrounded by women, firstly as her teachers and later as collaborators. She talks of an early network as involving men and women but *somehow the men just disappeared* and the women continued to work together, some for over 30 years. In acknowledging the length and success of the women's collaboration, however, Aurelia reiterates that *I can't tell you that it's related to the fact of being a man or a woman.* In reflecting on her leadership role within the group, she states:

> And the reason maybe because I am, I think it's perhaps, it's not, I don't know if this has to do with being a woman or not, but this has to do with my position of just being open to everybody's comments, ideas and whatever, you know, even if they are students.

Aurelia notes that such close collaboration is not common practice in academia given the considerable competition around academic authorship:

> This has to do with my own values, but I can't tell you that that's because I am a woman. Maybe it is, but I'm not sure.

Ines, throughout almost three decades of working at her university, has predominantly collaborated with the woman colleague who directed her PhD: *It was a supervisor like, between friends, and colleagues over time.* Their collaboration has been central to Ines's work as an academic:

> We used to say that we complete each other—It's so good in terms of research because we are so inside our research that we push through. Also we give ideas to each other.

Through their collaboration they have also consistently supported the work of graduate students in their research center, co-authoring with many. The majority have been women:

> I don't know if men don't like us [*laughter*].

Ines contrasts this experience of collegiality with the competitive approach she has witnessed in male colleagues, recounting the behaviour of one male colleague who she felt had self-interested reasons for learning about her research, not to collaborate with her but to build his own reputation.

Ornella's network of support for many years was constituted and mediated by her former, male, supervisor with whom she worked successfully and held in high esteem. But after he died, she found it more challenging to do research and write for publication. She misses talking about research with him, feeling intellectually isolated.

> [His death] broke my career. And this is the point where I feel the gender effect because after he passed away, I realized what his support, his scientific support meant because he was very well known among our international colleagues. He helped me to introduce myself to the [field]. Without his help, I'm not as efficient by myself. It's quite difficult to publish an article because even though I follow the same professional writing style. I can feel that without his professional connections it's quite hard to be successful in a publication.

Here Ornella casts her experiences in a gendered light (*I feel the gender effect*) in relation to the network opportunities for publishing and signals the profound effect of his death on her English-medium writing in particular:

> After [he] passed, I wrote, I think, only one publication, not more. I have research, I have studies, but somehow I lost my ability and I find it more difficult to write in English, I don't know. It's probably that I just need time.

Ornella views the gendered interactional dynamics in academia as being bound up with generational-cultural aspects, giving the example of experiences of how her work has been received at conferences:

> Most female and male professors are very positive, but maybe because I'm a woman, but the male professor is much more positive to my topics than the female one—The old professors are very polite, very positive but less critical. The younger generation are more direct—efficient.

Ornella's account of mentoring and network support index gender in complex ways, mingled with geolocation and generational shifts: her mention of an older generation of male professors being more courteous signals a paternalism that she seems to welcome, a point already noted above with regard to support for Kriszta's publications. That such relations shift over time is signalled by Ornella's account of a new project she has more recently established that is connected to her personal experience (see 4.7 *The body,* below). Writing and publishing with students as part of this project is not only sustaining Ornella in starting a new research area but enabling her to take on a more authoritative positionality and relationship to knowledge making.

In contrast to the primarily female collaborations already mentioned, Carla reports: *My colleagues are always men. But don't ask me why because I don't know.* This includes a long-standing collaboration with the male colleague with whom she co-authored the gender analysis of publications productivity. She reports that one of their findings was that *females tend to form research groups with other females and the same in the case of men with men,* in contrast to her own practices.

The significance of being part of a network to sustain research and publishing activity is emphasized in all scholars' accounts. The gendered dimensions to such networks is signalled in a number of ways: most obviously, all but one of the participants work primarily in women-only research groups, with some seeing this as '*coincidental*' and others indicating the importance they attach to a value system premised upon '*care*' (of each other, the work) which is presented as being at odds with the larger, masculinist, academic system.

4.4. Being a carer and a scholar

All of the scholars have also had varying personal caring responsibilities over their life trajectories, which they signalled as being a significant dimension to their lives as women scholars, including research and publishing which, in current evaluation regimes, are often central to career progression. All ten had caring responsibilities for children and three additionally had caring responsibilities for elderly parents or partners. Luisa talks of the challenges of being a mother and a scholar:

> I had to decide whether to choose between my career and my children. I decided my children. So my career's not a brilliant career, I should say. If you look at my CV, it's not brilliant. It's not an academic, properly academic. I publish every once in a while. I get many papers rejected.

Luisa feels that she is forced to *choose*, even in a context where she considers childcare and domestic labour are shared with her husband.

Kriszta states that practical support with everyday domestic responsibilities is essential for a scholar to be able to research, write and publish, asserting that to do academic work, women need to either have *very good husbands* or *lots of money*. She has had considerable daily support from her husband and, latterly, her mother, which they extended to another woman scholar who, following a divorce, was struggling to look after her children and manage her work as an academic. Kriszta and her family provided material support—quiet space and time, childcare, meals. Despite giving examples of the challenges faced by women scholars, Kriszta notes that men academics also face similar constraints if they do not have such support:

> I don't think it is a question of gender; it's a question of family and your network and your support systems—it's easier and it doesn't matter if you are male or female. This is how I see this question.

However, that specific roles are expected of women scholars is signalled in the examples given by Kriszta (*women need to have very good husbands*) and comments by other scholars about 'role reversal', as when Africa reflects on how her husband looked after their child and carried out domestic work during a period where she and another woman colleague were researching intensively:

> And every day I thought, you see now we are the breadwinners here. They [the men] are the women who stay in at home taking care of children.

Diana and Carla spoke of managing their academic workloads as single mothers and receiving different degrees of support from family and other caregivers. Diana opted for a master's program in a particular U.S. city partly because her ex-husband was studying there, which meant foregoing a funded opportunity not only for a master's but also for a PhD in another state where she would have been solely responsible for their daughter. This decision meant that she postponed doing her PhD, later taking some seven years to complete it.

Although she had no local family to offer practical help, Carla felt supported as a single mother, working alongside other female academics with children, which she linked to her discipline being constituted largely by women. Yet, she noted that female colleagues feel the effects of being responsible for children:

> Women don't like to speak about [this difference] but you can feel it, because sometimes you can see they are stressed or they are worried about their children.

She also points to the impact of child care responsibilities on women's academic productivity in terms of publications, noting the higher outputs of male colleagues whilst her children were young which, she contrasts with her situation now that her son is older.

> I have more time for research than before. I think it was hard work [before] because I had no time for anything else [other] than work and home.

In Ornella's case, after setting a hectic pace early in her career, her personal life became a priority and she became a partner and stepmother to two children.

> When I was around 35 years old, the time came that I wanted to have a long-lasting relationship and a family. My mothership interest became [at the] forefront. So I decided not to do everything for my career.

That a '*career*' – or a full academic career— appears to be incompatible with family commitments is underlined by most scholars. Aurelia talks of having a *double life*, between academic and home/caring roles. After being a secondary school teacher for many years, she did her PhD in her early 40s. In her 50s, therefore, she was under a lot of pressure in terms of teaching and research, as well as experiencing what she describes as a lot of *fights* at the university. She and her husband divorced and her mother became seriously ill and needed considerable care. She moved in with Aurelia, who, with help from her son and some paid support, looked after her mother for some five years. In such a context, Aurelia describes how what she considered to be her intellectual *passion* was also her *curse* because it meant that she strived to sustain her research and publishing activity, sometimes under very difficult conditions.

Now a widow, Ines was married for many years and had two children. She credits her husband with sustaining her career:

> He was not macho and he helped me a lot. I think because he couldn't finish [his education], he helped me to continue my career.

They always had paid household help, including a paid nurse in later life when Ines's husband was ill for eight years. During this time, a college-wide competition for promotion to full professor was opened, and although Ines was the *first in line* for the position, instead of applying for it took time off to be with her husband:

> I saw that he helped me so much that I prefer the loss, [it was] not so important for me—I like very much what I am doing—, but not as a career, as a way to have a position.

In retrospect, Ines sees her work as an academic as somewhat *accidental* and gratifying because of the support from her husband and her close colleague.

Andrea offers a distinctly positive account of the effect of the time/space afforded by her caring role. The three-year period she took out of academic labour when her children were small led her to rethink her intellectual priorities.

> I took a break and it gave me some perspective also on what I was doing. —But I did it by completely redefining my research interests and hooking up with other people. —So maybe if I didn't have this break it wouldn't happen, or it would be more painful.

Scholars' accounts indicate how central care work is to their lives and the different and specific ways in which such work impacts on their intellectual and academic career trajectories (see McMullan, 2018). Care work is seen as essential but also as necessarily impacting on their academic research production activity and/or careers. Whilst the emotional and physical challenges of care alongside academic work are emphasised, the intellectual benefit of taking time out of paid academic labour specifically for care work is highlighted by one scholar.

4.5. Academic service work

Nine of the ten scholars have, or have had, major administrative roles such as dean, head of department, coordinator of major curricular areas. Several scholars felt obliged to take on such administrative roles either because of their junior role or being on a temporary contract. After her former PhD supervisor, who was head of their department, died, Ornella was immediately appointed as head, taking on *a lot of administrational stuff, which is overloading me*, receiving a token honorarium but no work release.

> I don't want to do it [administrative work]—I don't care about the money. I would be rather poor than—you know—than do the job.

Still relatively early in her career, however, Ornella feels it would be disloyal to ask to step down as department head. Luisa also saw taking on major administrative role as a question of loyalty to colleagues in a context where academics were

collectively working to transform the governance and practices of the university into a more transparent and democratic space.

Whatever the reasons for taking on such roles, refusing to do so represents a risk that the scholars feel only able to take once they have permanent positions. Thus while Carla recently felt some anxiety about possible negative repercussions of refusing to take on an additional administrative role, *nothing happened*. Having a permanent position and being well established in her department affords her some agency:

> The main advantage of being in this position is that I can say no.

Other scholars similarly turned down requests to work in administration. Ines states:

> I was invited to be part of the direction of the department, but I didn't accept. I don't like this kind of [work].

Andrea recently refused additional administrative responsibilities whilst maintaining a key research coordinator role, thus taking control over the kind of 'service' work in which she engaged. Sonja refused to do administrative work after many years as head of department and mentoring, thus, close to retirement, is able to devote time to research and writing.

All scholars were clear that taking on administrative roles meant that their research would suffer. Ornella could not find time to continue the research she had worked on for many years. Diana, who was just finishing a four-year period as head of department, says:

> When I got this function in my department I knew already that I will not be involved in research in a big way.

Luisa, whilst committed to her administrative role, states:

> I'm very sad because each time I look into the data or I go to the meetings –oh I cannot do more—it's impossible, I have no time.

While these participants accepted or sought out administrative responsibility for a range of reasons, including opportunities to influence practices and policies at their universities, their accounts suggest that such work involves a sacrifice of the research activity and related research writing in which women are documented to produce less than men.

4.6. The body in academia

The body figures in women scholars' accounts in several ways: through reference to childbirth and the subsequent (literal) removal of the body from academic work; in discussion of caring responsibilities (using one's body to care for the bodies of others) and how these are distributed across days and lives and in relation to academic work; and stress, tiredness and exhaustion of the body from trying to keep everything going. Caring for the body is emphasized by some scholars: Carla describes how she spends time now that her son has grown up—doing more research, as noted above, but also *sports … I try to relax more, sleep more, get out more, travel more;* Kriszta meditates and gets regular massages.

After finishing her PhD, Ornella joined the psychology department where she had studied and enthusiastically began to collaborate with her former supervisor and others: *I sacrificed myself in my early period for my career. … There was no rest.* Later an autoimmune disease affected her fertility, taking a toll on Ornella's time and energy for research and writing.

> I had to change—The doctor said I had to slow down. It's too much work—So I decided to stop a bit— I always have to remind myself, 'Come on, it's not life. It's not the real life.'

Ornella's health experience later prompted her to lead a research project on people's experiences with autoimmune diseases.

Ines too mentions her health after the death of her husband, for whom she had been caring for many years. She was in a deep depression.

> I needed help, the pills—. I didn't cry in this time. I laughed with him. I sang with him—I was in tension [all the] time, but I didn't reveal this.

Africa points to the significance of the body explicitly in two further ways. Firstly, in the effect on her body of securing a permanent academic position:

> that stability, it's so amazing. I can feel it in my body. Five years ago when I get to the stable position, that was like a real change in the body, in the mind.

The effect of such physical and mental stability on her sense of intellectual agency—*I can speak my mind and take decisions*—was foregrounded (above) in her account of recent changes in her research direction.

Africa also explicitly marks a second significance of the body in academia. In response to a question about the way her academic career has been shaped by gender she says that *being fat* has been more significant. She refers to *erotic capital* in academia. *The way it [the body] represents, or the way the others read it is like a major force to position you inside one faculty*. In terms of her own experience, she states:

> I have been told here if you get on a diet and get thinner I'm sure you will be in a better position in this faculty.

In response to such comments by senior male colleagues, Africa says she has cried and at the same time thought *fuck off*. She feels that such orientations towards her body made her trajectory towards a permanent position much more difficult.

Andrea also refers to erotic capital within academia, recounting how a *beautiful* woman head of department appears on a front cover advertising the university in what Andrea describes as an inappropriately *seductive* pose. She signals the significance of the body in academia arguing that because the dominant cultural reference point about any relations between men and women is always sexualised, academic working relationships are often construed as sexualised even when they are not. She talks of being asked by colleagues (male and female) about her relationship with a senior colleague, the assumption being that she must be involved in a sexual relationship with him given how closely they work.

5. Conclusion

In commenting on their experiences as women scholars, most participants began by saying that gender is not significant. Yet the accounts are rhetorically similar across the interviews: no, gender is not significant, followed almost immediately by accounts of aspects of their academic lives with a gendered dimension. These 'small stories' (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) signal the importance of gender as an aspect to living as an academic researcher and writer. The methodology used in the study, involving revisiting comments made in passing over many years of discussion, and providing space to explicitly reflect and discuss what it means to be a woman scholar has proved a useful way of generating such often hidden stories.

The value of exploring women scholars' perspectives on, and practices of, research and academic writing over time is that these offer glimpses of trajectories of enactments of desire and agency rather than reifying accounts as expressed in one moment in time or in relation to one specific text. This attention to shifting desires, constraints and opportunities for women scholars and the ways these impact on their research and writing for publication is an important way of seeking to understand the significance of gender in the field of writing for academic publication.

The intellectual passions with which the women scholars initially embarked on academic careers remained constant for some scholars and shifted for others, but all have been sustained, albeit at some or many points of their academic lives, under considerable pressures. Pressures come from responsibilities and commitments outside of academic work, principally in different caring roles over their life trajectories, and within academia, relating to taking on administrative work. At the same time that scholars often feel committed to such responsibilities, the result is significantly reduced time for research and writing. Sexism constitutes another challenge to sustaining an intellectual academic life evident in some accounts, notably in seeking promotion (Aurelia) and in on-record comments about the body (Africa), but also in the infantilising and paternalistic orientations of some male scholars (Luisa and Andrea being called *girls*, Ornella and Kristza's dependence on senior male colleagues' benevolence). Participants' comments about the significance of beauty in academia as well as explicit comments about the effects of academic labour on the body, emphasise the significance of the body in a socio-institutional domain premised upon the value of the mind.

Exploring publication practices through the lens of trajectory shows that in the context of what appears to be an inexorable drive for ever-more rigid evaluation regimes globally (Curry & Lillis, 2017), opportunities for women scholars' agency arise at different points in time; thus scholars engage with evaluation regimes, aspects of which align with their interest and desires, whilst also enacting practices which challenge such regimes. Key examples include publishing in local-national languages, writing in a range of genres, some of which are explicitly not valued by such regimes, and in general seeking to work with a broader range of publics (teachers, clinicians, researchers, policymakers, educators). Opportunities for agency—whether in making publication choices about linguistic media, genre and audience or in investing time in working with user groups rather than academics—arise most clearly once scholars have permanent contracts or greater seniority. Women scholars signal the impact of being released from the immediate pressures of dominant evaluative regimes, as illustrated in Kriszta's comments:

> It's a kind of relief that those fights for citation and authorships and impact factors seem to be over.

Although, as indicated by several scholars, the fact that as individuals they feel freed up from evaluative regimes, they are not completely released, in that they continue to support other colleagues towards meeting the regime's criteria.

With regard to desires around the semiotics of knowledge making, a range of views is evident. Some scholars feel satisfied that their knowledge is successfully entextualised using what has become the conventional academic/scientific article. Others are deeply frustrated by the legitimised form (research article), medium (emphasis on English) and rhetorical conventions. What we see are traces of the desires for different ways of meaning that are hard to imagine as well as to enact (Anzaldúa, 1987).

In putting the spotlight on gender and the meanings attached to being a woman scholar, our intention is not to separate gender from other aspects of our being in the world—including other notably occluded categories in the field of research on research and writing, such as social class and sexuality. Rather, this paper contributes to debates about the gendered nature of practices around research and academic writing for publication and signals the need to make such debates more visible.

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Appendix. Gender-focused interview schedule

1. Preamble— connecting with previous conversations	I want to focus specifically on what it means to be a multilingual *woman* scholar— and whether and how—you think being a woman/gender has an impact on who you are as a scholar, what you have decided to do, what you have decided to write and for whom. - Previously you have mentioned [xxxx]
2 Being a woman in academia	In what ways if any do you think being a woman has shaped, influenced your research and career choices?
3 Writing as a woman scholar	In what ways if any do you think being a woman has shaped, influenced your choices, decisions, challenges in writing for publication?
4 Academic conventions and what you want to write/how you want to write	A critique of conventional academic writing is that it reflects norms generated historically by men scholars, and some academic women have challenged the conventions and ideologies around what is considered to be '*good*' academic writing. What are your views? During the course of your academic/research/writing career have you felt constrained or enabled by existing conventions? Are there ways of writing that you would have preferred? Do you think that what and how you have written–including writing in different languages–has been shaped or influenced by the fact of you being a woman scholar?
5 Interests and passions over time	Have your research–and writing interests–changed over time? How? Why? Are these shifts in any way due to being a woman in academia?

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