

FOREWARD: GETTING PUBLISHED

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1. INTRODUCTION

Congratulations to the writers in this edition and to all of the others previously for your submissions to this important, peer-reviewed journal. As you and our readers know, getting published is not an easy process. Well done! This Foreword talks about those challenges and offers hopeful, encouraging advice. The goals are to inspire authorship and facilitate publication by enhancing your knowledge and skills about it. As a published academic and scholar myself, I'd like to offer some hints and guidelines for approaching publication. The context of the Foreword is of writing for English-language journals.

Academics, scholars, scientists and others around the world are frequently challenged to publish articles in peer-reviewed journals. Who extends these challenges and why? In academia, the answer is threefold. The first is prestige for post-secondary institutions. Universities and colleges expect faculty to publish as a way to enhance the institution's reputation for excellence and to influence society with new discoveries, knowledge, and etcetera. Secondly, as reputation builds, so does the financial health of the institution. Scholarly publication brings the potential for the university to garner additional funding and increase student enrollment numbers. Research funding might also figure in. These are financial incentives. Last but not least, there is faculty incentive. Whether through personal and professional drive or a sense of competitiveness interprofessionally within or outside of one's own educational institution, or to win research funding, faculty members are also interested in seeing their work published.

2. CHOOSING A JOURNAL

The first step in choosing a journal for your article is to be very clear about your focus. If you want to talk about teaching English, look for a journal in English Language teaching or, in the discipline of Education. If you want to publish an article on ecology, look for something in that field. However, if you want to publish on the combined topics of ecology and English, look in both fields. Can you see? You are not confined to publishing in one specific type of journal. Branch out – get your name out there!

Established Journals

Once you have found a journal you believe is reputable and suits your needs, read their guidelines for submission. As you write your article be very sure to follow every single one of those! You will be held accountable for that. Submit your work in the format they required such as a Microsoft Word Document. Don't send in any other kind. They won't accept it.

Start up and newer journals

To ensure you've found a reputable new journal, search for their home base, their publishing company and if they have any ties to other professional organizations. Contact them and ask them about their peer-review process if you like. Look them up on-line, too. A good example of a newer journal gaining reputation quickly is this one, *The Journal for Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes*.

Predatory publishers

There are many, many of these types of publishers around today. They have discovered that there is money to be made from scholars and others who feel compelled to publish. These companies are not recognized by any professional accrediting body (i.e.: a pediatric journal that is not acknowledged by a pediatric council or regulatory body; doesn't provide in-depth editorial review comments per submission or proof reading. These types of publishers say that a peer-review of your article occurs when indeed it does not. When searching for journals be very sure to search the home base, their home publishing company and their reputation in any way you can. You do not want to go into one of these journals. Without true peer review, articles within may not be valid, reliable or even truthful. You don't want your name associated with a predatory publisher.

3. GROWING YOUR REPUTATION

Publication and reputation go hand-in-hand. As you increase your professional visibility through your articles, you increase your reputation. That is why it is very important to write. Getting published can be time-consuming. It is not as simple as just writing an article and submitting it.

There are a number of steps in getting your article 'into print' as they say. Once you have found a journal you believe is reputable and suits your needs, read their guidelines for submission. As you write your article be very sure to follow every single one of those! You will be held accountable for that. Submit your work in the format they required such as a Microsoft Word Document. Don't send in any other kind. They won't accept it.

Some journals editors will review your submission and decline it while also offering suggestions of other journals that might be more suited to your work. Take advantage of this courtesy.

If an Editor from a journal sends feedback '*accepted with minor revisions*', don't be offended. This is good news! You have been accepted. The need for minor revisions signifies that some formatting, grammar or referencing issues have arisen or more clarification is required. The journal has its own high standards and they will want your article to meet that same level. So will you! Make the changes and get published.

If you receive a message ‘*accepted with major revisions*’ again, please don’t be offended. Calmly and objectively try to read through the comments from the journal editor. If the comments and requests seem objectionable or too difficult for you, decline the offer. Move on to another journal. If the same response comes back, try one more time with another journal. After three attempts that return the same type of feedback, you will need to take ownership that your article is not yet researched or written well-enough for publication. It is time to start fresh. Rewrite or discard. As you do so, please don’t forget how much you have learned so far in this process about the way you work and write. The process itself is a good thing! Remember, you want your article to help build your reputation. Take all of the feedback and put it to good use.

4. COSTS

Start up and new journals may require publication fees (but not always). These should be small and in accordance with the size of the audience. Never pay an exorbitant price to get published. Eventually as the journal becomes more visible and its reputation for integrity is apparent, fees should dissipate or disappear. Funds will come from advertisers or supportive organizations instead.

Open Access Journals usually (but not always) have a fee for publication. Be very careful that the journal you are considering is a reputable one before ever paying to get published. Reputable journals often offer the choice of restricted access (through university libraries or professional associations, and the professions) or open access publication. For the former, it’s free to the author. For the latter, the author pays a fee. It could be expensive.

There is a great deal of current debate about paying a publishing house to allow your article to be accessed openly. There are many reasons for this. First, publishers have historically made their income from subscriptions to their journals. In particular, they have earned substantial income from subscriptions held by universities, colleges, science centers and so forth. They also generate income through advertisers and sponsors in the journals (i.e., a pharmaceutical company may have an advertisement in a medical journal). The growing trend today is to have authors pay to publish. Secondly, as authors yourselves, you may hold the ethical belief that information should be shared with all, not a select few. You might also believe publishing in Open Access will improve your chances of being read and cited. You may be right.

Some in academia believe that open access journals are last resorts for authors when they cannot get published in mainstream or highly reputable peer-reviewed journals. This is not necessarily so. When impact factor rating tools are applied to any journal, the results give evidence to its value. The impact factor notes an average measure of how many times an article has been cited for example. Two examples of this are the International Scientific Journal Rating (SJR) and its SCImago Journal Rank and the other is the Journals Citations Report (JCR) by Thomson Reuters which looks at impact and influence of articles. These can be accessed on the internet if you are curious.

Predatory publishers ask for unreasonable and exorbitant fees. These fees far and away exceed those recognized, reputable journals. Don’t pay. Find a reputable journal.

4.1. Writing hints

The very best way to find success in publishing is to follow this guideline: always write as if the person you are writing for does not know you, does not know anything about your topic or about to whom you refer. This improves clarity exponentially!

Keep your focus! It is so easy to get off track when writing. Always remain cognisant of your chosen topic and its context. Even if you stray for a bit to mention something salient as background information, check to see that you always return to your main topic and context. These should also appear in your title. Let the reader know write away what this article is about. Repeat your focus and context throughout your paper. Ask yourself this: *'if I am writing about Aviation English, how many times have I used the words aviation or English in my paper?'* Or, ask *'how many times have I used a word in the corpus of Aviation English in my paper?'* *'If I am writing about Serbia, did I mention this enough times that the readers will keep that context in the back of their minds?'*

Formatting should be at the level of academia meaning fairly but not rigidly formal. Use of first person 'I' is now acceptable in professional articles. 'We' should not be used without citations that show more than the authors take this stance. Formatting requires abstract, key words, an introduction to the topic, context and purpose of the article. The conclusion should mirror some of that. You might want to consider adding a sub-heading of Recommendations.

Research studies need to include a brief overview of their thesis, methodology, conclusions and recommendations in the abstract as well as in the paper in addition to the expected formatting for any other academic paper.

Referencing in peer-reviewed journals is an absolute must. Undergraduate students are often asked to use 3 – 5 references. Journal articles start at 5 and can be extensive. (Note: I've had an article published with over 60 references. I had originally submitted about 45 but the editors asked for even more!) . Rule of thumb: you cannot list a reference if it is not cited within the body of the article.

Use critical thinking when referencing another article. Depending on which country it came from ask yourself if that information would apply in your own country or situation. For example, what might be a moral and ethical dilemma in health care in one country or part of the world may not be in another.

Citations are key to academic articles. They demonstrate due diligence by the authors to research and refine their positions and arguments; support discussion points and recommendations. They must appear in the text of the article. It is a standard expectation.

Formatting for references and citations can be challenging. A very, very user-friendly, free resource for this is found on-line at The OWL at PURDUE. This is the Open Writing Lab at Purdue University in the USA. Please take a look. It is very helpful. Use it each and every time you write a formal paper or article.

Copyrighting pertains not only to using the words of others or to ownership of your own words but also to any graphics, tables, screen shots, etcetera that you put in your article. Be very careful not always identify sources and to now overuse them. Again, the OWL at PURDUE might offer some help with this.

The copyright for your journal article once printed belongs to the Journal. This means you cannot republish it in another form. You do reserve the right to advertise it, speak at conferences using the material, use the information in class. Check the copyright rules with your journal.

I hope that you have found this information in this foreword interesting and helpful. Keep on writing and keep on sharing your work through reputable journals such as this one, *The Journal for Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes*.

Respectfully,

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Editor, Author, Academic and Scholar
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Melodie Hull is a Nurse-Educator at College of the Rockies and at Thompson Rivers University-Open Learning Division in Western Canada. She has a number of specialties including nursing, psychiatric/mental health nursing and Medical English. She is known and published in each field.

**References are available but not an expectation of a Foreword, which should be more conversational.*