



NAVIGATING OBSTACLES IN ACADEMIC WRITING SCHOLARLY ARTICLES FOR REPUTABLE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL PUBLICATION

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Abstract: The following are the issues raised by this study: 1) What are the challenges that English lecturers face when writing research articles for scholarly publication in a reputable international journal? 2) What are the most significant impediments that English lecturers face when writing research articles for scholarly publication in a reputable international journal. The dominance of English in global studies has recently become an issue of debate in the publishing sector. Writing academic papers in English has grown more significant. However, faculty members and postgraduate students face writing barriers in a number of areas, including knowledge claim, textual organization, interference from diverse cultural perspectives, linking the text to the audience, argument structure, grammatical rules, and so on. According to the findings of this study, one of the most common difficulties that researchers encounter while writing is selecting how to claim expertise. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of writing and publishing in a well-known international indexed journal for the benefit of themselves, their university, and their country. They argue that the university should offer them a course, training, or workshop.

Keywords: *obstacles; academic writing; scholarly publication; reputable; international journal; research article.*

INTRODUCTION

Scholarly writing, or academic writing as it is often known, is significant in the academic world. It appears in several forms, such as essays, journal articles, research reports, and theses or dissertations (Lesmana & Arifin, 2020, p. 13; Aunurrahman, Hamied & Emilia, 2017, p. 72). Academic writing publications are typically associated with the researcher's or university lecturer's scholastic or expert status in the field. Currently, the concept of 'publish or perish,' which denotes the importance of writing for publication, has had a significant impact on academia all over the world, including Indonesia (Polas, 2024, Habibie, 2016, Hartono, & Arjanggi, 2020, Emilia, & Tehseem, 2013). As a result, Indonesian university lecturers, researchers, and postgraduate students are under enormous pressure

to publish in reputable international journals or proceedings. The publication or dissemination of academic work by lecturer's accounts for the importance of assessment outcomes for the research component as one of the main quality assurance requirements (Fadhly, Emzier & Lustyantie, 2018). The results would then be used to assess the quality of Indonesian universities in terms of research capabilities and potential, and it appears that the more academic publications there are, the more social prestige universities achieve. Furthermore, in some university settings, publications have been discovered to be one of the criteria used for yearly performance appraisal and salary adjustments for university lecturers or researchers (Harmawan, Pratama, & Fadilah, 2023, Lathif et al., 2021).

Writing articles is a topic that has received

much attention in the educational community over the past decade. Having an academic writing or article research published is a complex process for educators in all disciplines, including English lecturers and postgraduate students in Indonesia, who are both experienced and inexperienced (Ahlstrom, 2017, Arsyand, et al., 2020). In fact, writing for publication necessitates some fundamental English writing skills to produce academically sound work to be published in well-known journals (Giraldo, 2019, Moldovan, 2011). As a result, several university lecturers, regardless of their areas of specialization, would face difficulties when writing research articles in English. Various internal and external factors affecting the lecturers in question may be suspected to be an impediment (Maniati & Jalilifar, 2018).

Academic writing is the primary purpose of university teaching and learning scholarship (Lillis & Scott, 2007). Lecturers have to instruct students regarding a writing skill that is covered in the current issue of the publication. As a result, it might encourage students to polish their capacity to write for an international publication by pursuing their research interests (Tuck, 2012). In this regard, it has been discovered that writing for publication is now thrilling (Aydin et al., 2023; Buttery, 2010). When we write more regularly, we must think more deeply about the process, components, and new entities. According to Klein (2008), writing for publication is a unique opportunity that should be pursued creatively.

Research and academic publications are among the most critical criteria for university ranking (Nurkamto et al., 2024). Recognizing this, many universities have imposed publishing pressure on their academic staff of lecturers, particularly the publication of research articles in international peer-reviewed journals of repute (Pho & Tran, 2016). Many studies have been conducted on attitudes toward research and publication and barriers to research and publication; some have focused on students, while others have focused on university lecturers (Abdeljaoued, 2018, Gustine, 2018). For example, Cahyono and Amrina (2016) investigated EFL students' perceptions of training in writing research articles for publication. Rouault (2017) seeks to clarify the guidelines for getting articles published, outlines an approach to targeting appropriate journals, and improves academicians' or lecturers' understanding of the reviewing and revision process. Arshad's (2019) study focused on the difficulties faced by Indonesian lecturers in publishing articles in

reputable international journals as a factor impeding. Chien (2019) investigated Taiwanese researchers' perceptions, problems, and strategies for attempting to publish in English in the field of English teaching. Other studies include Pho and Tran (2016)'s investigation of publication barriers in the social sciences and humanities among Vietnamese scholars.

Although university lecturers are typically regarded as more established and experienced researchers, they face challenges in conducting research and publishing, particularly for reputable international journals. In fact, a large number of studies have focused on the difficulties that lecturers, particularly non-native English speakers, face when publishing in English, which is widely recognized as the international language of scientific publication (Sahan et al., 2024). Academics from Asia to Africa, Europe, and even Canada have reported difficulties with research and publication (Pho & Tran, 2016). According to Flowerdew (1999), language is the most significant barrier to international publication.

Based on the difficulties identified in previous studies, mostly with non-native English speakers' international publication, and the research context in Indonesia, the current study focuses on the obstacles that Indonesian lecturers may face in the process of writing for publication in the field of social sciences and humanities, obstacles before, during, and after the writing.

The following are the issues raised by this study: 1) What are the challenges that English lecturers face when writing research articles for scholarly publication in a reputable international journal? 2) What are the most significant impediments that English lecturers face when writing research articles for scholarly publication in a reputable international journal?

Many people believe that writing ability is not a natural gift, but rather the result of nurture. Students at the highest level of education must have read a large number of publications, including research articles. According to the study by Cahyono and Amrina (2016), the EFL doctorate students' lack of experience in the publication of research-based articles, as shown in the preliminary study supported by previous research studies.

According to Nolan and Rocco (2009), doctoral students frequently complain that they lack understanding of how to write for publication and struggle to meet the quality requirements of professional journals. In their study, Catterall, Ross, Aitchison, and Burgin (2011) claimed that

doctoral writing is frustrating, as evidenced by participant responses, which ranked journal article writing as the second most difficult writing task after writing the doctoral thesis. Time constraints, students' language proficiency, differing expertise of supervisors, insufficient pre-doctoral learning, and the fear of poor manuscript judgment are all factors attributed to the difficulties in writing journal articles or writing for publication.

According to Rouault (2017), many researchers understand that publications are a necessary evil that they must negotiate as members of the academy for employment, promotion, and meeting research grant requirements. The expectations and requirements for successful submission to academic journals can be intimidating and seem shrouded in secrecy at times. This paper aims to clarify the guidelines for getting articles published, outline strategies for targeting appropriate journals, and improve understanding of the reviewing and revision process. According to Rouault (2017), many researchers understand that publications are a necessary evil that they must negotiate as members of the academy for employment, promotion, and meeting research grant requirements. The expectations and requirements for successful submission to academic journals can be intimidating and seem shrouded in secrecy at times. Although publication in prestigious journals is not required for every academic position or promotion in Asia, some authors may seek to target higher-ranked journals in their field. The academic credentials and publication experience of the editorial board and reviewers, as well as the journal's acceptance rate, can all be used to determine rankings (Angelova-Stanimirova & Lambovski, 2024). Furthermore, indices such as the impact factor can provide a more objective profile of a ranking system used to compare journals in a specific field based on the number of times an article has been cited over the previous two years.

Arsyad (2019) conducted a study to investigate the possible factors preventing university lecturers or professors in Indonesia from publishing their research findings in reputable international journals in English. The study employed a mixed (qualitative and quantitative) method, including a national survey and in-depth interviews with selected lecturers and researchers from five Indonesian universities. According to the findings, three major factors have prevented lecturers from submitting their articles to reputable international journals: a lack of confidence in the quality of their research and article, the difficulty and time

required to prepare an article in English, and a lack of adequate reward for those who successfully publish in reputable international journals. However, most of them are enthusiastic about international journal publication, either for their benefit or for the sake of their institution (Hendriarto et al., 2021).

The majority of respondents also reported that the top three reasons inhibiting them from writing an article for an international journal include: a) feeling ashamed if the quality of the article is too low, b) writing reputable journal articles is too complex; c) there are no incentives available to those who publish in reputable international journals. The respondents also reported in the interview that the determining problems in international journal publications are: 1) the availability of inadequate international references in faculty and/or university libraries, 2) writing reputable journal articles is too difficult, 3) no financial help for writing articles for international journal publications, and 4) unawareness of the format of article writing that applies to international journals. If a lecturer has publications in reputable international journals, 1) credit points for career promotion, 2) credibility for institutions, 3) self-satisfaction/pride, and 4) personal credibility.

According to most respondents (41, 8 % - 59, 7 %), the following efforts are adequate to successfully publish in a reputable international journal. These include: 1) studying the format and style of writing research articles in international journals, 2) reading research articles published in international journal as much as possible, 3) confidently sending each research article to reputable international journals, 4) frequently writing articles to be published in national accredited journals, 5) frequently attending workshops on publications in reputable international journal, 6) requesting help from researchers who have successfully published their articles in reputable international journals.

Based on Uzuner's (2008) review, Jaroongkhongdach, Todd, Keyuravong, and Hall (2012) identify the following eight issues for researchers from various countries and disciplines trying to get published in international journals: a) a lack of time, b) a lack of financial resources, c) a lack of connections with the academic community in core countries, d) bias against scholars from peripheral countries, e) parochialism, f) language issues, g) issues with the literature review and discussion sections of research articles, and h) issues with research methodology.

To address these issues, non-native researchers are said to use strategies and resources that make the scholarly publication process easier. Cargill and O'Connor (2006) described collaborating-colleague workshops to help Chinese researchers improve their English publishing skills. The workshops include four components: a task-based approach, genre pedagogy, reference criteria, and discourse strategies for expressing the researchers' intended meaning. As a result of globalization, English has almost become "the primary lingua franca for research networking and scientific communication across different disciplines."

Among the most important criteria for university ranking are research and academic publications. Recognizing this, many universities have placed publishing pressure on their academic staff, particularly the publication of research articles in international peer-reviewed journals. Universities in Vietnam are no exception. Although lecturers recognize the value of research, they place little emphasis on it because it does not provide any rewards for promotion or salary increase. In Vietnam, the situation appears to be similar to that of Malaysia, in that salary increases are based on seniority rather than research productivity. Most Vietnamese universities continue to prioritize teaching over research.

METHOD

This study adopts a descriptive design and takes a qualitative approach. It was designed to investigate the obstacles that lecturers experience while producing research articles for international publication. It also explores their obstacles to writing research articles for publication and the necessity for university assistance in preparing their writing skills for academic publications.

The study included twenty instructors and postgraduate students (12 females and eight men) from several Indonesian universities. All participants are lecturers; some have extended their studies beyond master's and doctoral degrees. They are picked based on a variety of criteria. They include educational background, achievement, and experience writing for international publications. Purposive sampling was employed to choose participants. Because of their status as professors and master's or doctoral degree students in Indonesia, writing for international publication, the participants may be typical of Indonesian university master's or doctoral degree students.

A closed questionnaire was created for the instruments. It asked high-level lecturers and postgraduate students to select their answers from

a list of options, making it simple to administer, score, and code. The questionnaire contained ten different barriers to lecturers that influence the importance of international publication and the necessity for university support to help teachers prepare for writing assignments. The questions have been sent using Google Forms. According to Ary (2010), the questionnaire is posted on a website created by the researcher, and responders can then answer the questions and submit them online. It was later recognized as a valuable and efficient strategy for researchers and participants. After collecting the data, it was analyzed using percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire was designed to assess students' difficulties in preparing research articles for publication in a reputable international journal. Furthermore, all categories have been discussed in a logical order.

The obstacles factor faced by english lecturers in writing research articles for scholarly publication in reputable international journal

Because English is now a language for international communication, all participants agreed that publishing in English can help convey ideas to international readers. According to the findings of the interview, the majority of respondents identified grammar, research-related discussion, a lack of technical vocabulary, sentence formation, confusion over journal templates, and writing styles as linguistic challenges for writing intellectually in English (Ngoc, & Ngoc, 2021; Gohar et al., 2018). To explore the researcher's obstacles to writing for international publication, based on the responses to the question, 10 respondents (50%) agreed that they continue to struggle with grammar when writing for international publication. Furthermore, 15 (75%) respondents disagree that citation impedes their work. Furthermore, 19 responders (95%) disagree that citing published material is difficult.

The common problem for EFL scholarly when writing for publication in English stems from proficiency in standard English as well as mastery of research-related protocol, which can be viewed as a significant impediment for Indonesian scholars wishing to publish in a reputable international journal (Kapp et al., 2011). According to the study's findings, 11% (or 52.5%) of those interviewed struggled to structure their arguments while preparing research articles for publication.

Furthermore, according to the questionnaire results, 10 (50 percent) of respondents said they still struggle to arrange and develop their ideas in writing. Based on the data, 85 percent of researchers believe that “ways to make knowledge claims” are the most challenging part.

Poor critical and analytical skills, inadequate sources, limited access to dependable sources, bias toward EFL authors, managerial duties, lack of university support, lack of faculty training or workshop, and unsatisfactory research skills were discovered in non-linguistic areas of writing for publication in reputable international journals (Kwandayi, & Muyambo, 2021). Furthermore, students (75%) struggle to organize and develop ideas in writing and writing about accepted culture. Conversely, the former is not the most crucial method for making a knowledge claim because it just delays textual structure. They may get caught up in how well-organized their concept is. Researchers encounter difficulties in organizing and developing their ideas in an orderly (Deta et al., 2022). They feel that the best method to overcome this obstacle is for researchers to write more to finally discover the pattern while writing (Defianty & Hidayat, 2019).

Furthermore, researchers (85 percent) encounter difficulties dealing with “interference” from various cultural perspectives regarding academic procedures. In the writers’ views, their work may be culturally acceptable, but others from other cultures may find it objectionable. Culturally appropriate writing is, of course, challenging.

The most influencing obstacles factor faced by English lecturers in writing research articles for scholarly publication in reputable international journal

Based on the result of the research, the participants were asked about practices that can be undertaken to handle the obstacles to conducting academic research articles for publishing. English language proficiency is a pre-requisite for publishing in top scholarly journals within library and information science (Lund., & et al., 2021; Getahun & Hammad, 2021). Providing libraries of academic schools and institutions with appropriate and recent references was perceived to be the most important practice (75 %), followed by providing professional training courses on writing research articles for international publications (70 %) and, supporting knowledge improvement and promoting the expert (65 %).

The others handling challenges to international publishing, the participant asked about practices

that can be done to handle the obstacle to publishing internationally were preparing funding for international periodicals (80 %), followed by organizing international conferences (75 %), and setting up cooperation agreements between local research schools and institution, and overseas universities to conduct joint research (70 %). In a broad sense, several practices can be undertaken to tackle the obstacles to conducting academic research. According to the findings above, most participants believe publishing in an international journal is essential for higher education academics (Adnan et al., 2021). Such scholarly practices may include providing financial support, adequate references, training researchers or writers, collaborating with experts or practitioners, and using a pre-established research design.

More than half of those polled believed universities could help scholars prepare for research writing by offering courses, workshops, or tutoring (Purwanto et al., 2023). It is vital to have suitable training facilities, such as writing professionals to supervise the writing process and an English language centre for language editing. According to Photongsunan (2016), university assistance can inspire academics to be more interested and driven to create academic articles while benefiting their studies.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion may restate the research findings but should not simply state the significant findings. Instead, it should contribute to readers’ understanding of the topics and issues raised in the manuscript.

The present study shows that the scholarly community faces numerous obstacles in writing research articles for scholarly publication in reputable international journals. Successful research articles for publication in reputable international journals are considered of utmost importance to the academic accomplishment of scholars’ English proficiency. However, lecturers and postgraduate students encounter writing obstacles in various areas, such as knowledge claims, textual organization, interference from diverse cultural perspectives, linking the text to the audience, argument structure, grammatical rules, etc.

According to this study’s findings, one of the most common difficulties researchers encounter while writing is selecting how to claim expertise. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of writing and publishing in a well-known, internationally indexed journal to benefit

themselves, their university, and their country. They further believe the institution should provide them with a course, training, or workshop to help them hone their writing abilities for recognized international publications.

This study makes various recommendations to EFL lecturers, postgraduate students, and curriculum designers in Indonesia.

According to this study's findings, EFL lecturers must pay special attention and focus on writing for reputable international journals. Furthermore, lecturers should support and guide students rather than be controlling or demanding. This study also reveals that Indonesian EFL lecturers recognize the importance and impact of publishing for respected foreign journals. In this regard, lecturers should read extensively, identify the topic and pressing issue, and become more aware of their surroundings. They can also write regularly and expand their publishing network.

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