

“It is not just a question of English”: Two Case Studies from Iceland on Writing English for Publication Purposes

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English has become the language of academic publishing and international scholars find themselves pressured to present their research findings in competitive English speaking journals. Often this is a condition of professional advancement (Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2015). Only recently, researchers have begun to examine how L2 writers fare in relation to L1 writers in the competitive world of academic publishing. The disadvantage of second language users of English in the publishing process has been established, especially among scholars in the “traditionally limited” English access countries of Eastern and Southern Europe (Lillis & Curry, 2010; Lillis et al, 2010) and in Asia (Flowerdew, 2008). The experiences of highly English proficient scholars who work in rich English input environments have received less attention. Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörnsdóttir (2013) conducted a survey in one such context among academics at the University of Iceland on their views on academic writing in English. A qualitative difference was identified between the views of academics from different Faculties. The survey was followed by in-depth interviews with ten scholars from the five different Faculties. Several themes emerged from the interviews. In this presentation, the identified themes will be illustrated and supported by examples from two interviewees from different Faculties who express different, often conflicting, views on this topic. The findings indicate that writing academic papers in a second language has more dimensions than the expected practical ones such as extra time, effort and expense (Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2013). The interviews reveal a broad spectrum of professional, psychological and cultural dimensions that are under researched in the literature. Among them are the culture of the discipline, intended audience, personal conflicts and allegiances, issues of identity and authenticity.

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Biodata

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