



A Scholar's Guide to Getting Published in English. Critical Choices and Practical Strategies

Mary Jane Curry, Theresa Lillis.

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MARY JANE CURRY and THERESA LILLIS have repeatedly shown their commitment with open participation in and access to published academic writing, as well as with the quality of researchers' manuscripts, especially of those who are compelled to write in English when this is not their first language.

The interest of MARY JANE CURRY and THERESA LILLIS for the difficulties of speakers of additional languages to write in English is at the core of their careers as researchers. This is not the first time they work together, and as in previous articles, chapters and books, the result of this collaboration is always insightful and thought-provoking. *A Scholar's Guide to Getting Published in English* is a practical manual for novel researchers who need to publish in international journals as well as for teachers and supervisors who support others to publish.

As the authors indicate in the "Introduction" to the book, proficiency in English alone is not a guarantee of success in publishing. For this reason, CURRY and LILLIS use a different approach to other books addressed to the same readership, such as the classical handbooks by Swales (1990) or Swales and Feak (2000). Instead of focusing on the linguistic and rhetorical strategies of academic writing for publication, they try to help scholars to engage in the larger social practices. One of the aims of this book is to encourage academic writers to participate in current debates and adopt a critical view, so that they can make informed decisions regarding their future publications. This new approach is summarized in the second part of the title of the book: *Critical Choices and Practical Strategies*.

The concept of "social practice" becomes central in this book. Academic writing develops into a routine for the author, but this routine has to account for the ever-changing expectations of institutions and structures that hold

the power related to knowledge production in a field, and also the language of dissemination within that field. Social practices surround and wrap academic writing: participating in projects, conferences and networks, choosing an appropriate journal to get published, understanding and responding to reviewers, etc.

One of the strengths of this book is the “text-ethnographic” empirical research it is based on. The writing and publishing practices of actual scholars have been used to illustrate and to present evidence of the several aspects dealt with in the book. After 13 years collecting data from scholars located in 12 institutions in four European countries (Hungary, Slovakia, Spain and Portugal) and two academic fields (education and psychology), CURRY and LILLIS have been able to track down a good number of texts towards publication or rejection. The complete research was published in *Academic Writing in a Global Context: The Politics and Practices of Publishing in English* (Lillis & Curry, 2010). Even though presenting wide evidence from real scholars has to be acknowledged and praised, it also leads to limitations. The evidence is found just in four countries and all of them European, and in two fields from the social sciences. The authors recognise the constraints of selecting nationalities and fields. However, they point out that informal communications with scholars in other fields have made them believe that “the choices and strategies we present in this guide will be relevant to scholars and post graduates in many disciplines” (page 10). It may be so, but further research and more evidence are needed from other fields of research as well as other locations in order to confirm the data. In addition, it would also be useful to learn about the opinion of researchers in academic writing in the countries where the sample of scholars come from. As an example, there is a wide range of publications in Spain about this topic, such as those by Moreno, Rey-Rocha, Burgess and López-Navarro (2012) and Lorés-Sanz, Mur-Dueñas and Lafuente-Millán (2010), just to give two examples.

Each chapter of the book has been structured into six sections: an introduction to focus the chapter; data, questions and comments; questions that make the reader reflect about the relationship between the data and their actual work; ideas about how the reader could proceed and learn more about the topic; useful resources, and related research. The seventeen chapters in the book as well as the well-designed framework in each chapter lead the reader along and across the publishing process track, from the identification of journals interesting for publishing one’s research to the roles of reviewing and editing. This book is a very complete guide for future academic writers,

very useful also for supervisors and supporters of novel researchers; an ideal complement to other publications more focused on the linguistic and rhetorical perspective.

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