

How Should We Talk about the Dominance of English in Research?

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Criticism of English

Who is doing the criticism?

- Mostly (some) social scientists and humanities scholars...
- ...but here are some examples from biology and ecology:
 - **T. Amano et al. (2016)**, “Languages are still a major barrier to global science”
 - **V. Ramírez-Castañeda (2020)**, “Disadvantages in preparing and publishing scientific papers caused by the dominance of the English language in science: The case of Colombian researchers in biological sciences”
 - **M. Nuñez, T. Amano (2021)**, “Monolingual searches can limit and bias results in global literature reviews”
 - **E. Angulo (2021)**, “Non-English languages enrich scientific knowledge: The example of economic costs of biological invasions”

Criticism of English: “Englishization”

- **R. Phillipson (2009)**, “Linguistic imperialism continued”
- **M. Boussebaa & J. Tienari (2021)**, “Englishization and the politics of knowledge production in management studies”
- **K. Tam (2019)**, *The Englishized Subject: Postcolonial Writings in Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia*

Criticism of English: “Multilingualism”

- **A. Balula & D. Leão (2021)**, “Multilingualism within scholarly communication in SSH: A literature review”
- **E. Steigerwald et al. (2022)**, “Overcoming language barriers in academia: Machine translation tools and a vision for a multilingual future”
- **M. J. Curry & T. Lillis (2024)**, “Multilingualism in academic writing for publication: Putting English in its place”
- See also: **The Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (2022)**, *Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment*

Criticism of English: “Decolonization”

- **E. Cechetti et al. (2020)**, “Decolonizar el saber en la investigación en educación: el pensamiento-otro como estrategia epistémica para la producción académica diversificada”
- **M. C. Dawson (2020)**, “Rehumanising the university for an alternative future: Decolonisation, alternative epistemologies and cognitive justice”
- **A. C. Suzina (2021)**, “English as lingua franca: Or the sterilisation of scientific work”
- **F. Cubillos et al. (2022)**, “Academia, investigación y pueblos indígenas: reflexiones desde una experiencia de diálogo de saberes”

- See also: **L. R. Medina (2019)**, “A geopolitics of bad English”
- See also: **S. H. Alatas (2000)**, “Academic imperialism”

However...



Welcome to DIGRA CEE!

DiGRA CEE (Digital Games Research Association: Central and Eastern Europe) is a gathering of scholars who aim to support and develop the academic debate within game studies and related fields in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. The chapter's main activity is to organize the annual CEE Game Studies conference (CEEGS). The thematic scope of the conference is not limited to regional topics, and it welcomes participants from anywhere in the world!

Read more



Przemysław Czarnek, Minister of Science and Education in Poland (2020–2023), fot. Adrian Grycuk, [CC BY-SA 3.0 PL](#)

See also: W. Kosć (2022), „Academics Say University Evaluation Was Driven by Politics”

Examples in academic literature

- **J. A. Douglass (2021)**, *Neo-nationalism and universities: Populists, autocrats, and the future of higher education*
- **L. A. Ahlers & S. Christmann-Budian (2023)**, “The politics of university rankings in China”
- **K. Brøgger (2023)**, “Post-Cold War governance arrangements in Europe: The university between European integration and rising nationalisms”
- See also: **K. Hyland (2016)**, “Academic publishing and the myth of linguistic injustice”

Reconciling the two sides?

Examples in academic literature

- **J. A. Coleman (2006)**, “English-medium teaching in European higher education”
- **S. Krawczyk (2023)**, “Disciplinary responses to the rise of English in metrics-driven social sciences and humanities”
- **L. Bowker et al. (2024)**, “What can be done about scholarly communication’s diversity problem?”

Coleman, 2006 (p. 3):

“Even dispassionate observers draw a clear distinction between a *lingua franca*, used in communications between two non-native speakers, and asymmetrical dominance, where communication takes place between one native speaker and one non-native speaker . . .

And accepting English as a *lingua franca* . . . does not necessarily mean siding with the imperialists . . .

Once ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) has been objectively described as a variety and has lost its stigma, and once the previously assumed target of native speaker proficiency is set aside as ‘unrealistic and unnecessary’ (Ritzen 2004: 37), then new and less inequitable conceptions of global English and its learning and teaching become possible”

Practical example I:

Canadian Journal of Political Science

- no longer includes references in the word count of manuscripts to support authors and reviewers to engage in scholarship that moves towards citational equity and to make space for and amplify bodies of scholarship and ways of knowing that have systemically been marginalized in disciplinary knowledge production processes;

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/canadian-journal-of-political-science-revue-canadienne-de-science-politique/information/author-instructions/preparing-your-materials>

Practical example II: Digital Games Research Association's conference, reviewer guidelines in 2023

- The DiGRA 2023 Program Chairs asked reviewers to refrain from commenting on the linguistic quality of submissions (unless the language rendered them illegible)...
- ...and to pay attention to the diversity in references.

Lynne Bowker

Mikael Laakso

Janne Pölonen

Claire Redhead

May 23rd, 2024

What can be done about scholarly communication's diversity problem?

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Estimated reading time: 7 minutes

MULTILINGUALISM: Recommendations for consideration by different actors in scholarly publishing

Authors/researchers

- Write all parts of a manuscript in a way that presents the content clearly, concisely and completely to make the content accessible to all readers (including those reading in an additional language) to facilitate translation of the content into other languages.
- Practice citation diversity (e.g. citing research published in other languages) and consider including a citation diversity statement with your own articles, including any linguistic limits on literature searches (e.g. searches that have been conducted only in English).
- Increase visibility of publications in languages other than English by providing an English title and abstract.
- Provide abstracts in multiple languages.
- Disseminate work in multiple languages (e.g. via pre-print servers, blog posts, press releases, plain language summaries).
- Identify the languages in which you are able to accept peer review or editorial feedback in the cover letter that accompanies your submission.
- Consider language diversity when recommending potential peer reviewers for your manuscript.

¡Muchas gracias!

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