

## Editing the English of Clients in Academia in the Netherlands: an Authors' Editor's Perspective

Joy BURROUGH-BOENISCH

Freelance author's editor, Unclogged English, Netherlands

[unclogged.english@gmail.com](mailto:unclogged.english@gmail.com)

Among the factors responsible for the widespread use of English in Dutch universities today is a switch after World War II from using German as the language of science, and a more recent resolve by Dutch universities, accelerated by the Bologna Process, to offer many courses in English. In a parallel development, within Dutch society as a whole, English as an additional language has burgeoned (Edwards, 2014), with the result that in terms of workplace proficiency in English, the Netherlands ranks second among the 63 countries in the EF English Proficiency Index for Companies (2014). The implication for language professionals working for clients in academia is that the demand for English editing exceeds the demand for Dutch to English translation, with requests for editing coming from all levels of academia: faculty, PhD candidates, and Master and Bachelor students. In this presentation, on the basis of almost four decades of editing for clients in Dutch universities I will offer a personal perspective on the challenges and opportunities authors' editors in the Netherlands encounter today. I will discuss the networking and training opportunities developed by colleague language professionals that authors' editors working in the Netherlands can draw on to hone their editorial skills and professionalise their services. And I will outline how authors' editors' concern about the ethical aspects of editing for students has resulted in SENSE (the Netherlands-based association for language professionals working in English) developing guidelines for editing student texts. I will argue that support such as that developed by and for English-language editors in the Netherlands should serve to inspire incidental editors of non-native academic English elsewhere (such as those featuring in Harwood et al., 2009 and Willey & Tanimoto, 2015) to seek training and professionalisation and thereby improve their confidence, skill, efficacy, and job and client satisfaction.

### References

Edwards, A. (2014). English in the Netherlands: Functions, forms and attitudes. PhD thesis, University of Cambridge. Retrieved from [https://alisonedwardsdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/phd-thesis\\_edwards.pdf](https://alisonedwardsdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/phd-thesis_edwards.pdf)

EF English Proficiency Index for Companies. (2014). EF Education First. Retrieved from <http://www.ef.co.uk/epi/downloads/>

Harwood, N., Austin, L., & Macaulay, R. (2009). Proofreading in a UK university: Proofreaders' beliefs, practices, and experiences. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 18(3), 166–190.

Willey, M. & Tanimoto, K. (2015). "We're drifting into strange territory here": What think-aloud protocols reveal about convenience editing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 27(March 2015), 68–83

### Biodata

With two degrees in geography and a doctorate in linguistics (for a thesis on Dutch scientific English), Netherlands-based Joy Burrough-Boenisch is a freelance editor and translator for scientists and academics, a teacher of scientific English and a trainer of language professionals. She is a founder and honorary member of SENSE (Society of English-Native-Speaking Editors in the Netherlands). Her publications on editing non-native English include chapters in the EASE Science Editors' Handbook

and in *Supporting Research Writing: Roles and challenges in multilingual setting* (ed. Valerie Matarese). She has given workshops for language professionals in various European countries and for the European Commission.