Seeking acceptance in an English-only research world

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Abstract

Many have noted the increasing concentration of gatekeeping power in the hands of mainstream English-only journals and made compelling cases for the need to bring more off-networked, multilingual voices into the global research conversation. Despite the hurdles that often face under-resourced off-network scholars, a number of them do find their way into the pages of mainstream Anglophone journals. How do some off-network scholars manage to successfully negotiate the mainstream journal gatekeeping that keeps others, both off-networked and networked, outside the gates, and what roles do journal manuscript (ms.) reviewers play in this negotiation? A sample of submission history documents for accepted and rejected manuscripts submitted to an applied linguistics journal was compiled and analyzed in an effort to shed light on these questions. Findings suggest that, among other things, authorial persistence, that is, willingness to continue revising and resubmitting when faced with extensive critical commentary from reviewers, can result in publication. Implications, especially for journal gatekeepers and those who support or are themselves off-network academic authors seeking acceptance in an English-only research world, are discussed.
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> *The referees of scientific articles are abused nearly as much as the referees of football games. Almost every scientific researcher I have interviewed has an anecdote about a referee who reviewed an article of his or hers unfairly, or who required alterations that* [in the researchers' eyes] *. . . diminished the value of the article.* (Myers, 1990, p. 64)

Introduction

It is probably not news to anyone in academia that the experience of submitting one's work for publication – a high stakes game upon which hiring, promotion, and continued employment can

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depend – is often fraught with frustration and disappointment. As Myers (1990) and others, e.g., Artemeva (2000), Berkenkotter and Huckin (1993), have noted, even experienced, already-published professionals are not infrequently stymied in their efforts to publish their work and mystified by reviewer comments and editorial decisions. However, while the quest for publication can be a trial for any author, for those residing in "off-network" (Swales, 1987, p. 43) locations with limited resources and perhaps few colleagues, and forced, as is often the case, to compose in a language they may not be entirely comfortable with, the bar may be raised to insurmountable heights.

Swales (1987, 1990, 1997, 2000, 2004) has monitored the international research publishing scene for several decades and provided compelling reasons to be concerned about the continuing advance of the English language (EL). Almost two decades ago, Swales pointed out the growing "North–South imbalance . . . reflected in the uncomfortable fact that numbers of able people in isolated and 'off-network' places are being excluded from actively participating in international scholarship and research" (p. 43). In the present decade, Swales has noted the "growing monoculture," with "immense power . . . concentrated in the hands of American academic gatekeepers . . . [as] 31% of all papers published in the world's leading journals emanated in the United States . . ." (p. 67). Interestingly, however, still more recently, Swales has observed a much more complex picture, "with the status and contribution of the non-native speaker of English . . . becom[ing] somewhat more central than it used to be" (p. 52). The impact of "Englishization" continues, nevertheless, Swales remarks, as other academic languages are increasingly neglected (p. 52). Gentil's (2005) study of French biologists suggests that even journals that provide non-English publication opportunities are affected by English dominance. One of Gentil's informants commented on the influence of Anglophone scientific discourse style thus: "The whole world bows to the rules of the Anglosaxon [publication] system" (p. 14; see also St. John's, 1987, p. 119, Spanish scientist informant's observation that "Americans and British write for *bobos*" in a "child's language").

The inequity of the dominance of English, center-controlled publishing may be obvious enough (see Flowerdew, 2001), but more difficult, because of the invisibility of those whose work does not appear in mainstream center journals, is fully comprehending what is lost when off-network scholars, and English as an international language (EIL) academics in general,[1] are disadvantaged in the competition for publication. Kramsch and Lam (1999) have observed that "silencing" in effect occurs when aspiring EIL contributors (physically outside the English-language center or peripheralized within it; see Canagarajah, 2002) are unable to find "textual homes" (p. 71) outside their local communities.[2] Such silencing, Flowerdew has remarked, can be "impoverishing in terms of creation of knowledge" (p. 122), as peripheralized scholars are in a unique position to field-test current "dominant centre" theories from "alternative perspectives" (p. 144) and investigate issues that may never occur to mainstream scholars. Still more passionate about what may be lost is Canagarajah,

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[1] To highlight the isolation of "off-network" scholars, I use the term *off-network* throughout this paper rather than the equally appropriate (with regard to exclusion from mainstream scholarship) "periphery scholar" designation (Canagarajah, 1996, p. 435). To avoid the positive/negative implications, among other problems, of the native/non-native speaker dichotomy, I employ the terms *English as an international language* (EIL) and *English language* (EL) to distinguish users of English as an additional language from those who use it as their primary language.

[2] Shi (2002, 2003) points out that for scholars returning from long-term study abroad, publishing in their own national communities actually can be a challenge as well (see also Canagarajah, 2001; Casanave, 1998).

who speaks of ''the power of the . . . 'margin' . . . to offer a critical (and therefore, constructive) contribution'' (p. 268).[3] At the same time, Canagarajah notes, periphery scholars need contact with the ''center,'' for ''isolationism is debilitating'' (p. 268). It is the desire not to be intellectually isolated that figures largely in Sasaki's (2001) account of what motivates her own struggle, as a Japanese academic living in Japan, to stay in print outside Japan:

> Is it worth the effort to write papers in English? I sometimes wonder. But then I think of the comments I have received from researchers around the world . . .. Their comments have inspired me, and . . . opened a whole new world of research to me. (p. 119)

Recent research on off-network publication efforts is also helping us better understand why even successful scholars such as Sasaki (2001) ''sometimes wonder'' why they bother with the effort it takes to publish in English and why others, unlike Sasaki, seldom or never see the fruits of their own publication attempts. In surveying Cantonese academics about publishing in English, Flowerdew (1999a) found that 75% felt confident about getting their research published, yet 68% also felt disadvantaged by their writing and 51% concerned about ''technical problems with the language'' (p. 137) (see also Flowerdew, 1999b, 2000). Similarly, Li's (2002) survey of Mainland Chinese doctoral researchers discovered that almost 80% felt disadvantaged in competition with ''their native-English-speaking international counterparts'' seeking publication (p. 186). When Flowerdew (2001) interviewed journal editors, however, they reported that the most salient problem in international scholars' submissions was not language use but ''parochialism, or failure to show the relevance of the study to the international community'' (p. 135; see also Gosden, 1992). Rejection of ''parochial'' papers might seem reasonable, until one considers what Swales (2004) refers to as ''the skewing of international research agendas toward those most likely to pass the gatekeeping'' (p. 52). In the same vein, while acknowledging the look of ''old news'' (p. 448) in some off-network scholars' work, Canagarajah (1996) has wondered why those off-network should be expected to position their work in relation to center scholarship, especially when their topics are the ''social and cultural realities'' of the periphery (p. 460). Likewise, Lillis and Curry (2006), in their study of central European academics' publication efforts, found that such scholars may feel forced to reposition themselves with respect to center knowledge claims, in effect, weakening their own. As one of Lillis and Curry's informants put it, ''Saying something . . . which is new is not good, not allowed. Of course, it's absolutely their perspective to see [central Europe] as . . . a tribe trying to do something scientific'' (p. 24).

Yet the most daunting problems faced by off-network scholars may be neither discursive nor ideological. Of his own situation in Sri Lanka after returning with graduate degrees from the US, Canagarajah (1996, 2001, 2002) recounts that, in addition to lacking access to well-stocked libraries and colleagues attuned to his research interests, he often lacked electricity and even paper, making multiple drafts and composing without daylight impossible. While Canagarajah's

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[3] Canagarajah (2002) offers a disturbing perspective on off-network invisibility in his account of mainstream researchers' co-opting of off-network intellectual property. See his discussion of a Chinese discovery scooped by Western scientists and of an American graduate student's rush into print with data on South Asian castes generously provided by Sri Lankan scholars. In these cases, knowledge was not ''lost,'' but ''periphery knowledge'' was definitely ''appropriated . . . for knowledge construction in the center'' (p. 238).

experience may seem extreme, the types of material and social obstacles he encountered are not unique to wartime Jaffna. Describing his decision not to return to Ghana, Agunga (2001), for example, now a US-based professor and international agricultural development consultant, remembers feeling convinced that he could contribute more by not going home: ''Knowing that back in my village there is no library, no electricity . . .. Worse yet, once I get back out there, I'm probably lost forever'' (p. 173).

Obviously, though, some scholars, like Sasaki and Canagarajah, do manage to participate in the global research conversation after returning (or never leaving) home. Less obvious is exactly what distinguishes their efforts from those who do not succeed in establishing such visibility off-network. Canagarajah (2002, 2003) has pointed to rhetorical strategies that creative off-network academics have developed to cope with limited resources, such as composing brief introductions and taking advantage of others' knowledge of the research literature. Lillis and Curry (2006) have highlighted the facilitative roles that ''literacy brokers'' (p. 4), e.g., academic peers, English-speaking friends, and even journal gatekeepers (editors and peer reviewers), can play in the publication efforts of off-network scholars.[4]

While journal gatekeepers are, in fact, facilitators in providing needed feedback to authors, they are often, by virtue of their control of the gates, perceived as obstacles on the path to publication.[5] Perhaps even more than journal editors, who depend on the domain-specific expertise of many others to review submissions,[6] reviewers are held responsible for keeping the bar high: maintaining the desired standards of a journal through informed assessment of the novelty, significance, and validity of authors' knowledge claims (see Flowerdew, 2001; Gosden, 2001; McKay, 2003). Not surprisingly, choice of reviewers has been seen as a linchpin in promotion of more equitable representation of international scholars. Flowerdew has suggested that one way ''to ensure that NNSs have fair treatment'' (p. 131) is to have an adequate number of EILs (or, NNSs) on editorial boards. Canagarajah (2002) has drawn attention to many mainstream journals' claims of being international while having overwhelmingly North American and Western European boards. Off-network scholars on journal boards, Canagarajah argues, can encourage off-network submissions and, in their role as reviewers, serve as mediators to demystify publication requirements.[7] The journal editors that Flowerdew interviewed would not need to be convinced of such advantages, all 12 of them having already appointed EIL board members. Some of these editors even mentioned pairing EIL submissions with EIL reviewers. Little is known, however, about how such careful, proactive selection of reviewers plays out in the actual review process, which is as ''occluded'' (Swales, 1996, p. 45) as is the review genre itself, though some studies have examined selected review histories, e.g., Gosden (2003); Kourilova (1996, 1998). The principal question the rest of this paper aims to consider is the extent

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[4] Journal gatekeepers are not viewed as entirely supportive by Lillis and Curry, whose research also underscores the power gatekeepers hold in deciding what counts as knowledge.

[5] Manuscript reviewing may be seen as an obstacle of sorts by reviewers too, who often consider it a particularly difficult task, as Hyon and Chen (2004) found in their survey of over 100 faculty. We should note too that journal manuscript reviewing is purely *pro bono* work. Journals do not (and cannot) compensate reviewers.

[6] Commenting on her own and other editors' limited ''power,'' Leki (2003) describes herself as more ''door(wo)man'' (p. 103) than gatekeeper.

[7] Braine (2005) suggests another approach, that non-center journals be as highly regarded as center journals. The current trend, he notes, is in the opposite direction, with non-center academics increasingly pressured to publish in highly rated center journals.

Table 1
Selected submission histories by region of origin ($N = 9$)

	Near/Middle East	Far East	Latin America/Europe
EIL rejected papers	L1 Arabic speaker	L1 Chinese speaker	L1 Spanish speaker
	One L1 English reviewer One L1 Arabic reviewer	Two L1 Chinese reviewers	Two L1 Spanish reviewers
EIL accepted papers	L1 Arabic speaker	L1 Chinese speaker (first author of co-authored ms.)	L1 French speaker (first author of co-authored ms.)
	Three L1 English reviewers	Three L1 English reviewers One L1 French reviewer	Two L1 English reviewers
EL rejected papers	L1 English speaker	L1 English speaker	L1 English speaker
	Two L1 English reviewers One L1 Chinese reviewer	Three L1 English reviewers	Two L1 English reviewers

to which and ways in which reviews can facilitate the inclusion of off-network scholars in the global research community.

Methods

In an effort to investigate the role that peer reviewers play in opening (or not) the gates to off-network scholars, I decided to collect and analyze, with the journal publisher's permission, the submission histories of one applied linguistics journal's accepted and rejected papers with off-network provenance, i.e., originating outside the so-called English-speaking center, e.g., Australia, the UK and US, and written by both EIL and EL speakers[8] All the papers selected had been initially submitted between 1998 and 2001 to *English for Specific Purposes* (or *ESPj*), a journal with a particularly successful record of publishing contributions from countries the world over (see Braine, 2005). The contents of the first 21 years of *English for Specific Purposes*, 1980–2001, in fact, reveal, Hewings (2002) has noted, a steadily increasing percentage of articles published with non-US or UK origins: from 35% in 1980–1985 to almost 70% in 1997–2001. As co-editor of *ESPj* since 1998, I, not unlike many other applied linguistics journal editors (see Flowerdew, 2001), have been committed to continuing this growth in international representativeness. Serving as co-editor has also provided me with a behind-the-scenes perspective on a journal's (*ESPj*'s) submission vetting processes. I should note too that I am also well acquainted with the other side of the editorial process, having been both rejected and accepted for publication as an author by the very journal I now co-edit (i.e.,

[8] Determining EIL status is, at best, an educated guessing game, based on the author's surname, institutional affiliation, and the submission's country of origin.

prior to becoming editor; for more on being both editor and author, see Leki, 2003). Only a number of years after receiving the ''not yet ready for publication'' decision from *ESPj*, after considerable experience revising and resubmitting to journals, did I fully understand as an author what editors and reviewers who seemed so displeased were actually offering, namely, roadmaps to improvement of my work. Although as a journal editor, I am greatly appreciative of the contributions that reviewers generously make, I still find that as an author, I periodically need to remind myself of the value of all reviews I receive as windows on how readers actually respond to my text.

Further enhancing my appreciation of the context of reviewing and, more particularly, the submission histories chosen for examination in this study is the role I played as the editor to whom the papers focused on here were sent, thus the one who solicited and interpreted the reviews and determined the final disposition of the submissions. In choosing a subset of submissions out of the 60 papers (many of which were multiply submitted) sent to me, as one of three co-editors, during a 3-year period, I employed purposive (also known as theoretical) sampling (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2001), a type of sampling that, as Mason (1996) notes, entails ''selecting groups or categories on the basis of their relevance to your research questions'' and is ''meaningful theoretically, because it builds in certain characteristics or criteria which help develop and test your theory and explanation'' (pp. 93–94). To construct my sample, I deliberately sought an equal number of submissions, i.e., three, from each of three geopolitical regions – (1) the Near and Middle East (including North Africa); (2) the Far East; and (3) Latin America/Europe (the non-Anglophone European-language-speaking world) – thus a total of nine submission histories [9]. In each regionally-based trio of submissions, I included one rejected EIL paper, one accepted EIL paper, and one rejected EL paper, as well as all resubmissions of these papers, and all reviews of each submission, written by both EL and EIL reviewers, sometimes from the same country of origin as the submitting authors (Table 1).

The specific questions guiding analysis of reviewer roles in these submission histories were these:

1. What differences, if any, are found in the content and tone (or, ideational and interpersonal features) of reviewer commentary for rejected and accepted off-network EIL submissions? (Subtext: what aspects of the feedback might encourage or discourage revision and resubmission?)
2. What differences, if any, as reflected in reviewer responses, are found in rejected off-network EIL submissions and rejected off-network EL submissions? (Subtext: does language use matter?)
3. What differences, if any, are found in the content and tone of reviews provided by EIL and EL reviewers? (Subtext: do EIL and EL reviewers differ in their responsiveness to submissions, especially those originating off-network?)

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[9] Because of the paucity of submissions received from sub-Saharan Africa, it could not be included as one of the originating regions for this study. Regarding overall regional representation in *ESPj*, Hewings' (2002) prediction for the near future, based on his analysis of recent trends in its first 21 years, is that a large proportion of published *ESPj* papers (and one would assume submissions) will continue to come from China/Hong Kong and eastern and southern Europe, ''reflecting . . . both growth in ESP activity [in those regions] and the academic standing of those who research and report it'' (p. 3). The number of Middle Eastern and Latin American articles published in *ESPj*, after initially holding steady or increasing from 1980 to 1996, slightly decreased over the 1997–2001 period.

A rough guide to commentary types

Before delving into close explication of the reviewers' responses to each submission, I attempted to obtain a global view of the frequencies of commentary types found in all the reviews in this sample. I wanted to determine what text features were focused on, which received more (or less) attention, and the distribution of positive and negative comments for each evaluated manuscript (ms.) feature in the entire sample of reviews. Several caveats are needed before proceeding to the data presented in Table 2. With such a small number of reviews ($N = 29$), this data can only be suggestive. Considering how subjective such content analysis can be, deciding which comments refer to which text features (with frequent possibility of overlap, e.g., topic and audience, as in the right topic for a certain audience, or findings and significance, which are often intertwined in comments; see Gosden, 2003) can only be interpretive. Also open to interpretation is the determination of the positive or negative valence of the comments. One might question, for instance, if all reviewer suggestions necessarily denote negative criticism (my own answer is *yes* if they imply a need for change). The coding and counting of the comment types presented here, thus, should not be viewed as the only possible reading.

After carefully perusing the reviews in this sample three times, I identified the most common and salient (i.e., to me, as editor) recurring text features commented on in the reviews. In the journal's reviewer guidelines, reviewers are asked to consider, but not limit their comments to, the following areas: topic relevance, novelty of contribution to knowledge, subject matter familiarity (including prior research), research design and data analysis (for primary research reports; more theoretical or speculative papers are also accepted but not common in the journal), and presentation style. Upon examination of the reviews, however, I found that a somewhat more extensive and specific list of categories could more closely reflect the features most often and explicitly commented on. My new list included the following nine text features, some quite broad, others referring to specific manuscript sections: audience, topic, purpose (or problem statement/research questions), literature review, methods (or research design), results (including presentation of findings and analysis), discussion (or significance), pedagogical implications, and language use (or style). The last feature, language use or style, was the most amorphous, in that what reviewers referred to with these terms could be one lexical item or the overall format and flow of the entire paper. Because of the difficulty of deciding where one comment on any of these nine features in a review ends and another begins, rather than counting individual comments, I decided to count the number of reviews that commented, either positively or negatively, on any of the nine features.[10] Thus, the numbers in Table 2 refer to numbers of reviews, not numbers of comments. A second rater, my editorial assistant, was asked to rate all the reviews with respect to the first of the nine features, namely, topic (in other words, to rate the reviews as commenting positively, negatively, or not at all on topic). Our interrater reliability was a modest but acceptable 80%. The findings presented here, again, should be considered only roughly indicative, i.e., one possible reading (the editor's); nonetheless, they do suggest some reasons why manuscript authors may respond quite emotionally to reviews.

It will probably come as no surprise to anyone whose manuscripts have been peer reviewed that the vast majority of comments in the reviews could be interpreted as negative (especially from an author's perspective). Of the nine text features commented on, for only two were the

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[10] The following is an example of a reviewer statement interpreted as a positive comment on audience: "In its focus on … the paper will also be of interest to those concerned with workplace discourse analysis."

Table 2
Frequency of positive and negative commentary (N = 29 [reviews])

Text features evaluated	Reviews with positive commentary		Reviews with negative commentary		Total reviews with commentary	
Topic	21	72%	5	17%	23	79%[a]
Audience	8	28%	8	28%	16	56%
Purpose/problem statement/ research questions	2	7%	18	62%	20	69%
Literature review	4	14%	15	52%	19	66%
Methods/research design	5	17%	19	66%	24	83%
Results: presentation and analysis	3	10%	12	41%	15	51%
Discussion/significance	3	10%	12	41%	15	51%
Pedagogical implications	3	10%	8	28%	11	38%
Language use/style	6	21%	26	90%	27	93%

[a] Please note that some reviews contained both positive and negative commentary.

comments **not** predominantly negatively critical, namely audience and topic, and only for topic did the majority of reviews have positive comments (72%). All major components of the papers, e.g., purpose, literature, methods, received far more criticism than praise. The feature, however, most frequently commented on negatively was the vague category of ''language use and style,'' with 90% of the reviews containing negative comments.[11] Indeed, this category received more attention than any other of the textual features, with some reviews including both praise and criticism of usage/style (hence the seeming discrepancy in the total number of reviews with usage/style comments). In only 2 reviews out of the 29 (thus, 7%) were there no language use/ style comments at all. It should be noted, though, that in no case was usage/style alone mentioned as a reason for rejecting a paper (see also Flowerdew, 2001; Hewings, 2002). Nevertheless, it is easy to see why some authors might feel that language stands in the way of publication, as language is commented on more frequently than any other feature in these reviews. A simple count of the number of words devoted to language commentary would make this category appear an even more salient review component (see references below to multiple pages of stylistic comments in some reviews, by far outnumbering in verbiage any other commentary type). Of course, individual authors are not likely to know how far from alone they are in receiving close stylistic scrutiny or that both eventually accepted and rejected papers receive evaluations in which negative criticism far outweighs praise (see Kourilova, 1998).

Rhetorically reading the reviews

As interesting as the data above might be, it is, again, just an approximation of frequencies of commentary types and, as interpretive aggregate data, only broadly suggests the distribution of positive and negative commentary, or praise and criticism, to use Hyland's (2000) terms, in the pool of reviews. In other words, Table 2 tells us little about the specific content and tone (or, ideational and interactional features) of the individual reviews by EIL and EL reviewers, for EIL

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[11] Counted as negative for language use/style were remarks such as ''The entire paper could benefit from rigorous proofreading, most notably for article usage.'' Of course, comments such as this do have the positive effect of helping authors understand reviewer and journal expectations.

and EL authors, or for rejected versus accepted papers. The numbers above also reveal little about how the reviewers shaped their message for this occluded genre, what rhetorical strategies were deployed to communicate judgments, or to what extent the journal editors' standard request for ''frank and firm but collegial'' comments (*English for Specific Purposes Guidelines for Reviewers*) was taken seriously.

In the following hermeneutical rhetorical reading of the individual reviews, much of the analysis is indebted to Hyland's (2000) insightful analysis of the distinguishing features of a similar genre, book reviews. Although a more open genre, with a public audience, book reviews have a number of ideational and interpersonal features, as described by Hyland, in common with journal manuscript reviews. In that both genres bear the burden of potentially face-threatening speech acts (FTAs), the sociopragmatics of politeness provides a helpful analytical framework for both. Like book reviews, manuscript reviews employ both structural and linguistic mitigation strategies: a good news first/bad news later frame, or macrostructure, and such local strategies as ''criticism pairs, hedging, personal responsibility, 'other' attribution, metadiscoursal bracketing, and indirectness'' (Hyland, p. 55) (examples to follow). Also in both genres, praise tends to be global while criticism is quite specific. Yet, there are striking differences in the two genres as well. As Kourilova (1996) has noted, peer reviews appear markedly less polite, with much less evident effort to redress the FTA, compared to more public responses to colleagues' work (see also Gosden, 2001, 2003). Tellingly, Hyland found no reviews in his corpus of 160 book reviews that failed to mention at least one redeeming feature (perhaps not surprising, given that books are extensively screened before publication), but such reviews can be found in my sample of ms. reviews, as soon will be seen. Despite the occlusion and anonymity of ms. reviews, there would seem to be some incentive to be polite, as Hyland notes of book review authors, in the relatively small size of most disciplinary communities and likelihood of roles being reversed. One might hope that an equally potent incentive would be the opportunity to support attempts to contribute to disciplinary knowledge. In the following sets of analyses, we will look at how a small number of EIL and EL reviewers of off-network submissions handled such an opportunity, i.e., how they managed the simultaneously cognitive and affective demands of the reviewing processes, and how the submitting authors responded to their efforts.

Off-network EIL scholars not accepted for publication ''at this time''

The reviews of the three rejected papers by off-network EIL scholars in my sample (again, from the Near/Middle East, East Asia, and Latin America/Europe) actually exhibited many of the politeness strategies mentioned above, which Hyland (2000) found in book reviews (see also Gosden, 2003). The most immediately noticeable of these strategies is the opening good news frame, often in the form of global praise of an ''interesting topic,'' an initial comment found in four of the six reviews of the rejected papers, an example of which appears below (emphasis in bold here and throughout is my own):[12]

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[12] Please note that I will not be providing percentages in my analysis of the reviews, which are most meaningfully seen as components in case histories. The numbers involved in my analysis are too small to have any statistical significance. When I refer to a certain number of reviews in my analysis, I am referring to nested samples, often subsets within subsets; percentages would be unhelpful and possibly even misleading.

> This paper is an account on . . . an area which does not seem to have been widely explored
> . . . therefore, the **topic is of potential interest** to . . ..
> EIL (Spanish L1) review of European (Spanish L1) author

As these are reviews of papers eventually rejected, it should come as no surprise that on the heels of the good news comes the bad, which, like Swalesian gap statements in research article introductions (Swales, 1990), is often signaled by the adversative conjunction ''however'':

> **However**, the paper falls short in making an original contribution to current knowledge and
> teaching practices in our domain . . ..
> EIL (Spanish L1) review of European (Spanish L1) author

One exception to this brief, formulaic good news (''interesting topic'') opening is seen in one of the Chinese reviews of a Chinese manuscript, which begins with a full paragraph of praise:

> I find your manuscript . . . very informative and engaging . . .. By no means unique . . . these
> problems are being encountered everywhere English is taught . . .. I find it especially
> exciting that . . .. Such an approach is fundamentally different from the traditional teacher-
> centered style in China's education . . ..
> EIL (Chinese L1) review of East Asian (Chinese L1) author

One can imagine the submitting author who received this review little prepared for the bad news that followed, namely, reference to three significant ''problems,'' including a query about the reliability of the entire study. Thus, a good news opening is no guarantee, as Hyland (2000) found in book reviews, of a happy ending for the author.

Interestingly, two of the reviews in this set do not hesitate to immediately announce bad news, as seen in the following first sentence of one of these reviews:

> The topic . . . and method of investigation make it unsuitable for publication . . ..
> EIL (Arabic L1) review of EIL Middle Eeastern (Arabic L1) author

While all six of the reviews in this set enumerate fairly equally serious flaws in the papers reviewed, some are gentler in their criticism than others. Note the use of personal opinion and hedges to soften the bad news in the following:

> **It doesn't appear to this reader** that . . . Because . . . is an international publication, the
> authors **might** claim . . . that the issues . . . **may** be ones for many parts of the world, not just
> the Middle East . . ...
> EL review of EIL Middle Eastern (Arabic L1) author

In the reviews lacking good news openings, however, the bad news is almost totally unrelieved. Note especially the only slightly mitigated negative evaluative language in the following:

> This assumption . . . does not correspond to . . . realities of the Arab world . . .. Readers are
> not even informed . . .. [T]he method of investigation is fundamentally flawed . . .. The brief
> literature review . . . does not **really** present . . . a clear theoretical framework . . .. Finally,
> the proposed solutions . . . **seem** to be far-fetched and hardly convincing.
> EIL (Arabic L1) review of EIL Middle Eastern (Arabic L1) author

As for language use or style, lack of clarity is frequently mentioned in this set of reviews but is not always exclusively a linguistic or stylistic issue. Content and style infelicities often

overlap, as one might expect in any reader-unfriendly text with apparent information gaps. The two Chinese reviewers were quite vocal about such problems yet constructive and sensitive to reader response in their criticism, as seen in this excerpt from one of the Chinese reviews:

> Although I understand in general what is going on . . . I am not all together clear about . . .. Please don't get me wrong, I don't want to quibble . . . but I think some definition, explanation, and consistency with concepts and pronouns will help reduce confusion.
> EIL (Chinese L1) review of East Asian (Chinese L1) author

As five out of the six reviews in this set advised ''revise and resubmit,'' it is not surprising to find them concluding with apologetic and encouraging paired statements of praise/criticism (see Hyland, 2000), as seen in the following:

> So basically, it's a useful paper that with more focus and more depth could be of interest to many readers . . ..
> EL review of EIL Mideastern (Arabic L1) author

> I am sorry to say that in spite of how relevant the issues addressed are . . ., I would not recommend this paper for publication . . ..
> EIL (Spanish L1) review of European (Spanish L1) author

Only the one review that advised rejection had no such praise/criticism pairing, though it did have a few slight, if ambiguous, traces of mitigation:

> **Understandably**, the paper needs further editing and several stylistic changes . . . but **the opinion of the reviewer** is not to recommend it . . ..
> EIL (Arabic L1) review of EIL Mideastern (Arabic L1) author

Despite the revise and resubmit recommendations that all three authors received from one or more reviewers (and the editor), none chose to do so, at least not to the same journal.

It might be tempting, though certainly rash, to interpret the politeness strategies seen in this small set of reviews in terms of cultural influence, as examples, for instance, of Chinese awareness of face or Arabic directness. To state the obvious, individual reviewing styles can vary greatly among those from the same nation, town, institution, and even academic department. Amount of reviewing experience, however, might be a factor in reviewing style (Swales, personal communication, 2002). As only one reviewer in this set was an experienced reviewer for this journal, some of the reviews may have been shaped by a desire to demonstrate critical capabilities, but only a more longitudinal study could tell us if this was, in fact, the case.

Off-network EIL scholars accepted for publication

Perhaps not surprisingly, the submission history of off-network EIL scholars whose papers were eventually published is a longer and more complex narrative than that of those whose work never reached publication. Those eventually published were not scholars whose work was immediately recognized by reviewers as ready for publication. The papers were, instead, revised and resubmitted, in some cases repeatedly. This is a story of reviewer patience and author persistence.

Because of the many phases in the review process of off-network EIL scholars' published papers and the concomitantly larger number of reviews (for the 3 unpublished off-network EIL papers there were 6 reviews; for the 3 published off-network EIL papers there were 13, with 1 paper receiving 7 reviews), this account will be told in three stages, with each stage referring to a separate round of reviews.

In the first round of reviews of the three eventually published off-network EIL papers, the comments look structurally and to some extent propositionally analogous to those for the unpublished off-network EIL papers. The good news/bad news strategy is utilized, sugar coating a bitter medicinal center. Yet a closer look reveals that the good news in these cases is much more than routine palliation. Each first submission received at least one review with an enthusiastic good news opener that goes far beyond praising "interesting" topics, as seen in the following typical example:

> In general this paper does much of what the authors promise to do; they **demonstrate a real and interesting difference in** . . . . **The issues they raise are interesting ones**, and the **organization and use of relevant sources, will …** impress most readers.
> EL review of EIL Latin American/European (French and Spanish L1) authors

Especially striking about the bad news ushered in by such good news as above is that in the majority of these first round reviews there is not less but more criticism, of both content and style, than in the reviews of the unaccepted off-network EIL papers. Each of the eventually accepted off-network EIL authors received at least one first round review with two to three full pages of specific content/style comments and queries. Noteworthy in this detailed criticism, however, is the frequency and range of face-saving strategies (see italicized personal opinion, attribution to others, mitigation pairs, and hedges) and intermittent praise (positive evaluative language in bold):

> *I believe many researchers* still question the validity of this [cited] research—*I don't think* it has been so neatly decided yet.
> EL review of Middle Eastern (Arabic L1) author

> *Though* the **quality** of much of the discussion is **high**, and *though* the **suggestions** put forward there are **fascinating**, *I felt* that . . . . In particular . . . the comments on . . . *may* need *some* rethinking . . . .
> EL review of EIL Latin American/European (French and Spanish L1) authors

Not only did all of the first round reviews recommend that the authors "revise and resubmit," but each author received at least one review noting the publication potential. The following is a typical example:

> I look forward to seeing it published. I would, however, suggest . . . .
> EL review of EIL Latin American/European (French and Spanish L1) authors

Perhaps it was because of such encouragement that each paper was indeed revised and resubmitted.

The second submissions were accompanied by detailed cover letters itemizing all changes and/or justifying non-compliance with reviewer suggestions. One author, the Chinese L1 speaker, listed 33 changes. Of the three second drafts submitted, one, the Latin American/European paper, was so effectively revised and the resistance to some of the reviewer suggestions so vigorously justified that the editor decided to accept the paper for publication

pending minor revision without further review. The cover comments (quoted with permission) from the first (and corresponding) author exhibit a confident sense of authority, a willingness to accommodate and compromise with, but also flatly reject, various reviewer recommendations.

Acceptance of requested changes

The referee is right: it is indeed difficult to …. Anyway, we will acknowledge that difficulty in a footnote.

Partial acceptance

I admit, then, that our claim is ''speculative'' (but not arbitrary, though), but **without speculation or hypothesis there would be no science** [author's emphasis]. Isn't everything speculation, even the atomic theory? Who has ever seen an electron? …. What would the referee's alternative explanation be? … Since we were perhaps not clear enough … and since this point is important, I decided to add a few comments ….

Rejection of requested changes

The reason why we gave a considerable and decisive importance to … cannot be more obvious: such a change – as … all point out – was conspicuous indeed. During … [the region] was submerged in an almost medieval world …

Though the editor persuaded the authors to do some hedging, their claims remained largely intact in the final version (cf. Lillis & Curry, 2006).

The two other second submissions received conspicuously encouraging second round reviews. Though still seen in need of substantive and stylistic changes, the East Asian paper's second round reviewers recommended publication pending ''minor changes,'' with one remarking, ''I like this article very much and find much to admire in it.'' Especially noteworthy is the reviewers' readiness to help the author(s) find solutions to remaining problems. One of the reviewers (EL), for example, suggested that some apparently serious problems could be addressed by simply changing the paper's title. The other second round reviewer prefaced three pages of detailed critique with these encouraging words: ''I believe [these comments] will be useful in making … the article more broadly relevant.'' Despite finding a type of parochialism in the paper, this reviewer empathized and proposed a solution:

I find that … faces a problem: How to be faithful to the specific contingencies of the situation … and … find connections … [with] other situations which may differ in multiple ways. One suggestion is that you identify parallels … with … problems identified in other studies. I suggest you look at ….
EL review of East Asian (Chinese L1) author (first author of co-authored ms.)

With this specific, supportive advice in hand, the author(s) proceeded to revise and resubmit a version of the paper that was accepted without further review.

For the third paper in this set, however, there were clear expressions of disappointment in the second round of reviews. After noting that ''this paper does demonstrate the ability to apply an advanced … into a new and significant … setting'' yet still needed more emphasis on the setting, one of the reviewers concluded with a guarded ''revise and resubmit'' recommendation:

> I have made an effort in the review to provide constructive commentary . . .. However, I do not know if revision can be carried out in all areas noted . . ..
> EL review of Middle Eastern (Arabic L1) author

The other second round reviewer, a repeat reviewer of the paper, was clearly unhappy to see earlier stylistic advice ignored, though pleased to find some substantive changes:

> The author has now added . . .. All this enhances the paper . . .. Unfortunately it is still in need of just the kinds of stylistic revisions that I indicated in my initial comments . . .. I will go through the tedious task now of indicating just some of the problem areas. Too bad we're not paid for our time (only kidding!).
> EL review of Middle Eastern (Arabic L1) author

What followed were four pages of over 60 separate stylistic comments. Although advised to 'revise and resubmit,' the author might reasonably have been expected to be discouraged by the effusiveness of the criticism, but such was not the case.

The third submission of this paper was greatly altered, with detailed itemization of the changes. The third round reviewers, who had also been the second round reviewers (EL), sent extremely brief, five-to-seven-sentence reviews, the concluding sentences of which were: "My judgment is that this paper should be published as is. Well done!" and "I would like a copy of the article when it appears." Despite these brief glowing reviews, editorial negotiation of the final changes with the author took months, partly due to "non-discursive" postal and email difficulties (see Canagarajah, 2002, p. 170). The end product, though, was a publication that became one of the top 10 downloaded articles for the online version of the journal for that year.

It would appear that the quality of the reviews figured greatly in the eventual publication of these three off-network EIL papers, and no doubt the combination of encouragement and extensive criticism was essential to their eventual success, but not a sufficient cause of it. If the authors had had less faith in the value of their work and less determination to see it in print than they exhibited, no reviews, no matter how supportive, would likely have led to such outcomes.

Off-network EL scholars: not accepted for publication

The reviews of the three off-network EL scholar papers chosen are remarkably similar to those of other off-network submissions in the types of problems noted by the reviewers, including language-related issues. Unlike the reviews already discussed, however, these reviews were extremely at odds in their recommendations, often requiring additional, tie-breaker reviews.

For all three of these papers, there was at least one reviewer eager to see eventual publication, yet, interestingly, this eagerness seemed mainly motivated by topic choice. For these reviewers, the topic was not just "interesting" but one they definitely wanted to see in the journal, as evident in the following typical example:

> I was very interested to read about the . . .. And I think . . . readers would be too.
> EL review of EL East-Asia-based author

For the other five reviewers of these three off-network EL papers, however, wise selection of a topic was not nearly enough to warrant publication, eventual or otherwise. In fact, the topic, even if "interesting," was seen as part of the problem, in that the reviewers had difficulty identifying the focal research/pedagogical problem being addressed. News of this was gently broached (note bolded politeness strategies of mitigation pairs and hedging), as seen in the following:

> **Potentially** it is **of interest, although** it is **not clear** exactly what the problem is.
> EL review of EL Middle East-based author

> **However**, in exploring **this very interesting topic**, the author has **not yet fully** specified his/her research questions . . ..
> EL review of EL Latin-America-based author

The reviewers had still more reservations, as seen in the following excerpt, about aspects of the papers beyond focus—aspects that suggested limited research expertise and genre knowledge:

> The paper sounds more like a pilot study . . .. The literature review needs to be expanded and the research study needs to be redone . . ..
> EL review of EL Middle-East-based author

Additionally, each submission in this set received at least one review that implied that the authors were unfamiliar with the quality of writing expected even at the sentence level, a criticism not-so-subtly expressed in the following reviewer suggestion:

> It might be useful for a **NS of English** to read the text just to disentangle some of the sentences.
> EL review of EL Latin-America-based author.

Obviously, the reviewer cited above assumed, quite mistakenly, that the writing style revealed the EIL speaker status of the author (who, by the way, never received this comment as it was expunged from the review by the editor). As Bartholomae (1985) has pointed out, even in one's native language, academic writing can be a formidable undertaking.

Despite the encouragement to revise and resubmit offered to all three off-network EL scholars, only one chose to do so, the EL author mistakenly identified as EIL, and s/he did not meet with success. After outright rejection from one of the second round reviewers and advice to extensively revise from the other, the author was not encouraged to resubmit and opted not to do so. Thus, none of these three off-network EL papers was published.

Clearly, these off-network EL authors appeared to suffer from some of the same disadvantages as did the off-network EIL scholars whose work was not published, e.g., unfamiliarity with journal expectations, including the expected level of research design and research writing expertise. One might well wonder how familiar these authors were with the particular journal they chose to submit to. As seen through the reviewers' eyes, the quality of these off-network EL submissions suggests that, like others off-network, these EL authors may have had too few of the material and human resources they needed.

For comparison's sake: three networked scholars

While there are interesting parallels in what was found objectionable by reviewers of unaccepted off-network EL and EIL papers, suggesting that not native language but research writing expertise and availability of resources may be more salient than language issues, one still might reasonably ask: Are not all rejected papers, whether originally networked or not, similar in the types of problems they exhibit? Is not the vast majority of research published in any field produced by a relatively small number of unusually talented, productive professionals (Dunkel, personal communication, 2003)? With these questions in mind (not among the original guiding

questions of the study but emergent from the study), for the sake of comparison with my original nine submission histories, I decided to examine three additional unaccepted submissions from places usually considered networked – Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States – all submitted by EL authors (on the value of emergent design, maximum variation sampling, and conceptually-driven sequential sampling see Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2001).[13]

Of these three center submissions, one, from the US, lacked any mention of the journal's focal area or usual topics of interest. This paper was not sent out for external review. The editor's letter to these authors pointed out the "aims and scope" of the journal found on the inside front cover of every issue. The submission from the UK fared somewhat better, in that it was sent out for review, but the reviewers found it flawed in its basic underlying assumptions, literature review, and research design. One of the reviewers politely requested "clarification" of the paper's conclusions, which "seemed" to contradict the entire study.

The submission from Australia fared the best in this small sample, undergoing two rounds of review, yet still was not judged ready for publication. The initial round of reviews suggested that the paper was close to being publishable. One of the reviewers assured the author that s/he did "not think revision would take much work." The other reviewer was even more enthusiastic, remarking that the paper was of "**great** [reviewer's emphasis] potential interest." Yet this reviewer also suggested that the paper do less preaching to the converted and be "more ambitious and subtle," informed by more relevant literature and situated more in the local context to provide a stronger basis for "rich critique" and relevance to the wider research world.

Although the author made a good faith attempt at revision, the second round reviewers were still hesitant to advise publication. The one repeat reviewer was apologetically disappointed: "It is with considerable regret that I . . .." For this reviewer it was not clear that the author had "taken on board" his/her suggestions. The other second round reviewer, the first Australian reviewer of this paper, was more critical, stating that the paper dwelled too much on "backgrounding" and not enough on participants, published critiques of the author's perspective, as well as "any of the work done in Australia," and that it cavalierly handled documentation of sources. This latter reviewer, nevertheless, "strongly urge[d]" the author to revise and resubmit. There was, however, no third submission of this paper.

Thus, through the lens of these reviews, two of the three unaccepted networked EL papers look in many respects similar to the unaccepted off-network EIL and EL papers, exhibiting such familiar shortcomings as lack of knowledge or understanding of relevant topics, relevant research literature, expected research methods, genre conventions, and journal audience expectations. For the Australian submission, with its quite critical review from a compatriot, the situation looks not unlike that of some of the critiques received by off-network EIL contributors from fellow compatriot off-network reviewers. Perhaps just as reviewers in the same research area as that of the authors they review may appear hypercritical (especially to outsiders) so too may some reviewers from the same geopolitical areas as the submitting authors.

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[13] Silverman (2001) remarks that one of the strengths of qualitative research, and of purposive, theoretical sampling more specifically, is its flexibility, allowing the researcher an active (and interactive) role in the research process, including the ability to expand the sample as "as new factors emerge . . . in order to say more about them" (p. 253).

Discussion

A broader, more recent perspective

To put the submission histories just examined into perspective, it may be helpful to zoom out for a broader view of more recent submission/publication data for the same journal. If we look at a sample of 75 manuscripts submitted to *English for Specific Purposes* over the course of one year, 2003, we see some striking differences in the acceptance rates for networked and off-network submissions. Focusing on just two countries of origin, the United States and China (including all submissions from the PRC, ROC, Hong Kong, and Singapore), we find that while 83% of those originating in the US ($N = 12$) were eventually accepted, for the China-origin submissions ($N = 17$), the ultimate outcome was 24% accepted for publication. This East/West differential suggests that origin of submission may indeed have been a factor in a paper's final disposition, at least in one particular recent year. This submission provenance picture, however, is far from uncomplicated. Not all accepted papers from the US were authored by ELs, nor were all the rejected papers from China authored by EILs. We should note as well that of the accepted China-origin papers, 75% originated in Hong Kong, where there has been substantial financial support for research (see Braine, 2005).

An indication of how rapidly the demographics of published scholarly works are changing, on the other hand, is suggested by still more recent submission/publication data. In one issue of the journal for 2004, all four of the articles were authored by EIL speakers, three of whom were off-network. Of the five most frequently downloaded articles over a 3-month period in 2005, four had off-network EIL authors. In 2006, only 2 of the first 14 papers reviewed were submitted from the center, with the 12 other submissions emanating from East Asia (mainly the PRC), the Middle East, and non-Anglophone Europe. If we look on the bright side of this most recent news, it is not unreasonable to expect the *networked/off-networked* distinction, and the terms themselves, to become increasingly less meaningful.

What the submission histories suggest

Returning to the narrow-angle analysis of the submission histories presented above, any conclusions attempted with so small a sample from one journal are necessarily tentative but perhaps also provocative with respect to possible implications. Again, the motivating interest of this study was to determine if there were perceivable differences in the following: (1) reviews of accepted/rejected EIL papers (hence, what impact the content and tone of reviews might have on eventual status of submissions); (2) differences in the reviews of submissions from off-networked EIL and EL authors (hence, what impact an author's language use might have on eventual publication); and (3) differences between EL and EIL reviewers (or, what impact a reviewer's linguistic or cultural affiliations might have).

Regarding differences in the reviews of accepted and rejected off-network EIL submissions, we can say that those authors whose papers were eventually accepted for publication received notably more substantive, less formulaic encouragement—not just polite praise but apparently genuinely felt positive feedback. The reviewers who provided such feedback appeared sincerely compelled by belief in the value, or potential value, of a paper. It would not be advisable to conclude from this, however, that reviewers should abandon attempts to mitigate face-threatening criticism if they see little or nothing worth praising. Nor would it be wise to conclude that respondents who deliver apparently pro forma praise are

necessarily damning with faint praise or failing to make an effort to find something of real value. At the same time, one could argue that offering apparent encouragement to revise and resubmit when a paper suffers from inappropriate topic choice for a journal or a seriously flawed research design could be more an empty act of charity than one of genuine good will toward the author.

As for differences in the reviews of off-network EIL and EL submissions, we saw that, in this small sample, unsuccessful off-network EL authors' papers exhibited many of the same types of content and expression problems, in the reviewers' eyes, as did the unpublished submissions of off-network EIL authors. For some off-network EL scholars, even staying in control of surface textual features seemed challenging. Interestingly, when compared to reviews of a sampling of unaccepted networked submissions, all authored by EL authors, the profile of reviewer criticism was not greatly different from that of the off-networked. Thus, it appears, again from this small sample, that at least some number of rejected papers, whether authored by EL or EIL scholars, networked or off-networked, share many of the same shortcomings. Yet, if we take a different vantage point, not that of the propositions and rhetoric of reviews but provenance and acceptance rates of a larger number of submissions, we begin to see disturbing differences: that scholars in more privileged locales, i.e., not just in the US but also places like Hong Kong, do appear to have an advantage. Nevertheless, being an EL scholar in a well-resourced setting is certainly no guarantee of eventual publication; nor does being an isolated, off-network EIL author doom one to rejection. Clearly, authorial agency is a far-from-negligible factor (see Canagarajah, 2002).

Finally, with regard to differences in feedback from EL and EIL reviewers (or, Are EIL reviewers more sympathetic to EIL authors than EL reviewers are?), there were differences in the tone of EL and EIL feedback, but not consistent differences. As seen in my sample, EIL reviewers can be especially sensitive to potential face-threatening acts, but they can also be quite blunt.[14] As I suggested earlier, other factors, such as the amount of experience a reader has reviewing for a journal, may play a significant role in ability to achieve the balance of criticism and collegiality that a journal editor may wish for. Supplying feedback to reviewers who are open to receiving it and even just sharing the reviews of a submission with all reviewers are a few ways an editor might help novice reviewers get a fuller picture of the review genre as the editor conceptualizes it, i.e., what exactly is meant by ''frank, firm, but collegial.'' Of course, there are other factors that may come into play in how reviewers respond to contributors as well, e.g., being rivals in the same research area or members of opposing theoretical or methodological camps. Selecting appropriate reviewers for all submissions, EIL and EL, networked and off-networked, may be one of the most consistently challenging obligations of journal editorship (see Flowerdew, 2001; McKay, 2003).

Professional and pedagogical implications

How the above observations might translate into action on behalf of off-network scholars may be considered in terms of what journal gatekeepers and supportive, more experienced others might do to make the gates more negotiable for off-network authors.

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[14] With regard to the ideational aspects of EL and EIL reviewer comments, Burrough-Boenisch (2003) found in her study that ''there was no difference . . . in the propensity [of EL and EIL reviewers] to make epistemic comments and [request] changes'' (p. 235).

Journal editors can support off-network scholars (and all authors) through both careful choice of reviewers and clear-as-possible correspondence with authors.[15] Reviewers should take the time (albeit already generously donated) to compose well-considered, constructively critical, collegial reviews, even of papers that appear unlikely ever to be accepted. This does not mean (as noted above) that reviewers should offer false hope, but that all submitting authors have the right, as McKay (2003) has pointed out, to feedback that makes explicit what motivates a reviewers' decision and what might change it in future. Likewise, editors, in communicating the reviewers' and their own recommendation to authors, should do so in as unambiguous a manner as possible (see Flowerdew & Dudley-Evans, 2002, for examples of inadvertent ambiguity in a well intentioned editor's correspondence). Canagarajah (2002) reminds us that off-network scholars may be especially likely to misinterpret invitations to revise as rejections, perhaps overwhelmed by the number of changes requested and the resources needed to make them. Sasaki (2001) notes that it was not until she became a reviewer herself that she realized that even the most established scholars submit papers that are ''not perfect'' (p. 118). Indeed, McKay has remarked that almost every paper published in *TESOL Quarterly* during her tenure as editor was revised at least once after being reviewed. If, however, an editor feels that an author would be better advised to revise and resubmit to a different journal, a seemingly cruel recommendation (i.e., revise this paper but do **not** to send it back to us), s/he should suggest specific journals that would be likely venues for the author's work. Off-network scholars in particular, with limited access to print or e-resources, may need this information (Canagarajah). Perhaps more challenging than any of the above suggestions, however, is for editors and reviewers to begin to rethink the standard text conventions and even variety of English privileged in English-language journals (see Berns, 2005; Canagarajah; Seidlhofer, 2001). If contributions from around the world are sought and a truly global audience the goal of ''international'' journals, then should center-based conventions continue to be the unquestioned norm? This, though, is by no means an exhaustive list of actions journal gatekeepers might take. Thoughtful, empathetic editors and reviewers concerned about the welfare of the field have no doubt considered others (see Flowerdew, 2001).

Faculty in professional preparation programs around the world, i.e., MA and Ph.D. applied linguistics (or TESOL) programs, could help instill interest and confidence in contributing to ongoing professional conversations by nurturing meta-awareness of the nature of knowledge construction in the field and the right, even responsibility, to both critically consume professional knowledge and contribute to it. Ramanathan (2002) argues, in effect, that for the field to continue to evolve, novice professionals should be taught to question the profession's practices, how its usual genres and text types socialize members and how ''the (textual) politics of . . . display'' affect written knowledge (pp. 9–11). Such questioning habits of mind could be empowering for those who wish to join and push forward the field's conversation.

Teachers of English, or literacy brokers in general (Lillis & Curry, 2006), can do much too to help writers gain the confidence they need to eventually achieve publication. One obvious strategy is to help writers become responsive to both status-superior (e.g., teacher, supervisor) and status-equal (peer) criticism of their work. Being responsive, however, does not necessarily

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[15] Interestingly, journal editors meeting at recent conferences, e.g., TESOL and AAAL, have begun to discuss the merits of discontinuing double-blind reviewing, i.e., insistence on author/reviewer anonymity. Revealing identities could enable authors to contact reviewers for further guidance during the revision process. The requirement of double-blind reviewing for inclusion in prestigious citation indexes, however, does not encourage journals to move in this direction, especially considering the rating systems now in place at many institutions worldwide that reward faculty only for publication in highly ranked ''indexed'' journals (see Braine, 2005).

mean accommodating critics, though knowing when it is advantageous to do so can be helpful. Responsiveness may also entail reasoned resistance to criticism.[16] In other words, novice academic writers need to appreciate the relationship between authorship and authority, and to recognize that requests for changes may be negotiable (Burrough-Boenisch, 2003; see also Swales & Feak, 2000, Unit 7). Teachers can foster such a sense of ownership and metacognitive awareness of response behavior by requiring students to provide cover letters with subsequent drafts, explaining changes made or resisted, just as authors who submit revisions to journal editors do (see Ferris, 2003; Goldstein, 2005). Teachers might also provide opportunities to practice critiquing of published works to scaffold assertiveness in unequal power relationships (Belcher, 1995; Li, 2006; Swales & Feak, 2004). Helping writers develop the habit of using the Internet to connect with others in similar research areas opens up the possibility of informed feedback (including advice on appropriate forums, e.g., conferences and journals, for one's work) no matter how remote the writer's locale. As with the earlier suggestions, this list points to only a fraction of the ways future visibility in the research world could be supported.

Academic authors themselves, however, may find the greatest encouragement in the experiences of such scholars as Bhatia (2001), who have overcome significant hurdles in their own publication attempts (for other examples, see Belcher & Connor, 2001; Casanave & Vandrick, 2003). As a novice EIL author confronted with an editor's request to change a term coined by the author himself and not found ''in any of the available dictionaries of the English language'' (p. 47), Bhatia had to decide whether to refuse to alter what he felt proud of or cave in and achieve fairly certain publication:

> I decided to take the risk [of rejection] rather than undermine my conviction in my own claims. I wrote a very lengthy and detailed explanation in support of my decision . . .. I don't think I have written a more important letter in my life. To my pleasant surprise, the editor very graciously accepted the argument . . .. Even today after many years I can hardly [overestimate] the value of that one single outcome, and the support and encouragement it gave me at such an early stage of my academic career. (p. 47)

Acknowledgments

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[16] Gosden (2003) has observed that the skills needed to balance ''compliance and resistance'' in responding to reviews may be ''much more complex [for EIL academics] than those required for the core activity of writing research papers'' (p. 100).

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