

English Triumphalism in Academic Writing: The Price of Global Visibility

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Abstract

Within the academic field, it has been said that one has to “publish in English or perish” (Viereck, 1996: 20). Lured by the prospect of international readability, and thereby possibility of higher citations, non-native English speaking (NNES) researchers resort to publishing their work primarily and exclusively in English. While this has created a global academic environment with a common medium of communication, it has been at the cost of other important national languages. Global visibility comes at the price of local or regional invisibility. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of English medium publication (EMP) on local languages. An exploratory research methodology with a critical agenda was employed. Qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews revealed that NNES researchers acknowledge the privilege attached to publishing in internationally indexed journals and employ numerous strategies to facilitate successful publication. However, most participants expressed clear dissatisfaction toward this policy and some indicated that, apart from publishing mainly in English, they also publish in their local language for the purpose of serving their local communities. It was concluded that additional efforts are needed to engage NNES who are competitive at the international level in research that is of local and regional importance in the purpose of promoting linguistic diversity and enhancing collaboration between core and peripheral languages.

Key words: critical applied linguistics (CALx), English medium-publication (EMP), linguistic imperialism, non-native English speaking (NNES)

Cite as Sibahi, R.(2015). English Triumphalism in Academic Writing: The Price of Global Visibility. *Arab World English Journal*, 8 (3). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol6no3.13>