

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR

John Flowerdew's essential bookshelf: English for research publication purposes (ERPP)

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(Received 9 March 2023; accepted 17 March 2023)



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I am very eclectic in my approach to Applied Linguistics, having published in fields as diverse as discourse studies, pragmatics, critical discourse studies, English for Specific Purposes, corpus linguistics, and second language listening, among others. I therefore had a problem of deciding on what to concentrate on when invited to write this piece, which has to focus on a specific topic. After some soul-searching, I decided on an area that has always interested me: ENGLISH FOR RESEARCH PUBLICATION PURPOSES (ERPP). ERPP is a sub-field of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) focussed on research and instruction related to the communicative needs and practices of professional and student researchers who need to publish the results of their research through the medium of English. Given the exponential growth of English as the international medium of research publication, the majority of such researchers are plurilinguals, who do not have English as their mother tongue (although English may be their first language when it comes to publication). As a student of foreign languages myself, it has always struck me that the need to write in an additional language is a burden that plurilingual scholars have to carry that their Anglophone counterparts are exempted from. Any efforts to assist this group are therefore welcome. Having said that, I am not denying that Anglophones are confronted with their own problems when it comes to writing for publication and ERPP has increasingly come to focus also on this group.

My first encounter with the challenges of research writing came when I was studying for an M.Ed. in the UK and a Latin American student asked me to translate his M.Sc. dissertation on Mercantile Insurance, if I remember correctly. Required to submit the dissertation in English, but unable to do so at the required level, this student had drafted his work in Spanish and approached me as a speaker

of Spanish to translate it for him into English. Being faced with this task introduced me to some of the difficulties of writing in a technical register in a foreign language, even if one has a decent level of competence in more general areas. Later, when working at Sultan Qaboos University in the Sultanate of Oman, I was confronted with the reverse situation, when a colleague in Botany asked me to translate a conference abstract she had written in English that needed to be submitted in French. This time I adopted some techniques that I later discussed in a publication involving the analysis of previously published abstracts in the field in order to discover the particular registerial features of the genre in French (Flowerdew, 1993).

When I had moved to Hong Kong, in 1990, I decided to study writing for publication in a systematic way and drafted a research proposal to do just that. A large-scale programme of university expansion was underway, and many new local Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking academics would be required to do research and publish in English. The goal of the project was to look forward to the challenges such novice scholars would confront and to possible ways to address some of these challenges. The research proposal was successful, and this became the beginning of my engagement with a field that came to be referred to as ERPP.

My selection begins with a book that introduces the field. It is then divided into three sections, corresponding to three of the major fields of ERPP research: understanding what academics write, understanding how they write and get published, and understanding how to help novice academics write and get published.

Introduction to the field

- (1) Flowerdew, J., & Habibie, P. (2022). *Introducing English for research publication purposes*. Routledge.

It may seem self-serving to make my first recommendation a book by myself (co-authored with Pejman Habibie). My justification for its being on the essential bookshelf is that, at the time of writing, this is the only introductory overview of ERPP available. Given that ERPP is a rapidly expanding field, there will no doubt be other introductory texts that might be recommended in future. The volume tries to present an accessible overview of the field, with topics ranging from the global context of English as an international lingua franca and the globalisation of scholarship; the historical development of the journal article as the preeminent research genre; the various theoretical and empirical approaches that have been adopted in ERPP; the range of pedagogical practices adopted for ERPP; peer review and associated gate-keeping practices; the role of digital technology in the dissemination of research; and critical issues such as the role of plurilingual scholars, controversies concerning editorial bias, and academic fraud. The volume concludes with an argument for a greater role for ERPP in the university curriculum, a step up from its current status as a peripheral field, as indicated by the marginal status of its practitioners in university English departments or language centres. I am very pleased that my co-author, Pejman Habibie, invited me to join him in writing this book, as it gave me an opportunity to familiarise myself with certain areas that I did not know much about and to delve deeper into other areas that I had long been interested in, but had not had time to work on. It also made me realise how ERPP has the potential to become a bona fide field of study, with an already coherent and rapidly-growing body of literature.

Understanding what academics write

Applied linguistics' earliest and continuing contribution to language teaching is linguistic analysis. Accurate descriptions of the language are able to inform syllabus and materials design in what Halliday (2006a) refers to as an '*Applicable Linguistics*'. Applied Linguistics, of course, helps teachers in the classroom, showing them the best way to present the linguistic information they are seeking

to impart to their students. With regard to ERPP, as a sub-discipline of English for Specific Purposes, an understanding of the linguistic and discursive features of the specialist registers and genres involved in the various disciplines that students have to engage with is essential.

- (2) Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.

If there is one text that anyone interested in ERPP and, indeed EAP more broadly, needs to be familiar with, it is this one. I came across a precursor to this book (Swales, 1981)¹ when I taught on a British Council ESP Summer at Aston University, where Swales had set up a repository of ESP literature, and it did much to fuel my interest in genre analysis and how it might contribute to language pedagogy. Swales defines genre as a class of communicative events that share common characteristics in terms of a series of moves and constituent steps and associated lexicogrammatical features. The concept is exemplified by means of the four-move model of the introduction sections of research articles, the CREATE A RESEARCH SPACE (CARS) model, which is perhaps Swales's best-known contribution and has been used as a tool for teaching. Another important concept in Swales's theory of genre is that of DISCOURSE COMMUNITY, the users of a genre who share a common communicative purpose. Although I have put this work under the heading of 'Understanding what academics write', it is in fact equally important for its contribution to pedagogy (see Flowerdew, 2015), with its model of the reflexive relation between text structure and function, and also in its introduction of the notion of RHETORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING as a means of alerting learners to the way genres are structured and textualised and in its exemplification of how this might be applied pedagogically, by means of tasks. Although over 30 years old now, this volume continues to be cited by a very high percentage of writers on genre analysis and ERPP. Swales is truly the doyen of the field.

- (3) Halliday, M. A. K. (2006b). *The language of science*. The collected works (vol. 5) (J. J. Webster, Ed.). Bloomsbury.

Michael Halliday was a regular visitor to my former university, City University of Hong Kong (CityU), where my colleague Jonathan Webster had created the Halliday Centre for Applied Linguistics, and I was fortunate to get to know Michael and his wife Ruqaiya Hasan, also a formidable linguist, quite well. Part of the reason for Halliday's visits was to work with Jonathan Webster on the editing of his ten-volume collected works. I have chosen the fifth volume in the collection for my bookshelf, because it offers important insights into the understanding of scientific language, which are essential for any researcher and/or teacher of ERPP.

In his preface to the volume, editor Jonathan Webster uses as an *exergue* a sentence of scientific text cited by Halliday: 'The rate of glass crack growth depends on the magnitude of the applied stress.' Webster asks: 'What about this quote identifies it to the reader as the discourse of science?' and 'How did these features evolve into what we recognize as scientific English?' The answer to these questions lies in the notion of what Halliday terms grammatical metaphor, 'how the grammar shifts from a predominantly clausal to a predominantly nominal mode of construal' (p. 191), how much of what would be stated in everyday language by means of clauses is formatted in scientific language as nominal groups. This, for me, is an essential insight into how scientific text is constructed.

Linked to this notion of grammatical metaphor is a related one to do with how connected discourse is held together and progresses. Essential to this process are the notions of theme and rheme, the theme as the point of departure of a clause and the rheme the part following the theme that introduces the new information. In connected discourse, the theme picks up what has gone before and the rheme moves it forward with new information; to do this succinctly the prior information is repackaged in the theme by means of grammatical metaphor as a nominal group. Grammatical metaphor and

¹Later republished as Swales (2011).

thematic development are thus key elements in understanding how scientific language is constructed and provide an important resource for teachers of ERPP for understanding the texts their students are seeking to produce. These phenomena apply as much to bureaucratic language as they do to that of science, so Halliday's work is also valuable for ERPP practitioners involved with Business English.

- (4) Hyland, K. (2000/2004). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. Longman; University of Michigan Press.

Ken Hyland is another CityU connection, having been a colleague for six or seven years in the English department, before going on to greater things – first at the Institute of Education, University of London, and then as Director of the English centre at the University of Hong Kong. Having retired to the UK from Hong Kong some years ago, we both happen to be neighbours in Kent. Ken was working on *Disciplinary discourses* at the same time as I was working on the ERPP project I mentioned in the introduction to this piece. Both of our studies involved text-based interviews with academics, although the outputs were rather different. Text-based interviews provide an important element of triangulation for textual analysis, which is important in coming to a better understanding of a text, a fundamental skill for any ERPP practitioner or researcher. What I like about Ken's work is how he combines interviews and focus groups with disciplinary informants with detailed corpus-based analysis of the sort of texts that they produce.

Hyland is most interested in the interactional dimensions of academic texts and how disciplinary discourse communities construct their discursive identities. He does this by studying not just research articles, the most prestigious genre of scientific research, but also book reviews and textbooks, which provide a comparative dimension. He demonstrates through his analysis of various rhetorical elements (citations, reporting verbs, the allocation of praise and blame, promotion, hedging and metadiscourse,) how writers engage with readers and seek to control their readers' anticipated responses.

There is much food for thought here for ERPP teachers and materials writers in revealing the strategies that writers in the various disciplines use to persuade their readers of the validity of their knowledge claims, strategies that can potentially be passed on to learners, as indicated in the section in chapter 7 on the teaching of academic writing.

- (5) Lin, Y., & Chen, M. (2022). 'The more important findings are sustained': A diachronic perspective on the genre of the retraction notice. *English for Specific Purposes*, 67, 18–30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2022.03.002>

The three pieces I have listed thus far in this section are all classic books and were produced at least 17 years ago. As a final offering in this section, I would like to suggest something more current. This gives me the opportunity to recommend a very recent article by two of my former Ph.D. students, Yuting Lin and Meilin Chen. Although most ERPP instruction, at least by language teachers, is focussed on teaching students how to write research articles (Li & Flowerdew, 2020), an arguably equally important role for ERPP is preparing novice researchers to function effectively in the broader culture of international research and publication, be that by familiarising them with the whole range of research genres, showing them how to interact with editors and reviewers, how to write grant proposals and conference abstracts, and so forth, and explicating the power relations involved with all of these activities (Flowerdew, 2019a).

An aspect of international publication that has increasingly been coming to the fore in recent years is the need for an increasing number of research articles to be retracted, or withdrawn. This can be owing to flawed, erroneous, or falsified results, the inclusion of findings that have already been published elsewhere, or plagiarism. A developing genre in this regard is the retraction notice, a text written by the journal editors or authors of the retracted article and published in the journal in question, explaining the reason for the retraction. Li and Chen's article is a diachronic discourse study tracing changes in the genre of the retraction notice by comparing earlier (1966–1996) and current (2016–2020) forms. Li and

Chen used classical genre analysis methods as developed by Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993), supported by corpus tools, to analyse the rhetorical moves/steps and their linguistic realisations in 200 RAs (research articles) from high-impact biomedical journals. The paper shows how genres are always evolving and never stable, especially a newly developed one such as the retraction notice. One of the reasons why I like this article is its combination of genre analysis and corpus methods, two areas I have myself worked in. Regarding the latter, if I had more space, I would have included a purely corpus-based study in this section, as, arguably, any genre analysis nowadays needs to make use of this method.

Understanding how academics write and get published

In understanding how to help novice academics write and get published, an important theory is that of social constructivism. A social constructivist approach to ERPP research views text production as a social practice, investigating such issues as scholars' writing procedures, their interactions with colleagues and gatekeepers (editors and referees), and the pressures brought to bear on them in their various contexts. The goal of this approach, a move towards which we have already seen with the inclusion of interviews with writers in Hyland (2000/2004), is to develop an understanding of the *modus operandi* and practical experiences in going about writing for publication of distinct groups of writers and individuals. Situated accounts of scholars' practices and of their perceptions, problems, and strategies concerning such practices can serve as exemplars against which other situations can be compared and contribute to theory building. They may also serve to bring about policy changes at either a local or broader level, and they may feed into pedagogy.

- (6) St. John, M. J. (1987). Writing processes of Spanish scientists publishing in English. *English for Specific Purposes*, 6(2), 113–120. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906\(87\)90016-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906(87)90016-0)

The earliest study using the social constructivist approach is this investigation into the composing processes of 30 Spanish scientists writing for publication in English at the University of Cordoba, Spain. St. John conducted her investigation because she wanted to find out how her university in the United Kingdom (Aston University) could better design courses to assist her target group of English as an Additional Language (EAL) writers, so the study can be considered as a form of needs analysis. St. John's findings drew on an analysis of participants' texts, with some interpretation of their cognitive processes and motives, based on interviews and informal discussions.

St. John noted that few organisational changes were made to the participants' texts once the initial drafts had been completed, a finding that she attributed to participants' prior exposure to many articles in English and the similar format of articles in both English and Spanish. 80–90% of changes were to do with word order and lexis. While some participants started to write first in Spanish and then translate or have their work translated into English, they soon changed to writing directly in English, which was the choice of all participants. Three strategies were used: writing directly in their own English; writing from a Spanish outline; or building a jigsaw using published articles as a source. All participants employed an Anglophone or highly competent English speaker to check and edit their texts. They found the discussion the most difficult section to write, followed by the introduction, with the method and results being the easiest. They tended to rely on adapting material from previous texts while writing.

We can see from this study that the social constructivist approach, supported by textual analysis, can yield interesting data on how a group of EAL writers go about writing for publication, along with their perceptions, problems, and strategies with regard to the issue. Although, as with any such approach, no generalisations can be made from the findings of this study, they do provide baseline data on which to compare subsequent findings in comparable situations.

- (7) Canagarajah, A. S. (1996). 'Nondiscursive' requirements in academic publishing, material resources of periphery scholars, and the politics of knowledge production. *Written Communication*, 13(4), 435–472. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088396013004001>

In 1996, with George Braine, a leading activist for non-native speakers in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), I organised a colloquium at the International TESOL convention of that year in Orlando, Florida, entitled 'Non-native writers and TESOL journal editors: A dialogue' (Braine & Flowerdew, 1997). Suresh Canagarajah was one of the participants we invited. This paper, aspects of which were presented at our colloquium, is a partly autobiographical case study conducted while Canagarajah was working as a scholar in Jaffna, Sri Lanka (see also Canagarajah, 2002). It is an account of the difficulties he and his colleagues experienced in conducting research and attempting international publication in a peripheral context at a time of civil war. His data consisted mostly of field notes based on participant observation and articles published by his academic colleagues (he was unable to conduct formal interviews because of the situation in Jaffna at the time) (Canagarajah, 2002). Non-discursive deficiencies identified by Canagarajah included disruption to the power supply, limited access to communication facilities, lack of library facilities and consequent difficulty in meeting the deadlines of journals, on the one hand, and, more fundamentally, in putting together a well-documented and adequately-referenced article in the first place, on the other. In spite of the challenges, Jaffna scholars had 'coping strategies' (p. 466), such as making up for lack of reference material by strategic use of secondary sources and passing them off as based on primary sources and inserting references to works that had not been read. Although the conditions described by Canagarajah in this study are extreme, this paper did a lot to raise awareness of some of the difficulties and inequalities encountered by scholars working on the periphery of international publication and is important in the ERPP literature for that reason. It led the way for much recent work in what is now referred to as the decolonisation of the academy, an important aspect of which is concerned with giving so-called peripheral scholars a greater voice (e.g., Habibie, 2022).

- (8) Flowerdew, J. (2000). Discourse community, legitimate peripheral participation, and the non-native English-speaking scholar. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(1), 127–150. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588099>

According to Google Scholar, this is my most frequently cited article, and I like to think that it has had a (small) impact on the field in highlighting the struggles that early career scholars go through, especially if they are working in peripheral contexts. As I mentioned in the introduction to this piece, when I first went to Hong Kong 1990, there was a programme to expand the university system and to encourage more local participation in academic research and publication. In support of this initiative, I initiated a research project investigating how local Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking academics went about writing for publication in English. This paper is one of the results of this project. It is a case study of a young Hong Kong scholar in Communication Studies and his experience in publishing a scholarly article in an international refereed journal on his return from doctoral study in the United States. The article seeks to show what it means to be a non-anglophone researcher based in a non-anglophone country seeking international publication.

The (triangulated) analysis, which showed the process the participant went through to be quite a struggle, was based on his draft and final texts; interviews and email communication with the participant; communications between the participant and the journal editor, reviewers, and an in-house editor; field notes; and discussion with an editor who helped the participant with his writing. The study also involved participant verification (Ball, 1988), that is, the research participant reviewed the research report and provided input to it. Because the study adopted an ethnographically inspired approach, it did not begin with a preestablished set of research questions; the key issues were rather developed out of the data. These included the importance of knowing the rules of the publishing 'game'; the mediated nature of the publication process; the importance of adapting content to fit the expectations of the journal; the problem of distinguishing the dividing line between content and form; and the problems of geographical isolation. These are all important lessons for early-career scholars and for ERPP practitioners and researchers alike. The article argued that the concepts of discourse community and legitimate peripheral participation are valuable in understanding the process of plurilingual scholarly

apprenticeship. The approach has subsequently been adopted in a number of other studies (e.g., Li, 2006; Sun & Cheung, 2022).

- (9) Li, Y. (2007). Apprentice scholarly writing in a community of practice: An interview of an NNES graduate student writing a research article. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41, 55–79. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2007.tb00040.x>

Yongyan Li, another former Ph.D. student of mine whom I am very happy to include in my suggested list of readings, has published a number of individual case studies focussing on the experiences of Chinese novice and experienced scholars when writing with a view to publication in English. As Li (2007) points out, case studies allow for varied research perspectives and methodologies and for comparison and theory building, as well as being conducive to highlighting the individual perspectives of the research participants. In this particular study, the focus is on a graduate student in Chemistry writing the first draft of an article.

In line with the social constructivist approach, Li collected a rich set of data, including on-line blogs written by the student; drafts of his developing text; his Bulletin Board System message exchanges conducted while composing his text; email exchanges Li conducted with the participant; and post-hoc interviews. The study shows how the participant engaged with the local and global research communities, the laboratory data he was working with, and his previous experience of writing research articles. Of particular note was how he analysed the rhetorical strategies and features adopted in published articles in order to incorporate them into his own writing. In addition, his previous experience of getting an article published led him to pay particular attention to the organisation and structure of his text, to emphasise the positive aspects of his study, and to make sure he got the right ‘angle’ on the research being reported (p. 66). In common with the other studies in this section, Li’s paper takes us well beyond the actual text to explore the contexts in which the text is produced, including, in this case, the perspectives and thought processes of its author. As with most of Li’s work, this study of an individual demonstrates the power of the social constructivist approach in understanding the situated nature of the writing for publication process.

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

I encountered some of the findings of this publication when Teresa Lillis and Mary Jane Curry presented at an important conference in Tenerife, Spain (Lillis & Curry, 2007), the first devoted to ERPP (PRISEAL, 2007). Lillis and Curry’s (2010) subsequent book-length exploration into the writing and publication practices of 50 multilingual psychology scholars in four periphery European countries is a seminal publication highlighting the potential of the social-constructivist approach to researching ERPP. Data collected over several years included participants’ manuscripts and drafts, interviews, observations, document analysis, analysis of written correspondence, and reviewers’ and editors’ comments. Lillis and Curry made use of what they refer to as ‘text histories’, an approach involving the collection of the various drafts of a manuscript and data from as many people involved in the manuscript as possible (editors, reviewers, colleagues, etc.), including cyclical face-to-face discussion with authors of the manuscripts and drafts. Lillis and Curry also made great use of ethnographic vignettes to illustrate the research and publication process.

One of the main findings of the study was that, as we have seen with the other publications reviewed in this section, knowledge construction is not the product of a single author but is a joint creation involving many parties besides the author(s), referred to by Lillis and Curry as LITERACY BROKERS. Another key finding is that scholars in the study rely on participation in both local and international networks in the writing and publication processes. Lillis and Curry also examine the hierarchical power relations between the two levels of ‘local’ and ‘global’. These levels are important when scholars decide where to publish their work; new, original research is targeted at international journals,

while overviews and applied work are more likely targeted at local journals. For me, one of the most important insights of Lillis and Curry's book is the way it highlights how an academic text is not the product of a single individual, but the joint production of a whole community of contributors, some near and some far away.

Understanding how to help novice academics write and get published

Most scholars receive little or no formal pedagogical support on writing for publication, neither in terms of developing their academic writing skills nor learning how to deal with non-discursive issues, such as how to select appropriate journals for their work or communicate appropriately with editors and reviewers. This is where ERPP pedagogy comes in and there is a whole range of issues at stake in this endeavour, not least in arguing the case for ERPP provision within the academy, where such provision should be located, and how best to deliver it. To mention a few of these issues, some argue that ERPP should be provided within the disciplinary departments, others think it should be part of the role of the university language centre, while some think it should be the job of the English department. Some ERPP practitioners argue for a more critical approach to ERPP provision, encouraging learners to question some of the more inequitable practices when it comes to international publication, while others do not see this as their role at all and take a more pragmatic approach. As for teaching and learning, there have been exciting developments in the use of corpora and data-driven learning and in the on-line delivery of ERPP provision. Unfortunately, I have only two spaces left on my bookshelf. I would have liked to include something on data-driven learning (e.g., Lee & Swales, 2006), but I have had to forego that selection in favour of two texts to which I have a personal attachment.

- (11) Kwan, B. S. C. (2010). An investigation of instruction in research publishing offered in doctoral programs: The Hong Kong case. *Higher Education*, 59, 55–68. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-009-9233-x>

An important article on ERPP needs analysis and, by implication, course design is by Becky Kwan (2010), another former CityU colleague. As part of her Ph.D. under Vijay Bhatia (also at CityU), Kwan investigated the extent to which Hong Kong Ph.D. students' requirements in terms of being able to publish research papers during their doctoral study and the early phase of their academic careers were being met. Kwan posited that, in order to publish internationally, competencies are required in four major domains: scholarly communication, strategic research conception, strategic management of publishing, and strategic management of thesis publishing. These competencies were investigated by means of an analysis of documents from doctoral degree granting universities and interviews with doctoral students.

Because Kwan was working on genre analysis for her Ph.D., an interesting aspect of her study is how she is able to break down the four major competencies into sub-components. For example, in terms of scholarly communication (communicating one's research through an RA), in addition to generic writing skills such as argumentation and coherence, writers need to develop a command of the schematic structure, discipline-specific citation language, and metadiscourse of the research paper. Furthermore, authors need to be familiar with the occluded genres (Swales, 1996, 2004) required in communicating with gatekeepers about the RA they are trying to publish.

The conclusion of Kwan's study was that instructional attention was skewed to the first of the posited competencies, scholarly communication, while attention to the three other areas was minimal. Kwan's study fulfilled an important gap in the ERPP literature, not only in Hong Kong, but internationally. A more recent study of ERPP courses by Li and Flowerdew (2020), for example, came to a similar conclusion, albeit that the courses in this study were all run by language, rather than content, teachers. This highlights the need for ERPP to focus more on some of what Canagarajah (1996) referred to as the NON-DISCURSIVE requirements of the writing for publication

process (and, in order to do so, perhaps collaborate more with disciplinary specialists, as indeed is recommended by Kwan).

- (12) Swales, J., & Feak, C. (2012). *Academic writing for graduate students*, 3rd ed. University of Michigan Press.

This book is not a research book, but it sits on my bookshelf because, although a course book for students (probably the most widely used text in university language centres and other venues where students are taught to write for research publication), it also provides much pedagogical food for thought for ERPP practitioners, be they classroom teachers, curriculum and materials developers, or teacher educators. Now in its third edition since 1994, the book acknowledges various recent developments in the field of academic writing and ERPP, as follows. First, the traditional distinction between native and non-native writers is being eroded, especially where many ‘expert users’ of English are employing the language as their primary mode of increasingly international academic written communication. Second, internet communication in its various forms is now almost universal. Third, graduate students are increasingly becoming more involved in international conferences and publication, often with their supervisors and/or peers. Fourth, writing is now being recognised as a more collaborative activity involving networked activity; the single-authored publication is now the exception, not the norm.

The book is a model of how to design a linguistically-focussed ERPP course. In line with ideas first presented in Swales (1990) and further developed in subsequent work, the volume encourages students to position themselves as junior scholars in their academic communities and work collaboratively. To this end, it employs a task-based methodology, involving analytic group discussion and genre consciousness-raising. The materials are grounded in corpus-informed linguistic analysis, on the one hand, and require students to do their own corpus-based analysis, on the other.

Final thoughts

My Ph.D. supervisor, Christopher Brumfit, in probably the most widely-cited definition of Applied Linguistics, defined it as ‘the theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue’ (Brumfit, 1995, p. 27). ERPP is a perfect example to fit this definition, because it is concerned quite simply with the ‘real-world’ problem of how individuals strive to research and publish their research in English. For the majority of researchers in the world today, English is not their mother tongue and so it represents a particular challenge; but it also represents a challenge, albeit a lesser one, for researchers who have been brought up speaking English as their first language, because the English used in academic research is not the same as the English used in everyday life.² Indeed, probably like the majority of readers of this article, I find researching and writing in academic English to be a challenge.

I began this piece with some examples of how I came to be aware of the ‘real-world problem’ that is the focus of ERPP. In the two examples I gave, the (attempted) solution was translation. I put ‘attempted’ in parentheses here, because, owing to the specificity of the language of disciplinary genres, unless one has access to disciplinary specialists, translation is not an effective method. Many researchers try this approach and give up, as was the case with the participants in St. John’s (1987) study. Finding better ways to prepare novice (and more experienced) scholars to confront this challenge of researching and writing for publication is the goal that research in ERPP has set itself.

Hopefully, my bookshelf selection will be of some interest to both those new to and already active in the field. The pieces I have cited are not particularly recent, but I felt it more important to recommend readings that can be considered as more foundational. There is a lot of excellent more recent work that I could have included and there is a lot more work to be done in the future. The field is

²See Flowerdew (2019b) for a more nuanced argument on this issue.

currently flourishing and yet still in need of much further work, which I encourage readers to embark upon, if they are not already doing so.

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