English as an Additional Language in Research Publication and Communication
Introduction

The vast majority of publications in relation to professional academic writing have long since begun by acknowledging – and at least implicitly bewailing – the dominance of English in scientific communication of all kinds. Pressure to publish in English becomes ever stronger and affects a growing number of scholars who are thus forced to use English as an additional language (EAL). This pressure is now not only felt by those working in the hard sciences and seeking to publish their work internationally but by researchers in the social sciences and humanities. Academic tenure, promotion and even salaries depend on the number of publications in high impact ISI journals. Even those who eschew ambitions of international publication are not exempt from the additional hurdle that writing in English represents. It is now the case that even journals produced outside the English-speaking world in countries such as Spain, Taiwan, Malaysia and Sri Lanka are becoming English-medium. Aside from the gradual disappearance of academic registers in languages other than English and the tendency to focus on global issues rather than local concerns, the demand that researchers produce publications in English leads to obvious inequities. Many EAL users rely on ‘literacy brokers’ (Lillis & Curry, 2006) such as translators and authors’ editors to revise their texts in accordance with the demands of editors of English-medium publications. The services of such brokers are often costly and for scholars on the periphery entirely prohibitive. Where material resources are scarce, conducting research and then writing it up presents additional challenges, many of which have been documented by Canagarajah (1996) and Salager Meyer (2008).

Research aimed at supporting EAL scholars now dates back almost half a century. Studies of published academic genres in English have revealed many of the characteristic practices of accomplished
writers. There have also been scholars who have focussed on the inequities of a system in which ‘smaller’ languages are often dominated by English to such an extent that academic registers in these languages all but disappear.

The scholars who have taken the second of these approaches have proposed initiatives designed to promote the creation of multilingual scientific journals, more flexibility on the part of the reviewers of international journals, and the implementation of more resources for researchers working in developing countries. They make pleas for the reduction of book prices and registration fees to facilitate the participation of researchers ‘on the periphery’ in international fora and calls to publishing houses to create open access journals rather than demanding hefty subscription fees from scholars and institutions with only limited resources.

Those whose main focus of attention has been the first approach have explored a variety of academic genres in English and in many other languages, both from a genre-analytic and a teaching-oriented perspective, in order to elucidate how scientific communication is used by members of specific disciplinary communities. The recent socio-linguistic approaches argue for the study of the rhetorical features of a genre in the social and cultural context in which it is produced, and encourage a close engagement between researchers and members of the disciplinary communities under scrutiny in order to better understand expectations and social practices. A complementary line of research investigates the efficacy of teaching materials developed from the findings of EAP research in a bid to address the needs of academics who use English as an additional language and who are required not only to teach in English, but also to conduct and publish research in this language.

This collection of selected empirical papers mainly focuses on this first approach. Some are cross-cultural analyses of differences between genre instantiations produced in English and other languages including Greek, Indonesian, Polish and Spanish. Other papers focus on aspects of English academic discourse alone. There are analyses of the rhetorical structure of genres such as the peer review and the conference presentation as well as studies of the socio-pragmatic and lexico-grammatical features of academic discourse, particular areas
of interest being nominalizations, modality and pronoun use. In many cases the corpus used for the study is one the researcher has compiled for the purposes of the study while in others established corpora such as MICASE are used. A wide range of academic disciplines are represented among them Medicine, Linguistics and Business Studies.

Despite their diversity, the papers all have in common the aim of informing EAP practitioners and researchers so that they in turn might be better equipped to assist those scholars who use EAL to overcome the barriers to publication they may face when communicating their research in the international context. Furthermore, the contributions all have their origins in papers and workshops presented at the first conference on Publishing and Presenting Research Internationally: Issues for Speakers of English as an Additional Language, which was held at the University of La Laguna (Spain) in January 2007. They represent many of the issues discussed at the conference, particularly those with relevance to the first approach outlined above.

The contents of the book

The papers are grouped into three sections. The first of these is devoted to descriptive studies of linguistic and rhetorical features of written and spoken academic genres. INMACULADA FORTANET GÓMEZ examines the evaluative language of the RA referee report. This occluded genre typically presents difficulties for users of EAL either as recipients of such reviews or as authors. Where the EAL user is the audience for the review, problems of comprehension frequently result in a failure to respond adequately to reviewers’ demands and in the RA being rejected. Where the EAL user is asked to write a review difficulties may arise in terms of cross-cultural differences in terms of the generic structure of the review and the balance between criticism and positive comment. With the aim of assisting EAP instructors who need to teach this genre, Fortanet Gómez applies the following methodology: a linguistic analysis of an interdisciplinary corpus of referee reports provided by Spanish researchers in order to identify language problems and interviews with Spanish researchers on their comprehension difficulties. The conclusions drawn from her
study lead to a series of guidelines which may facilitate the understanding of the key points in referee reports and show how authors should comply with them. The author also includes recommendations for referees so that the reports they write might be more accessible to target readers, thus avoiding the situation where lack of comprehension or feelings of discouragement result in the novice author deciding not to submit an improved version of a paper.

ZIFIRDAUS ADNAN investigates the rhetorical structure of the Introduction section of Indonesian research articles in three natural science disciplines (Agriculture, Biology and Medical Sciences), using the latest version of the CARS generic model of RAIs in English (Swales 2004). The author seeks to answer the following questions: To what extent do the generic structures of the RAIs fit the model? What are the salient features of the Indonesian RAIs that are distinct from those of English RAIs as generalised in the amended CARS model? What are the principle concerns of Indonesian authors that make the features different from the English RAIs as generalised in the model, and why? He concludes that, mainly due to lack of resources, claiming centrality moves are not made in the Indonesian papers in terms of research-world importance, but in terms of real-world importance, which does not involve a thorough review of the literature. Likewise, justification of research tends to be made by raising a real-world problem and by offering a solution to it, rather than in terms of indicating a gap in research or publication.

In ENRIQUE LAFUENTE’s chapter, a cross-disciplinary analysis of the interpersonal strategies typically related to epistemic modality in the research article is carried out. The author starts by discussing the concept of hedging. He argues that the type of hedges which have generally been referred to as approximators have a different function to that of epistemic expressions and, therefore, should be classified as a separate metadiscourse category. In his classification of the various strategies which are used to convey epistemic meaning, he makes a distinction between hedges, boosters and approximators. The study ultimately offers both a contextual analysis and some contrastive quantitative data on the use and distribution of epistemic and approximative strategies in the disciplines of Food Technology, Urology, Business Management and Applied Linguistics.