

**THE DIFFICULTIES OF POLISH SCHOLARS TRYING TO PUBLISH IN
INTERNATIONAL PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS**

by

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Abstract

This study set out to consider the factors responsible for the low publication rates of Polish academics in international, peer-reviewed journals, and whether the global dominance of the English language in scholarly publications is a significant contributing factor. The literature suggests it might be but, to date, no in-depth investigation has confirmed this.

Qualitative research methodology was selected as the most effective approach for the study and semi-structured interviews with eight Polish scholars were conducted. According to the data collected in these interviews, the reasons behind the small international publication output of Polish scholars are multifaceted. Polish academics face a number of difficulties which are in line with those described in the literature discussing the challenges facing non-native English speakers attempting to publish internationally. Linguistic difficulties are exacerbated by chronic underfunding of Polish science which results in inadequate resources and low salaries that lead to faculty taking multiple jobs. However, the study also reveals that Polish academia suffers from the lack of publishing culture. In other words, the “publish or perish” imperative, so widespread in the Western academic world, is only just taking root in Poland. Further, the study shows that Polish scholars struggle more with mastering English academic writing structures than they do with English language proficiency in general.

Scientific productivity in Poland could be fostered in a number of ways. Academics should be given more help and incentives to increase their overall publication output, domestically as well as internationally. For example, researchers’ salaries should be improved so that they do not need to hold multiple jobs. At the

same time, access to subsidised English editorial services should be made available to scholars to help them prepare their manuscripts for international publications. As well, English academic writing courses should be introduced widely at Polish universities to improve the writing skills of future generations of scholars.

What can be learned about publication obstacles in Poland from this study may be applicable to other non-Anglophone scholarly communities, and may provide answers as to how the global community may “level the publishing playing field” to ensure maximum dissemination of all scholarly ideas.

Preface

This thesis is an original, unpublished, and independent work by the author, Magdalena Kijak. The research reported in Chapters 3 to 5 was undertaken with the approval of University of British Columbia's Behavioural Research Ethics Board under Certificate Number H10-02967.

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List of Abbreviations

ERIH - European Reference Index for the Humanities

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GERD – Gross Domestic Expenditure on Research and Development

HEI – Higher Education Institution

JCR - Journal Citation Reports

KAMJE – Korean Association of Medical Journal Editors

NES – Native English Speaker/Speaking

NNES – Non-Native English Speaker/Speaking

OECD – The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

R&D – Research and Development

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To my late brother Marcin whose death left a void never to be filled in my life.

I love you and miss you beyond words.

1. Introduction

International scholarly publication in Poland is low. The literature suggests that low publication rates in non-Anglophone countries such as Poland are in large part due to the dominance of the English language in scholarly publication worldwide. The well-established pressure within the academic community to “publish or perish” is now, in reality, publish in English or perish. Non-Anglophone scholars are therefore disadvantaged over Anglophone ones.

The author seeks to understand whether such disadvantages underlie the low Polish publication. Further, this thesis seeks to determine whether a deeper understanding of the Polish situation may lead to recommendations on how individual non-native English speaking countries, such as Poland, as well as the international academic publishing community can help scholars who speak English as an additional language overcome these barriers.

1.1. Polish scientific¹ publication internationally is low in numbers and low in impact

Academics in Poland publish very little in international journals. A 2010 bibliometric analysis of scientific productivity of public higher education institutions (HEIs) in Poland – an overwhelmingly monolingual Central European country that belongs to Kachru’s (1985) *Expanding Circle*² of English – revealed that, in 2008, the

¹ The terms science, scientist and scientific unless stated otherwise are used throughout in the wider sense, that is including the social sciences and the humanities.

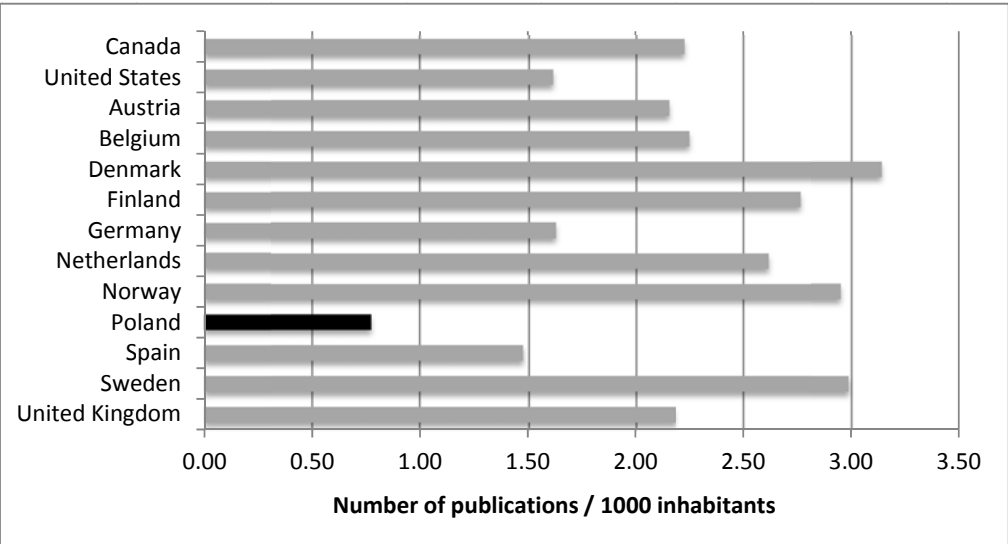
² To describe the use of English in different countries, Kachru (1985) developed the now famous model of three concentric circles of the language: the *Inner Circle* is comprised of countries where English is spoken as a native or first language; the *Outer Circle* represents regions where English
(Continued on next page...)

average “publications per academic staff member” in journals listed in ISI Web of Knowledge (currently Thomson Reuters Web of Science) was equal to 0.23, a figure two to three times lower than for academics in countries such as Germany or Austria (Wolszczak-Derlacz & Parteka, 2010, pp. 45-46). That indicator was even worse, 0.14, if only the number of original articles was considered.

This low publication rate among Polish scholars is further confirmed by a similar exploration of the number of citable documents (i.e. articles, reviews and conference papers) published in 2012 and included in the Scopus database (source: SCImago, 2007) and then compared with the size of the population in selected countries (source: <http://stats.oecd.org>). Publication rates in Poland are the lowest of 13 countries, as Figure 1 below illustrates, just over a half of the next lowest, Spain, and less than a quarter of the top performer, Denmark.

Figure 1: Poland ranks last among 13 other countries in terms of publication performance.

Source: SCImago (2007) and own elaboration.

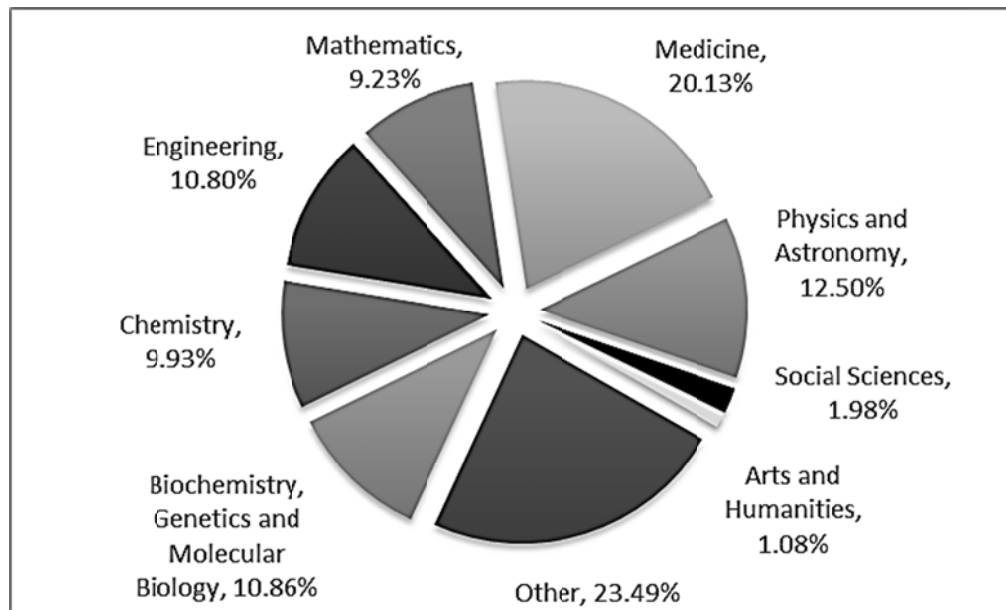


plays the role of a second or official language; while *Expanding Circle* encompasses countries where English is used as a foreign language.

What is published internationally by Polish scholars is concentrated on the hard sciences. According to the latest SCImago data, publications in as few as six areas (Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology, Chemistry, Engineering, Mathematics, Medicine, Physics and Astronomy), all belonging to hard sciences, comprised nearly 75% of Polish research output in 2012. At the same time, scientific productivity in the social sciences and the humanities was almost negligible as can be seen in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Documents published in only six subject areas comprised three quarters of Polish research output in 2012.

Source: SCImago (2007) and own elaboration.



Furthermore, the impact of Polish publications is low. Low citation of Polish publications is one measure of this weak impact. For instance, between 1996 and 2012, a citable document (co-)authored by a Polish scholar was referred to 8.25 times on average (SCImago, 2007). The same indicator for most Western countries is two to three times higher, for example, 16.16 for Germany, 22.69 for Switzerland, 20.11 for Sweden and 18.50 for Canada (*ibid.*). Similarly, Kalisz (2007) notes that the 2006

directory of most often cited researchers listed only two Polish academics while, for example, Germany had 236 and Denmark, which is almost seven times less populous than Poland, had 29.

Low Polish scholarly impact is also evident in the weak showing of Polish journals and universities. Very few Polish scientific journals, in illustration, are known worldwide: out of 8471 listed in the 2012 edition of the database *Journal Citation Reports-Science* and 3047 listed in *Journal Citation Reports-Social Sciences*, only 131 and 7 respectively are Polish; only 31 have an impact factor higher than one (source: www.thomsonreuters.com/journal-citation-reports/).

Polish universities also are negatively impacted by low research productivity. For example, they are positioned at the bottom end in world rankings which to a great extent (30 to 40%) are based on research output and number of citations.³ Thus, only the two top Polish universities – Warsaw and Jagiellonian – make it into the top 500 of the three most popular world university rankings and are placed in the fourth hundred in all of them (Academic Ranking of World Universities, 2013; QS World University Rankings, 2013; Times Higher Education World University Rankings, 2013).

1.2. Publishing internationally is a career imperative for today's scholars

“Publish or perish” is a well-known imperative in modern academia, and a reality in most countries, languages, and scholarly disciplines (e.g. Duszak & Lewkowicz, 2008; Misak, Marusic, & Marusic, 2005). To some extent, this is unsurprising,

³ As much as 40% of the Academic Ranking of World Universities is based on “Research Output” measured by the number of papers published in Nature and Science and the number of papers indexed in Science Citation Index-expanded and Social Science Citation Index; while another 20% of the weighting is based on the Thomson Reuters’ list of Highly Cited Researchers. Times Higher Education World University Rankings gives 30% of its weighting to “Research Influence” measured by the citation volume and another 6% to “Research Volume” - per academic publication output.

considering the fact that written texts are the primary vehicles for conveying new knowledge and the principal embodiment of research activities (Hyland & Salager-Meyer, 2008; Man, Weinkauf, Tsang, & Sin, 2004). More specifically, it is the research article published in a refereed journal that “holds a central place in knowledge production and academic culture”, notes Canagarajah (1996, p. 439). Swales (1990) further asserts the refereed article is today considered to be the most typical artefact of research.

Publication in internationally established, peer-reviewed journals is an important means for scholars to secure employment, ensure funding and is the main route to tenured jobs; it is not only a way of diffusing research findings. Many authors have supported this reality (Belcher, 2007; Cargill & O’Connor, 2006; Hyland, 2009; Ravallion & Wagstaff, 2011). The volume of quality research output is equally crucial for institutions worldwide in order to attract both international fee-paying students and top academics, and to secure public as well as private grants (Braine, 2005; Hyland & Salager-Meyer, 2008; Y. Li, 2006). The growing popularity of national and international university league tables, which to a large extent base their scores on various research-related criteria, only adds to the pressure.

1.3. English dominance in academic publications disadvantages non-English-speaking scholars

Academic journals are now published almost universally in English; this is a fact widely known and accepted. Almost three decades ago, Swales (1985a) reviewed available literature and drew attention to the growing predominance of English as the world’s language of research and publication. In 1997, he compared English to a *Tyrannosaurus rex* – “gobbling up the other denizens of the academic linguistic grazing grounds” (p. 374). Today, not publishing in English means isolating oneself

from the wider international audience as well as reducing one's career prospects (Flowerdew, 1999a; Misak et al., 2005; Uzuner, 2008). This lingua franca status of English creates many challenges for speakers of other languages who aspire to publish internationally. Over the last two decades, a number of researchers have investigated the obstacles that prevent non-Anglophone scholars from sharing their findings with the global community (e.g. Braine, 2003; Canagarajah, 2002; Cargill & O'Connor, 2006; Casanave & Vandrick, 2003)

1.4. Research questions

Low visibility of Polish researchers on the international stage raises the obvious question: what is the cause of this situation? Meanwhile, the dominance of English in scientific publications poses a related question: is it possible that English is a barrier? Unfortunately, there has been little in-depth exploration of the above questions or the relationship between them. This study attempts to fill the gap by asking the following questions:

- What factors are responsible for the low publication rates of Polish academics in international, peer-reviewed journals?
- Are inadequate English language skills of Polish scholars a factor?
If yes, how serious a factor is it?

1.5. Research design and overview of the thesis

The research sets out to find answers to why Polish publication is low and how this low rate may be linked to the English language. It consists of two parts:

1. A literature review to seek clues as to these answers, and
2. A qualitative interview study to verify whether the literature findings hold true for Polish scholars.

Details on this research, and the author's discussion of the findings, are laid out over five chapters, beginning with Chapter 2, which provides a review of the literature on the difficulties facing non-native English speakers (NNES) attempting to publish in English. It also reviews the limited research available on these same difficulties among Polish scholars. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology that guided this project. It provides the rationale for why qualitative research methods were used and presents the sampling and recruitment strategies, as well as the instruments used in this study. It also explains how the data was collected, transcribed and analysed. Chapter 4 presents and discusses the findings and suggests their possible implications. And finally, Chapter 5 concludes the thesis with a discussion of the limitations of this project, the possible application of this research, and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review

The primary purpose of the literature review is to look for clues as to the underlying reasons for low scholarly publication in Poland and to determine whether the dominance of English internationally plays a large role. However, a secondary and important purpose is to search for ways to overcome the disadvantages that English dominance places on Polish scholars, to discover whether other non English dominance factors contribute to low Polish scholarly output, and finally to consider how these too may be addressed.

2.1. Today's academics must publish

The research article, a broad genre that can be traced back to the second half of the 17th century (Hyland & Salager-Meyer, 2008), is the primary vehicle to convey scholarly knowledge and holds a central place in today's academic culture (Canagarajah, 1996; Swales, 1990). However, for most researchers these days, having publications in internationally established, peer-reviewed journals is much more than a way of diffusing their findings as academic jobs, grants and promotions depend on research output (Belcher, 2007; Cargill & O'Connor, 2006; Hyland, 2009; Ravallion & Wagstaff, 2011). At the institution level, the volume of quality publications is also important since it often determines institutional funding and reputation. This translates into the scholarly imperative "publish or perish."

2.2. The dominance of English necessitates its use in international journals

Publishing in English has become almost the only way a scholar's work can be disseminated globally. And, since the volume of one's international publications is often used as a direct measure of scholarship, those who do not publish in English

limit their chances not only of prestige and international recognition, but often also of successful academic careers (Curry & Lillis, 2004; Gentil, 2005; Giannoni, 2008; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Uzuner, 2008).

English dominance is of long standing. It was over two decades ago that Swales (1985a, 1990) commented on the growing dominance of English in scientific publications, and numerous academics have since confirmed his belief (cf. Ammon, 2006; Braine, 2005; Flowerdew, 1999a; Gibbs, 1995; Y. Li, 2006). Definite figures are impossible to establish because citation indexes tend to be biased towards English (Hamel, 2007; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Sandelin & Sarafoglou, 2004), but, for example, Giannoni (2008) examined the records held by the most popular medical database PubMed and observed that while the total number of medical publications between 1986 and 2006 more than doubled, the proportion of those in languages other than English dwindled from 23% to just 10%. Similarly, Moya-Anegon et al. (2007) whose study compared the coverage of the Scopus⁴ and Ulrich's⁵ databases found that respectively 85% and 74% of journals they include are published in English.

English gained a significant lead over other languages in the last half of the last century. At the beginning of the 20th century, English, French and German held roughly equal positions in scholarly communication. Hamel (2007) suggests their relative importance differed by discipline: German was the language of medicine, biology and chemistry, French dominated law and the political sciences, whereas political economy and geology were within the realm of English. However, the two

⁴ *Scopus* is one of the largest abstract and citation databases of peer-reviewed literature. It covers 21,000 titles (including 20,000 peer-reviewed journals) and consists of 50 million records in the fields of science, technology, medicine, social sciences and Arts & Humanities (www.scopus.com).

⁵ *Ulrich's Periodicals Directory* is a database providing information on popular and academic magazines, scientific journals, newspapers, etc. It covers more than 300,000 serials in 950 subject areas (www.ulrichsweb.serialssolutions.com).

World Wars together with the growing power of the US pushed English to its current pre-eminent position – a “coincidence of the confluence of a number of political and economic forces during the last half of the 20th century” (Kaplan, 2001, p. 19).

English dominance cannot be explained away by suggesting little research is done in non-native English speaking (NNES) countries. This argument is easily refuted since countries such as Japan, Denmark, Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands and Finland are among those with the highest research output, obviously in English (Giannoni, 2008; King, 2004). What is more, a study of medical publications conducted by Man, Weinkauff, Tsang, and Sin (2004) established that countries with high English fluency have high publication output in the top journals. Likewise, an econometric study by Bauwens, Mion and Thisse (2007) concluded that English proficiency in European countries is a significant factor in their research productivity.

The Anglicization of academic publishing is visible both in the hard sciences, and in the social sciences and humanities. Although social sciences do tend more to the use of local languages, a high portion of international publications in these genres is in English. Several authors, for example, have noted that these soft sciences focus more on intra-national topics directed at local audience and are therefore more likely to use national languages (Ammon, 2006; Gentil, 2005). Siguan (2001) also notes that concepts in social sciences are frequently constructed on specific cultural tradition which are conveyed within the limits of a specific language. Moreover, as Ammon (2006; 2012) explains, the language of the social sciences and humanities is much more complex – bordering on artistic for the humanities – and therefore less attainable for non-native speakers. Nevertheless, the proportion of English in worldwide social sciences publications was 76% in 2005, according to a figure provided by Ammon (2012, p. 339). A similar number (74.57%) was quoted by Hamel (2007, p. 59) who

reviewed a 1999 study by Cindoc examining the share of languages in both social sciences and humanities databases.

The Matthew Effect is a term in sociology that describes a situation where “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer” and it could be used to describe the self-perpetuating nature of English dominance in today’s academia: It has a prominent status and it is used widely, hence it becomes even more desirable and its status increases (Flowerdew, 2013). Likewise, because of their prominence, papers in English are cited much more often; thus, the journals they appear in are considered more prestigious and, as a result, are included more often in databases and citation indexes, thus are easier to access, are read more often, and become even more prominent (Flowerdew, 1999a; Gibbs, 1995; Hamel, 2007; Tonkin, 2011).

2.3. English dominance may be detrimental to knowledge creation

Monolingualism is detrimental to the formation of new knowledge (Ammon, 2006, 2007). As Mauranen (1993) put it: “Insofar as rhetorical practices embody cultural thought patterns, we should encourage the maintenance of variety and diversity in academic rhetorical practices — excessive standardization may counteract innovation and creative thought by forcing them into standard forms” (p. 172; cited in Swales, 2000, p. 67). A similar view has been expressed by Siguan (2001) who suggested that the prevalence of English in research literature “may put a brake on scientific creation, and may eventually impoverish it” (p. 68) and contended that this is what happened to German sociology in the second half of the 20th century.

Furthermore, van Dijk (1994) argued that the lack of “insight into theories, methods, data and results of scholars elsewhere on the globe ... diminishes the relevance and generality of our findings, and in any case contributes to the reproduction of prevailing

forms of cultural and academic hegemony” (p. 276).

An increasing monolingualism among native English-speaking scholars threatens to restrict their cultural understanding. The numbers of Anglophones – including scholars – who are monolingual is growing (Hamel, 2007; Tonkin, 2011). Swales (2004) notes that in the past, doctoral students in the United States were required to be able to read scholarly literature in one or more foreign languages but this requirement has been dropped by most universities today. Similarly, a report commissioned by the British Academy⁶ (Levitt, Janta, Shehabi, Jones, & Valentini, 2009) found that the number of UK born and educated academics “possessing the competence to engage with research materials in languages other than English” is low and further declining (pp. 15-18).⁷ This increasing monolingualism narrows Anglophones’ research contexts and perspectives, limits access to foreign source materials and literature, restricts ability to conduct comparative or international studies and overall diminishes understanding and appreciation of other cultures and discourses (Levitt et al., 2009).

A potential skewing of ideas exists towards those articulated by native English speakers (NES). Most publications originate in Anglophone or Western European countries⁸, especially those with excellent English fluency, and are authored much more frequently by Anglophone or Western European academics (Gibbs, 1995; Man

⁶ The British Academy is the UK's national body for the humanities and social sciences (www.britac.ac.uk).

⁷ The finding is unsurprising considering the long-standing downwards trend among UK students taking foreign language A-levels (school-leaving qualification), with the numbers for German and French (traditionally the two most popular languages) dropping by half in the last decade (Paton, 2013).

⁸ In 2012, over 63% of articles indexed in the Web of Science, one of the world's largest citation indexes, originated in the US and the EU, while another 8% were published in Canada and Australia (Thomson Reuters, 2014).

et al., 2004; Swales, 1985b). This may potentially favour the methods and paradigms of native-speaking English scholars as these are published much more often, and thus also read more regularly, than those originating by NNES scholars (Ammon, 2012). The global exchange of knowledge is overwhelmingly unidirectional.

What is more, scholars who are under pressure to publish in established English language journals may end up shifting their views in order to conform to the centre (Durand, 2006), as has been shown by Lillis and Curry (2006) in a study of central European academics. Swales (2004) also cited “the skewing of international research agendas toward those most likely to pass the gatekeeping role of major Anglophone research outlets” (p. 52) as one of the negative effects of “Englishization.” De Swaan (2001) gives an example of economics as a field where the “predominance of English is coupled with a predominance of American economic models and standards” (p. 78), and warns that despite being universal in social sciences, English is not impartial but favours American ideas as well as authors.

English dominance widens the gap between English researchers and the general world public (Murray & Dingwall, 2001; Swales, 2004). Three quarters or well over five billion people in the world cannot communicate in English, even though it is true that a quarter of the world’s population speak English to some degree (Crystal, 2003). Yet, the hegemony of English in academia requires that scholars worldwide who wish to publish must be biliterate – they must be able to communicate in English on the world academic stage but, if they wish to convey their research in their own country, they must also be able to communicate academically in their native tongue. If NNES scholars choose (or are forced to choose) a focus on English, what is contained in their research will never be revealed to the general non-English speaking public.

English ascendancy has not only contributed to the decline of other major

scholarly languages such as German and French (Swales, 2000), but also to the potential stifling of the scholarly genre in many national languages (Ferguson, 2007; Tonkin, 2011). For example, Awedyk (2009) remarks on the weakening of the Norwegian academic discourse as a result of an ever increasing use of English terminology, Cho (2010) comments on the lack of academic terms in Korean, while Gunnarsson (2001) discusses the threats to the Swedish scientific register in fields in which diglossia has become a reality.

The dominance of English in research dissemination is a reality today, detrimental or not. There is a plus side to the pre-eminence of English in scholarly communication: a global lingua franca undoubtedly boosts international collaboration and hastens the dissemination of new knowledge, thus aiding the worldwide progress in many areas of science and human development (Coulmas, 2007; Flowerdew, 1999a). Furthermore, for those whose mother tongues have always been marginal in international scientific communication, academic monolingualism reduces the need to learn multiple foreign languages, allowing them instead to concentrate on developing better skills in a single language (Ammon, 2007). It can, in turn, be assumed that more advanced skills in a foreign language facilitate fuller and more active engagement with the international academic community. Duszak (1997c) explains, “For speakers of some minority languages, English offers a way out of isolation and into the world of international scholarship” (p.3).

Regardless of the pros and cons of English as the dominant language of scholarly publications, it is the reality. There are credible arguments for re-aligning this language imbalance; however, to be able to reach the right audience and initiate a meaningful debate, the language of this discourse, at least for now, must be in English. This thesis therefore focuses on understanding in greater depth the

disadvantages English dominance places on NNES in the hopes of concretely addressing these barriers and placing NNES scholars on a more level publishing playing field with their native English-speaking colleagues.

2.4. Non-native English speaking scholars face publication obstacles

2.4.1. The need to become fluent in English is a considerable obstacle for those scholars whose native language is not English.

The dominance of English in academia gives a general competitive advantage to NES countries and speakers over their NNES colleagues. For example, it saves English speakers substantial time, effort and financial investment required in learning a foreign language (Fiedler, 2010) – resources they can spend on other pursuits, including more research. Furthermore, as will be discussed later, Anglophones find it easier to publish (Hamel, 2007) and are said to produce as much as four-fifths of the scientific works published globally in English (Guardiano, Favilla, & Calaresu, 2007). Hence, as has been mentioned earlier, their papers are read more readily and their ideas and findings reach a wider audience. What is more, universities in English speaking countries consistently do better in worldwide rankings which are based to a large extent on various research output indicators that favour Anglophone authors (Van der Wende, 2008).

In fact, inadequate language skills have been shown to be a significant obstacle for NNES to publishing in English. For example, a survey of nearly 600 Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong academics conducted by Flowerdew (1999b) found that over two thirds considered themselves disadvantaged when writing in English mostly because of “technical problems with the language” (p. 137). In another study, Flowerdew and Li (2009) interviewed 20 Chinese scholars in the humanities and social sciences and

determined that insufficient language proficiency was viewed as the most serious constraint on their publishing in English. In addition, Man et al. (2004) established a correlation between English proficiency in OECD countries and their publication output in the most prestigious medical journals. Language difficulties are also cited as an impediment to NNES achieving international publications by Flowerdew (1999a), Li and Flowerdew (2007), Curry and Lillis (2004) and Burrough-Boenisch (2003) among others.

Poor linguistics skills have been shown to correlate with high paper rejection rates (Coates, Sturgeon, Bohannon, & Pasini, 2002), and it has been argued that some editors and reviewers of established journals have little tolerance for imperfect and non-standard writing (Flowerdew, 1999a; Meneghini & Packer, 2007; Swales, 1990). NNES experience difficulties while writing, accessing literature written in English, or corresponding with editors (Flowerdew, 2013). This is particularly true for those living in countries belonging to Kachru's (1985) *Expanding Circle* where English is used only as a foreign language.

The attainment of language fluency appears to be secondary to an even greater problem for NNES, that of adhering to the strictures of writing in academic English. Writing papers that follow conventions established by a specific discourse community, in this instance that of English written academia, is a complex endeavour even for NES (Belcher, 2007; Hyland, 2009; Misak et al., 2005). Indeed, Swales (2004) contends that NES and NNES academics experience fairly comparable issues in writing English, especially if they are novice writers. However, the point here is that NES may indeed struggle comparatively with achieving excellence in written academic English; yet, their struggle is limited to this one aspect. NNES, as noted earlier, must

first expend considerable energy learning a language that is not their native tongue, even before tackling the writing convention challenge.

Further, NNES scholars face more difficulties than their NES colleagues in the redrafting stages due to the stylistic differences between English and other languages. As an example, from his study entitled “Publish in English or Perish in German”, Gnutzmann (2012) paraphrases the frustrations of a German NNES struggling to complete a paper in English. His first draft, he notes, is “the best I can deliver in English.” And then, if he is asked to redraft, a typical part of the English academic writing convention, he notes that he has reached “the end of the line ... I just don’t have any options left” (p. 17).

Attaining English fluency in writing requires competence at a technical level. This competence includes overcoming such problems as restricted vocabulary range, complicated syntax, incorrect use of idiomatic expressions, imprecise modality and the absence of native-speaker-like formulaic sequences (cf. Braine, 2005; Burroughs-Boenisch, 2003; J. Li & Schmitt, 2009). However, English fluency also requires structural as well as technical competence. In comparison to other languages, English is said to lie at the upper end of a scale of text organisation explicitness (Hyland & Salager-Meyer, 2008). In English, the structural framework for the writer’s content requires a strong logic to the flow of ideas. Thus, unsurprisingly, stylistic differences are alleged to obscure the value of NNES’ research reports even more (Uzuner, 2008), with qualitative research that relies almost exclusively on text being most affected (Flowerdew, 1999b).

English structural competencies that multilingual scholars struggle with include lack of cohesion and coherence (Hyland & Salager-Meyer, 2008), inappropriate introductions, weak discussions and overall inappropriate structure (Flowerdew, 2001;

Misak et al., 2005; Uzuner, 2008). As well, the lack of authorial voice that compellingly conveys to the reader the writer's points, and the inappropriate use of hedging or vague language have also been identified as major issues for NNES scholars by many editors (Flowerdew, 2001; Salager-Meyer, 2011).

Academic English fluency requires even more competencies, such as making references to existing literature, and proper handling of citations. This is an additional troublesome area for NNES scholars (Misak et al., 2005). Flowerdew (2001) and Uzuner (2008) also referred to the frequent problem of "parochialism" or the tendency of NNES to write papers excessively grounded in local contexts, something that does not advance their ability to publish internationally (cf. Lillis & Curry, 2010).

2.4.2. The lack of funding resources is another serious publishing obstacle for NNES.

The extra personal resources required of NNES scholars to attain English fluency as noted above are exacerbated by the typical underfunding in under-developed (NNES) countries of both material resources to aid English academic fluency and of general resources to support research and publication. And yet, the literature is clear: Low research funding equates to low publication rates. Lack of material resources has been named as a barrier to participation in scientific discourse that is on a par with if not greater than linguistic considerations (Ammon, 2012; Canagarajah, 2002). Moreover, studies such as that by Man et al. (2004), who used multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship between research funding in OECD countries and their scientific productivity, have shown a direct correlation between national spending on Research and Development (R&D) and that nation's publication output. Likewise, according to Das, Do, Shaines, and Srinivasan (2013), per-capita research output of a given country decreases with the country's per capita

gross domestic product (GDP).

Material funding constraints can prove insurmountable for aspiring NNES scholars. Canagarajah (1996, 2002) argued, for instance, that in developing countries, availability of resources such as computers, printers or the internet remains restricted which can, as an example, make the strict conventions for citations or paper formatting required by editors impossible to follow.⁹ Financial limitations mean not only little funding for research but also lack of well-stocked libraries, restricted access to electronic journals and bibliographical databases, poorly equipped laboratories, and less, if any, money for logistical support (cf. Salager-Meyer, 2008). Unsurprisingly, studies such as that by Sahakyan and Sivasubramaniam (2008), who surveyed and interviewed academics from the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, quoted “lack of material resources” (p. 41) as one of the main challenges faced by Armenian scholars trying to publish in English language journals. Similarly, limited resources and inadequate funds were cited as key issues impeding English-medium text production by Lillis and Curry (2010) in their study of academic writing practices and experiences of scholars from Hungary, Slovakia, Spain and Portugal.

The lack of resources can be a result of low funding ability at the scholar’s institution. Higher educational institutions in NNES countries are negatively affected by the low international visibility of their scholars. As Hyland (2009) points out, in many countries, institutions’ funding is increasingly linked to their publication output. Curry and Lillis (2004), for example, describe such a dependency at Slovakian universities. Thus, low publication rates reduce possible funding sources to educational institutions,

⁹ For example, the first edition of the APA Publication Manual from 1929 was seven pages long (*Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 2009, p. 3), the current 6th edition has over 250 pages.

restricting their ability to support their scholars with the material resources needed in order to be able to publish internationally. It is, unfortunately, a vicious circle of funding shortfalls.

Summing up, NNES scholars who want to publish internationally face a multitude of barriers put up by publishers, editors and reviewers, in addition to the enormous effort and cost required to learn English. Scholarly writing is time consuming and demanding even for NES; the extra burdens that NNES have to handle – linguistic and paratextual – may well reduce the volume of publications they are capable of producing, which may further deter them from even trying to publish in English (Casanave & Vandrick, 2003; Cho, 2010; Flowerdew, 2008).

The question whether challenges described above are faced also by Polish academics when trying to publish in international English language journals will be discussed in the following sections.

2.5. Polish scholars wishing to publish internationally mostly face similar barriers as other NNES academics

The literature suggests Polish scholars face three types of publishing barriers. The first two, inadequate fluency in English and funding constraints, mirror those of other NNES scholars. However, the third, attitudinal barriers, appears to be unique to the Polish situation.

2.5.1. English fluency may be a key barrier for Polish scholars.

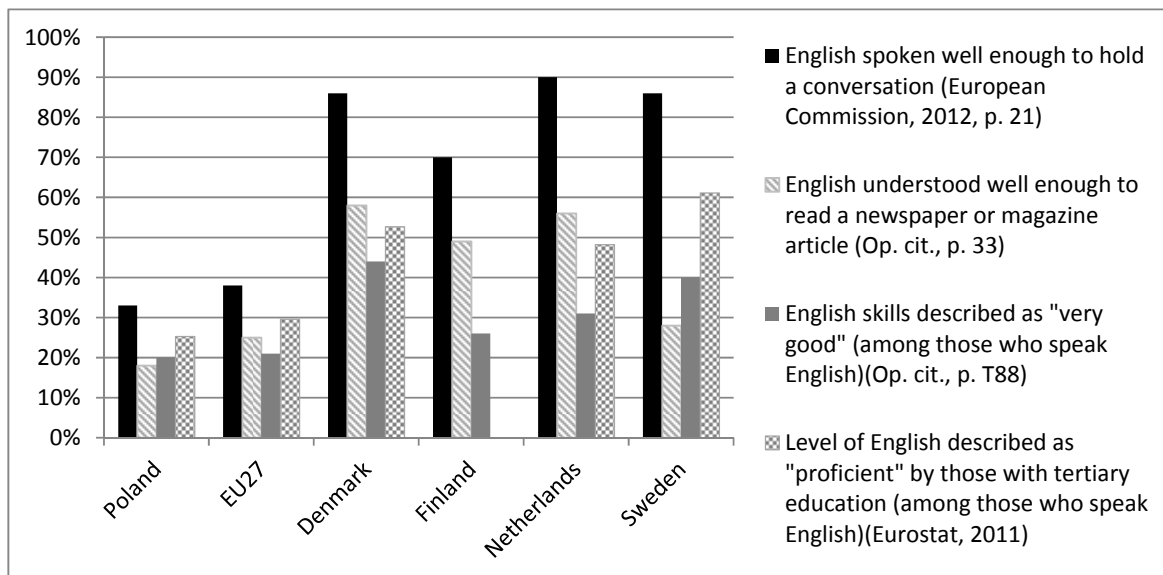
Low English fluency in Poland may be linked to lower publication productivity. English language skills in Poland are not at par with those of other NNES countries that have higher international publishing rates. Countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland or Sweden are repeatedly cited as examples of Western European

non-English speaking countries with scientific productivity and citation intensity comparable to Anglophone countries (cf. Burrough-Boenisch, 2006; King, 2004; Sandelin & Sarafoglou, 2004). English fluency in Poland does not compare well to such fluency in these other countries, as is outlined in the chart (Figure 3) below.

As can be seen in Figure 3, English language skills in Poland, even among those with higher education, are considerably lower than in countries much better integrated into the global scientific community, a situation which may begin to explain the difficulties facing Polish scholars attempting to publish in international journals.

Figure 3: Polish language skills lag behind NNES better integrated into global publishing.

Source: European Commission (2012); Eurostat (2011); own elaboration.



Low Polish language skills exist despite popularity and demand among Polish citizens. Recent data indicate that over 85% of students at primary and secondary level educational institutions study English nowadays (Eurostat, 2012). This demand began an upward rise in the early 1960s when another Western language was made

obligatory at the secondary level. The 1975 British Council profile suggests that around 60 per cent of secondary students at the time were studying English (cited in Reichelt, 2005b). But it was in the early nineties, after Russian was abolished as a compulsory language, that the demand for English in Poland soared; Poland's entry into the European Union in 2004 gave another boost to the language.

English enjoys a relatively high prestige in Poland and is seen as a skill necessary to succeed. Its growing popularity and "fashionability" in the last few decades has led to a rapid increase of Anglicisms in Polish (Chłopicki, 2005; Mańczak-Wohlfeld, 2004), mainly in the form of lexical borrowings but also in areas such as morphology, syntax and even punctuation and semantics (Mańczak-Wohlfeld, 2006; Zabawa, 2008). The prevalence of English loan words in some areas of life, such as business or marketing, and the frequency of code-mixing especially in colloquial Polish and among the younger generation has led some scholars even to wonder whether it constitutes a threat to the Polish language itself (Chłopicki, 2005; Mańczak-Wohlfeld, 2004).

The popularity of English does not, however, translate into language fluency among Poles. Even though a recent interview survey of a 1000 Polish nationals, conducted as a part of a EU-wide study entitled "Europeans and their Languages" (European Commission, 2012), showed English to be the best known foreign language in Poland, it also highlighted the fact that – as was illustrated in Figure 3 – only 33% of those over the age of 15 report knowing it well enough to hold a conversation (p. 21), a mere 18% admit to understanding it well enough to read a newspaper or magazine article (p. 33); while only 20% of those who speak English describe their skills as *very good* (p. T88). Astoundingly, even among those with tertiary education, just over a quarter (25.3%) report their English to be *proficient*

(Eurostat, 2011).

It is thus unsurprising that a questionnaire survey of a hundred Polish academics by Duszak and Lewkowicz (2008) revealed that many have difficulties even reading in English. Hence it is not unreasonable to surmise that writing in English presents Polish scholars with an even greater challenge. Especially, as noted by Reichelt (2005a), English-writing instruction has been generally neglected at all levels in Polish schools, partly because in the past, English teachers lacked training in teaching writing. Also, until 2005, the English language portion of the school-leaving exam taken by most students was in the form of an oral exam. There was little incentive, therefore, for teachers to teach writing, which requires time-consuming grading. The new exam introduced in 2005 includes two writing tasks at the basic (required) level: one shorter and one longer but formats are limited to texts such as postcards, notes, invitations and formal or informal letters. Even then, only the advanced level includes a 200 to 250 word composition. At the university level, students, except for those majoring in a language, usually only attend a general foreign language course for a year with the final exam being focused on grammar and translation.

This diminished emphasis on English writing instruction can be linked in part to the fact that Polish does not really have a strong tradition of writing pedagogy (Reichelt, 2005a, 2005b) as writing is taught explicitly only at the primary level. Once they enter secondary school, Polish students write papers mostly focusing on literature and its history, and are usually free to decide how to approach the writing (Duszak, 1998). As Duszak (1997b) suggested, in Polish schools “exercises in creative writing replace the English drill in step-by-step instruction in the production of expository and argumentative texts” (p. 28). What is more, best grades are often awarded to papers

that are simply long; content usually comes second, while organisation trails last (Reichelt, 2005a, 2005b). At the university level, writing courses are almost unheard of and "The ability to produce academic prose is viewed more as an art than a skill to be mastered through observation and practice" (Duszak, 1997b, p. 28).

Research elsewhere suggests that the lack of writing instruction in Poland's own native language may exacerbate the poor English writing skills of Polish scholars. Cho (2010) who investigated biliteracy challenges of four Korean scholars in the US suggested that the lack of writing instruction in the native language contributed to their difficulties with developing academic literacy in English. Likewise, Braine (2005) speculated that lack of adequate writing instruction at school had long-term consequences on writing abilities of Hong Kong academics. It is quite plausible that this is also the case for Polish scholars.

English writing convention and style differences may also play a part in Polish publication rejections in English journals. Editors of established journals have little tolerance for imperfect and non-standard writing (Flowerdew, 1999a, 2001; Swales, 1990). Unfortunately, numerous textual and stylistic differences between the Polish and English languages, as found by Duszak (1994) and Golebiowski (1998, 1999, 2009), can lead to such "imperfections" and paper rejection. "Lack of linearity, implicitness of style and minimal use of metalinguistic cues", for example, were the characteristics of Polish discourse different from English that stood out for Golebiowski (1999, p. 236). Polish texts were also shown to be far less structured than their English counterparts. Duszak (1994), who looked at Polish and English research papers introductions, notes that it proved difficult at times to delineate introductions in Polish articles and she described the texts produced by Polish academics as "a sort of academic 'flow-of-consciousness'" (p. 302).

Polish academic discourse has been heavily influenced by the German style of writing and thus it is described as belonging to the Teutonic scholarly tradition (Duszak, 1998; Gajda, 1999). In contrast to Anglo-Saxon communication patterns, academic Polish is said to be characterised by emphasis on content rather than on form (Duszak, 1998), digressiveness (Duszak, 1997a), and intellectualisation of style (Gajda, 1982).

In fact, the Polish language does not have equivalent terms to *academic writing* or *academic discourse*, according to a prominent Polish linguist, Duszak (1998). The closest one - *styl naukowy* [scientific style/register] – is used to describe specifically research writing addressed at other scholars. In contexts where knowledge is conveyed for others, for instance educational purposes, the style is described as *dydaktyczny* [didactic] or *popularno-naukowy* [popular scientific] (Duszak, 1997b). Predictably, Polish academic discourse has been studied in depth and documented by very few (Duszak, 1998; Wyrębowicz, 2009).

Although modern Polish academic discourse is said to be changing under the influence of English (Duszak & Lewkowicz, 2008), the differences between Polish and English academic writing may mean that many Polish scholars writing in English use native discursal patterns that are alien to English which, as has been mentioned in section 2.4.1, often result in the rejection of papers by English-language journals.

2.5.2. Funding constraints

Lack of financial resources is often quoted in the popular press as the key reason for the low visibility of Polish scholars on the international scene (cf. Czeladko, 2011; Gabryel, 2011; Kalisz, 2008). As has already been discussed, lack of material resources has been named as a barrier to participation in scientific discourse that is on a par with if not greater than linguistic considerations (Ammon, 2012; Canagarajah,

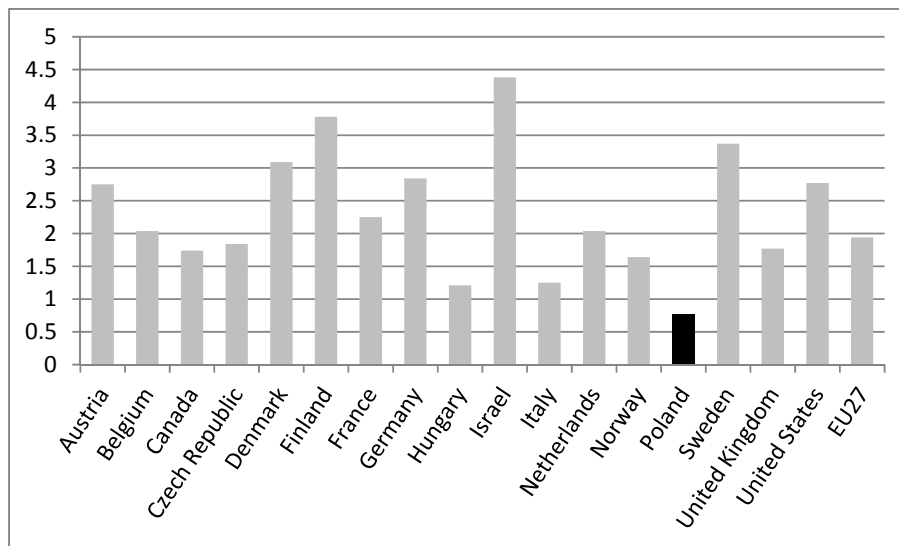
2002), and studies such as that by Man et al. (2004) have shown a direct correlation between national spending on Research and Development (R&D) and that nation's publication output.

Polish expenditure on R&D remains low compared with many other countries, including other Central European nations such as Hungary and the Czech Republic (OECD, 2013b), even though it has increased by as much as 50 percent between 2008 and 2012 (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2013, p. 53). The figure below (Figure 4) shows that it is 2.5 times lower¹⁰ than the average in the EU and several times below that in many Western European countries.

Figure 4: Polish expenditure on research is low compared to many countries.

Gross Domestic Expenditure on Research & Development (GERD) as a percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2011 in selected countries.

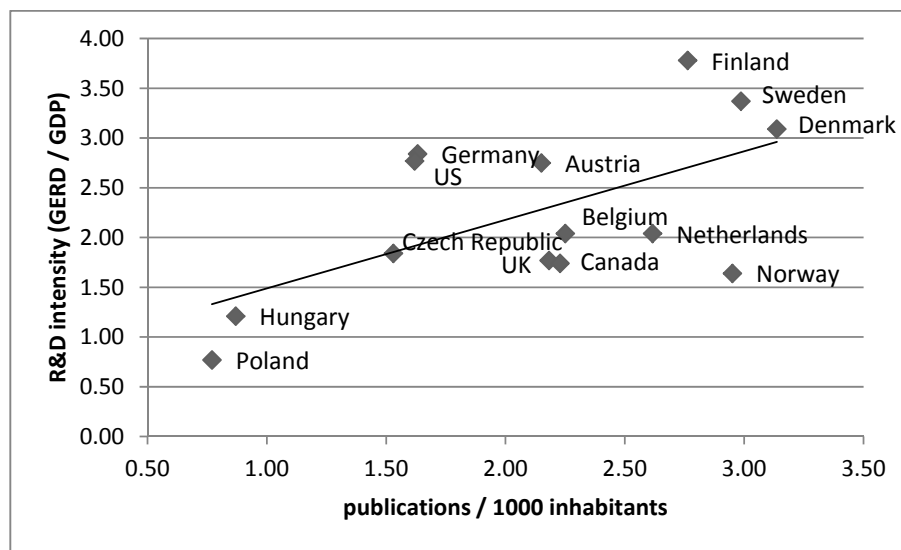
Source: OECD (2013b); own elaboration.



¹⁰ In terms of Euro per inhabitant the expenditure is nearly 6 times lower – the average across the EU in 2012 was €527.6/inhabitant, in Poland it was €89. For a comparison in Sweden the figure stood at €1,464.9 and at €1,311.5 in Denmark; in the Czech Republic it was €273.9 and in Hungary €126.6 (Eurostat, 2013a).

Yet, research clearly shows a positive relationship between R&D spending and publication rate. A simple comparison of data from Figure 4 (Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D) with Figure 1 (number of publications per 1000 inhabitants) illustrates this link between countries spending on R&D and the number of publications per 1000 of inhabitants. The chart (Figure 5) below shows Poland to be at the very bottom.

Figure 5: Low investment in R&D results in a low publication rates.



Similar analysis led the authors of the previously mentioned report on scientific productivity of HEIs in Poland (Wolszczak-Derlacz & Parteka, 2010) to conclude that “*ceteris paribus*, a 10% increase in funding could be linked to a rise in research productivity¹¹ done at Polish HEIs by around 40%” (p. 80). The same report also highlighted the fact that in Polish HEIs between 83% and 99% of funds are spent on

¹¹ The report defines “research productivity” as the “number of publications per academic staff member” (p. 47).

teaching activities, leaving few resources for financing research – in contrast, in the UK only 28% of funds on average are destined to didactics (p. 62).

Inevitably, poor funding results in poor research facilities and resources which can be detrimental to the actual academic performance. According to Kwiek and Antonowicz (2013) only a third (34%) of Polish scholars are satisfied with their research equipment and instruments, and less than half (43%) assess their computer facilities as adequate, while over a third (37%) finds their library facilities and services insufficient (pp. 40-41). Even worse, only a fifth views available research support in a positive light and overall research funding is considered adequate only by 9% of Polish academics (*ibid.*).

Low funding also leads to the inability of Polish scholars to focus on research. Linked directly to the general underfunding are low salaries for academics in Poland. As a result, Polish scholars often end up having multiple teaching jobs in order to achieve a reasonable standard of living (Kalisz, 2008). This situation is particularly true in the social sciences and the humanities where dramatic expansion of HEIs in the last two decades,¹² especially in the private sector, created a plethora of new teaching jobs (Leszczynski, 2011). Kwiek (2012) quotes ministerial data showing that 40% of all full professors in 2008 were employed full-time in more than one institution. According to him, if one were to include part-time employment, the figure could be as high as 70 to 80%, especially in the soft sciences (p. 645). Needless to say, the relationship between excessive teaching load and research output can only be

¹² In 1989 there were 97 HEIs in Poland, in 2011 there were 460 while the number of students increased by 450% (Central Statistical Office, 2012).

negative – academics teaching in several institutions¹³ simply do not have time for research and publishing (Fulton, Santiago, Edquist, El-Khawas, & Hackl, 2007; Kwiek, 2012; Wolszczak-Derlacz & Parteka, 2010).

Further, the low funding results in fewer researchers and hence research publications. Below average expenditure on R&D means that the number of those employed in this sector in Poland is also below European standards. In 2011, R&D personnel constituted 1.83% of total employment across the 28 EU countries, with Finland leading the scoreboard at 3.27% and 13 other countries above the EU average. Poland was in 25th place – ahead only of Romania, Bulgaria and Cyprus – with a figure of a mere 0.86% (Eurostat, 2013b).

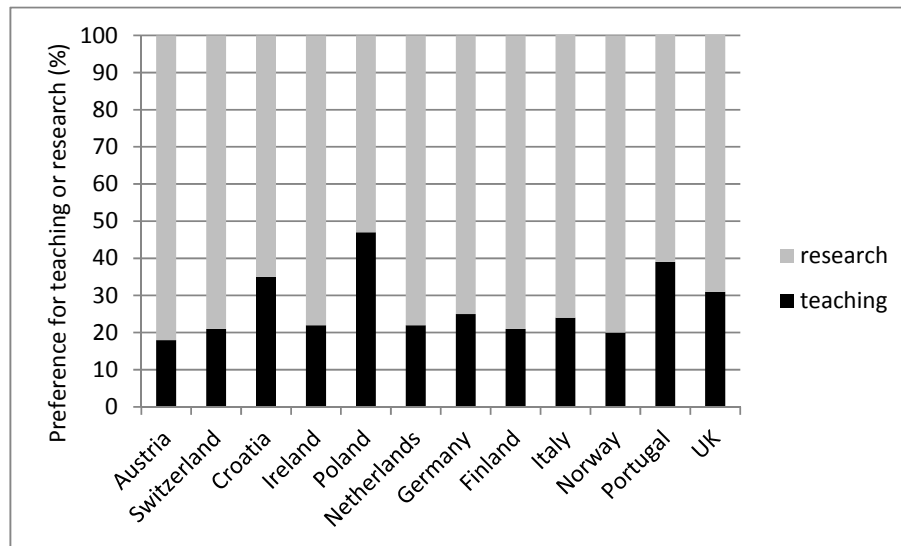
2.5.3. Other attitudinal factors

The literature suggests that additional barriers beyond linguistic and funding exist for Polish scholars hoping to be published internationally. These appear to relate to the lack of a strong publishing culture in Poland. Polish professors, for example, prefer teaching to research (and to the publishing of that research) more than their European peers. As suggested by recent large-scale surveys of European academics (EUROAC/CAP¹⁴), as many as 47% of senior university academics stated that their preferences lie “primarily in teaching” or “both, leaning towards teaching” (Höhle & Teichler, 2013, p. 90). In other countries, the same inclination was expressed, on average, by around a fifth of scholars, as illustrated in the following diagram (Figure 6).

¹³ New legislation introduced in 2011 (“Prawo o Szkolnictwie Wyższym [Higher Education Act],”) theoretically limits multiple employments to only one additional position (§129). In practice, little has changed as the limitation does not apply for example to contract work (Walczak, 2011).

¹⁴ The 12 country EUROAC/CAP data set was created by a merger of data from the worldwide “The Changing Academic Profession” (CAP) survey conducted in 2007 and “The Academic Profession in Europe: Responses to Societal Challenges” (EUROAC) study from 2010.

Figure 6: Polish academic preference for teaching over research may lead to less research, and therefore fewer publications.
Source: Höhle and Teichler (2013, p. 90), own elaboration.

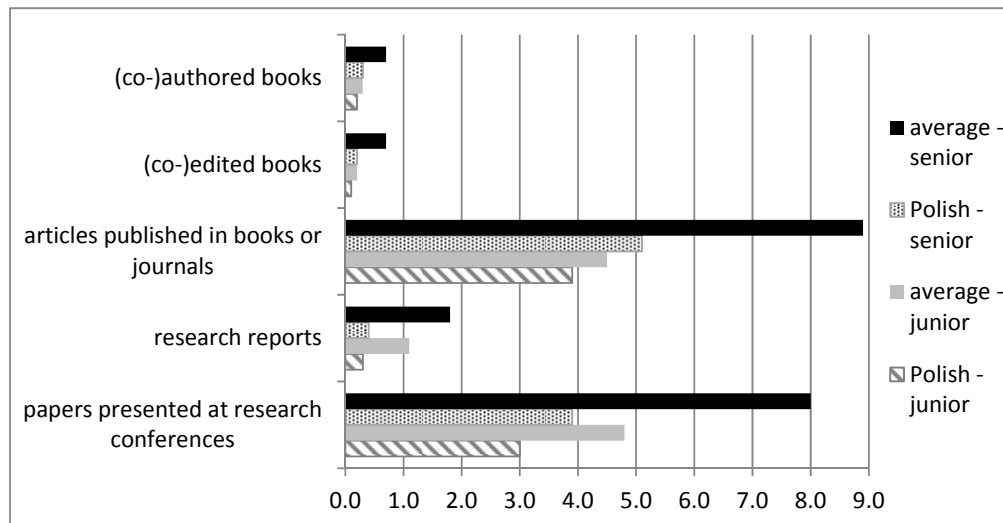


Furthermore, the same survey found that only 38% of senior and 46% of junior academic staff at Polish universities actually conduct experiments or inquiries (Drennan, Clarke, Hyde, & Politis, 2013, p. 114). Those figures were the lowest among the 12 countries surveyed. And, unfortunately, low research activity translates into low rates of publications and other forms of research dissemination, nationally as well as internationally. Indeed, data presented by Drennan, Clarke, Hyde and Politis (2013) shows that Polish academics, both senior and junior, make fewer scholarly contributions (i.e. books (co-)authored and (co-)edited, articles, conference papers, etc.) than their colleagues on average in the remaining 11 countries of the EUROAC/CAP study. The following figure (Figure 7) illustrates this.

Figure 7: Polish academics publish less than their European colleagues

Number of texts produced over a three year period by senior and junior Polish academics and the averages for the 12 countries in the EUROAC/CAP study.

Source: own elaboration of Drennan et al. (2013, pp. 119-120)



This data confirms the figures presented in the Introduction (section 1.1) and suggests that Polish scholars generally publish less than their peers in many other countries, language of the publications notwithstanding.

Until recently, Polish scholars faced little pressure to publish. Even up to three years ago, individual academic staff evaluations were rare; thus, there was little incentive for Polish scholars to invest in attempting to publish internationally in English. A number of articles in the popular press that discussed low publication rates in Poland pointed to the general lack of mechanisms that would reward highly active researchers and lead to job losses for those who have not published for decades (Gabryel, 2011; Gorzelak, 2012; Kalisz, 2007; 2008).

Several recent government incentives may increase the pressure to publish. For example, in 1998, a central appraisal scheme of publicly funded Polish HEIs and other research units was introduced and based to a large extent on their publication

output.¹⁵ As well, the revised Higher Education Act introduced in 2011 made regular internal reviews of academics compulsory (“Prawo o Szkolnictwie Wyższym” [Higher Education Act], §132). However, the individual review criteria are decided upon internally and may not emphasise publications.

English in Polish academia today has not been met with complete enthusiasm; many express serious reservations (Dubisz, 2011). Publishing in native Polish is seen as part of the national psyche. Duszak and Lewkowicz (2008) point out that, due to its history, “Poland has always been rather nationalistic and the Polish language has been seen as important for the nation’s survival and unity” (p. 110). The publication-based central evaluation system of research units noted above has polarised this ambivalence to English publishing. This system is considered highly controversial because English-language publications score much higher than those in Polish (see note 15 below), putting language purists on the defensive. Some Polish scholars argue that the task of social sciences and humanities is to educate Polish society and promulgate national culture which can only be done in a national language (Jałowicki, 2009).

Finally, Polish academic culture does not seem to foster the existence of sufficient PhD students and yet there is a link between PhD students and research levels. Therefore, yet another reason behind low research levels in Poland may be the small numbers of PhD students in Poland when compared with other countries. The

¹⁵ This parametric assessment is based on points assigned to publications according to a special journal list – *lista czasopism punktowanych* [scored journals list] – published by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. It keeps changing but it consists of three parts. Part “A” is based on the Journal Citation Reports (JCR) published by Thomson Reuters and carries the most points: 15 to 50 per article. Publications from list “B”, which contains journals without impact factor, are given from 1 to 10 points. Finally, articles published in journals on list “C”, which is based on the European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH) database, get 10 points. Articles in humanities, social sciences and arts published in unlisted foreign journals are assigned 4 points.

PhD students/research link has been shown by Wolszczak-Derlacz and Parteka (2010) who concluded that a “major share of PhD students goes hand in hand with better research performance” (p. 12). In 2011, 1.6% of young people on average across OECD countries graduated with a PhD (OECD, 2013a, Table A3.2b). For many Western countries this figure was even higher, for example: 2.5% Finland, 2.7% Germany, 1.8% Netherland, 1.9% Norway, 3.2% Switzerland, 2.4% UK. In Poland, the rate was over three times lower than the OECD average – namely 0.5% (*ibid.*).

2.6. Literature review summary

There is no doubt that in today’s globalised world, English is the language of academia and the ability to produce scholarly writing in English is a powerful prerequisite to entering the international academic community. While the existence of this lingua franca has its advantages, when it comes to publishing, it creates a serious bias favouring NES. Researchers who are NNES are disadvantaged, the importance and quality of their research notwithstanding.

With regard to Polish academics, it appears quite plausible that inadequate language skills constitute the greatest barrier preventing them from international publishing, although decades long underfunding of Polish research seems equally important. It is not unreasonable to speculate that the material challenges discussed in sections 2.4.2 and 2.5.2 contribute to the low level of research activity in Poland as well as to the diminished interest in research of Polish scholars and the subsequent lower than average overall publications rates. What is more, until the introduction of the compulsory internal reviews of academics in 2011, Polish scholars faced little pressure and few incentives to publish.

3. Methodology

The following original research forms the foundation of this thesis. Its purpose is to confirm the validity of what the previous literature review suggests but no primary research has yet confirmed: That the dominance of English plays a significant role in the low publication rate among Polish scholars, creating language fluency barriers that are exacerbated by underfunding, and may ultimately contribute to a diminished interest in research and publishing within the Polish academic community.

3.1. Research design

Qualitative methods and, in particular, qualitative interview study, have been chosen for this study for a variety of reasons, the first of these being the potential depth of investigation and the subsequent richness of data such methods can create (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Hoepfl, 1997; Robson, 2002). As well, since this study's purpose is to examine a subject that had not been investigated previously, it was important to collect the most significant data and endeavour to understand the phenomenon as well as its context (Simons, 1996; Verma & Mallick, 1999). Such a holistic approach is consistent with the focus of this study. Likewise, the flexible nature of qualitative research makes it inherently exploratory, and experts have confirmed it is ideal for the initial investigation of a problem (Bassey, 1999; Schostak, 2002).

Moreover, at the moment, there appears to be no standardized quantitative measure appropriate for exploring topics related to social phenomena such as the reasons for non-publishing behaviour among Polish scholars, the issue studied in this thesis. Further, quantitative measures can tend to obscure social issues as they may underestimate non-tangible factors. These intangibles, however, may be the most important clues to a complete understanding of the phenomenon (European

Commission JRC, 2007). Other researchers have noted that understanding a phenomenon from the point of view of the actors, in this instance, the Polish scholars, can be lost when the focus is data quantification (Iacono, Brown, & Holtham, 2009).

The selection of an interview study framework, the posing of questions to a number of participants to gauge how they think and how they act, was also carefully chosen to reflect the topic of this research. This thesis is investigating the underlying reasons for a low Polish publication rate. To ensure true and full information is collected on these reasons requires that those who are closest to and are the most impacted by this publishing phenomenon be asked for their opinions, that is, the Polish scholars themselves. McNamara (1999) has noted that “Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant’s experiences” (Introduction, para. 1). In this instance, getting to the root of why Polish scholars under publish compared to their Western colleagues.

Therefore, this study follows the fundamentals of a qualitative research methodology, and the principles of interview study research (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009)

3.2. Sampling method and study participants

Study participants were chosen based on the nature of their doctoral speciality – the social sciences and humanities. The low publication rate in Poland is particularly low among these disciplines; hence, I wished to research scholars in these fields to better understand the barriers to publication overall in Poland. Further, the social and humanities sciences tend to be by nature more closely associated with language. Scientists therefore in these fields can offer greater insight into the impact of language on publishing rates in Poland.

Eight participants were recruited to the study after giving their informed consent. All participants held doctorates: seven were either assistant, associate or full professors, and one was a senior lecturer. They were employed at either Warsaw or Jagiellonian (Cracow) universities in areas of English Philology, Linguistics or Sociology while one person was a professor at the Warsaw School of Economics. They were all in their 40s to 60s and the majority (seven) were female. The following table presents participants' profiles (all names have been changed to preserve participants' anonymity):

Table 1: Study participants' profiles

Name	Gender	Age	Academic Rank	Discipline
Barbara	Female	50s	Associate Professor	Linguistics
Dorota	Female	50s	Assistant Professor	English Philology
Izabela	Female	60s	Professor	English Philology
Janusz	Male	60s	Professor	Sociology
Joanna	Female	60s	Professor	Economics
Karolina	Female	40s	Assistant Professor	Linguistics
Małgorzata	Female	50s	Associate Professor	Linguistics
Marta	Female	40s	Senior Lecturer	English Philology

The purposive sampling method was selected to target participants best able to articulate the publication barriers faced by Polish scholars, as discussed above. The criteria used for selected were therefore twofold: academics actively involved in research and those from the fields of linguistics, English literature and English Language Teaching.

Initially, a group of approximately 100 potential participants was identified on the basis of publicly available records. All the potential participants were contacted

via email in English (see Appendix A) which explained the background, purposes and significance of the study, as well as the data collection procedures. There was no response to this initial email, and a second email, shorter and in Polish, was sent to the same addressees (see Appendix B). Six of those contacted in the second email agreed to become involved. Additionally, two individuals were recruited via personal connections.

These recruitment difficulties therefore required a convenience sampling rather than the original intended approach. This is not, however, unexpected with respect to interview study recruitment strategy; qualitative research is an iterative process in which data collection and even research questions are adjusted in order to ensure goal achievement. This is one of the key benefits of conducting qualitative rather than quantitative research on human phenomena such as that being studied in this thesis. Nevertheless, non-representativeness of a qualitative sample can be viewed as a compromise required to attain the depth and richness of qualitative data (Hughes & Hayhoe, 2007, cited in Koerber & McMichael, 2008).

Additional recruitment elements ensured participants were made as comfortable with the interview process as possible. All potential interviewees were invited to choose a date and time most convenient for them as well as the preferred medium (internet or phone) for the interview. It was further left up to the interviewees to decide which language – Polish or English – they wanted to use during the interview with the researcher, who is bilingual in both languages and completed her undergraduate degree in English Language Teaching at a Polish university. As well, the ethics of informed consent were strictly adhered to as all participants were also asked to sign and return a scanned copy of the consent form (see Appendix C).

3.3. Instruments

Semi-structured interviews were used as data collection instruments to ensure that all necessary topics were discussed while allowing the interviewees to bring up other issues they considered relevant. No pre-determined answers were provided, the questions left open, giving me the opportunity to explore in more depth any themes that arose that could deepen an understanding of the underlying reasons for the Polish situation. The following is a list of questions that were asked, not necessarily in the order given:

- How important is it for Polish academics – and for you personally – to publish the results of one's research?
- Have you ever published any academic texts (books, journal articles etc.)? If yes, in what languages have you published?
- What language(s) do you consider most important to publish in? Why? Has this changed during your career? Has this changed since 1989 – i.e. since the fall of communism in Poland?
- Is it important for Polish academics – and you personally – to publish in international peer-reviewed journals?
- Have you ever attempted to publish in English-medium journals or edited books? If yes, have you succeeded?
- What difficulties have you faced while trying to publish in English-medium journals?
- What do you think are the main problems that Polish researchers face when they try to publish in international journals? In your opinion, is language a problem? If yes / no, why?
- What could or should be done to help current and future Polish researchers to publish internationally?
- What could or should be done to improve the visibility of Polish scholars internationally?
- Do you have any other comments regarding this topic?

3.4. Data collection

The method of data collection chosen was the collaborative software application called *Wimba Live Classroom* which allows for easy voice recording and results in

high quality audio. I started my data collection by conducting a pilot interview (an early interview designed to test the instruments and uncover any problems likely to be met) with a retired university professor known to me. This approach follows advice proposed in the literature for example by Seidman (2013). In addition to trying out my questions, the pilot gave me an opportunity to test *Wimba Live Classroom*. The pilot went well.

The actual interviews were conducted from Canada in February and March 2011. Regrettably, after the first two interviews, I decided that *Wimba Live Classroom* was not the optimal recording tool because unstable internet connections were causing breakdowns in communication. I then decided to use *SkypeOut* – a feature of *Skype* that allows calling phone numbers – and recording the interviews using software called *Pamela for Skype* (version 4.7.0.68).

All the participants were more than willing to use the phone as a means of conducting the interviews, and the research shows the choice of telephone interview a viable option. Telephone interviews are considered a suitable mode for qualitative projects, and a number of studies have concluded that data gathered using this mode is comparable to data from face-to-face interviews (Holt, 2010; Stephens, 2007; Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004).

Indeed, conducting research interviews by telephone has a number of advantages. For me personally the most important was the ability to reach my respondents without the need to travel to Poland. I may have also gained access to those whose busy schedules would not have permitted a face-to-face interview. Additionally, it gave the participants full control over the timing, place and privacy of the conversations and allowed for a few last minute changes to the schedule which would have much more difficult had I conducted the interviews face-to-face.

The recording software worked very well and the resulting audio, in .mp3 and .wav formats (from *Wimba Live Classroom* and *Pamela for Skype* respectively), are of high quality except for a slight echo in some of the recordings.

In preparation for each interview, I attempted to learn something about each participant using the records available online: in addition to ascertaining their position and professional interests I tried to establish their publications record. This knowledge was useful later in establishing a degree of rapport with the interviewees.

Each interview began by my confirming participants' choice of language (all participants chose Polish) and quickly explaining my educational background and my links with Poland. I then reminded the interviewees about the aims of the study and stressed the fact that the conversation was being securely recorded. The participants were also advised that they could refuse to answer any of the questions asked during the interview and that their anonymity and confidentiality was fully guaranteed. I would then proceed to ask the questions listed above (section 3.3), varying their wording and order as seemed appropriate. Most interviews ended with informal conversations as the interviewees were often curious about my studies at UBC and life in Canada in general. The interviews lasted between 25 and 115 minutes. All the respondents were highly articulate individuals and required little prompting.

3.5. Transcribing and coding

The data from the recordings, in the form of .wav and .mp3 files, was imported into the qualitative data analysis software *NVivo* (version 10), which allows for transcribing the audio as well as coding (i.e. categorising data) directly in the application. Although *NVivo* allows for direct coding of the audio files, a feature that some scholars had longed for (cf. Kvale, 1996), I opted to create transcripts from the

audio data. I prefer to work with visual stimulus but I had another reason for choosing transcripts. Researchers who have explored direct coding of audio have concluded that the process of transcription itself enhances subsequent coding and analysis (Evers, 2011) and many others consider transcription to be integral to the analysis process (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999).

Although many authors recommend verbatim transcription of whole interviews (Seidman, 2013), I decided to heed the advice of McLellan, MacQueen, and Neidig (2003) who suggest that “What to include should always be driven by the research question that an analysis attempts to answer” (p. 67). Thus, first I listened to each interview as a whole, at its natural speed, and then listened again and transcribed in detail the relevant sections of the recordings often using the feature of *NVivo* that allows for a slow-down playback. I only summarised those parts of the audio which seemed not related to my research questions knowing that, should I decide to include them in the analysis, I was able to very easily go back to any section of the recordings to re-listen and transcribe it in detail.

Once finished, I listened to the audio again to proofread my text for accuracy and to add information about non-word elements such as pauses or laughs. Since my data was meant to be analysed primarily for *what* was said rather than *how* it was said, I used a simple notation schema proposed by Poland (2001, p. 641), which uses only simple symbols such as a series of dots to denote short pauses, hyphens to indicate overlapping speech or capital letters to show emphasis. Figure 8 shows an excerpt from one of the transcripts.

Figure 8: A transcript fragment

I: Zagraniczne?

R: Więc to jest bardzo ważne, żeby była. Wszystko jedno niech to będzie 2 kilometry za granicą Polski wydane ale żeby to się nazywało że to jest "publikacja ZAGRANICZNA". Jest takie popularne myślenie. Także-

I: (overlapping) To ciekawe.

R: No tutaj widzę na przykład na tej mojej liście też jest to co nas zawsze z kolei jako anglistów denerwuje że (...) dość nisko są punktowane no właśnie- publikacja po angielsku nie ma znaczenia tylko- aaaaa (...) na przykład tutaj jest (...) jakieś tłumaczenie. No właśnie że monografia przetłumaczona na język obcy to się bardzo dużo punktów dostaje (...)

I: Jak jest przetłumaczona-

R: (overlapping) Tak, tak, tak, czyli taki jakby ja rozumiem promocja właśnie (...) promuje się tych którzy promują prawda swoje publikacje na zewnątrz.

I: (overlapping) Acha, rozumiem-

R: No bo wiadomo że w [Polsce?] to jest- (pause) także, no, to już nie będzie szła dalej w jakieś interpretacje że prawdopodobnie ci którzy piszą tylko po polsku i drukują tutaj w Polsce to nieraz to są bardziej wartościowe teksty niż te publikowane na zewnątrz. (...) NIERAZ, nie mówię że zawsze ale może być.

I: (overlapping) Nie no oczywiście-

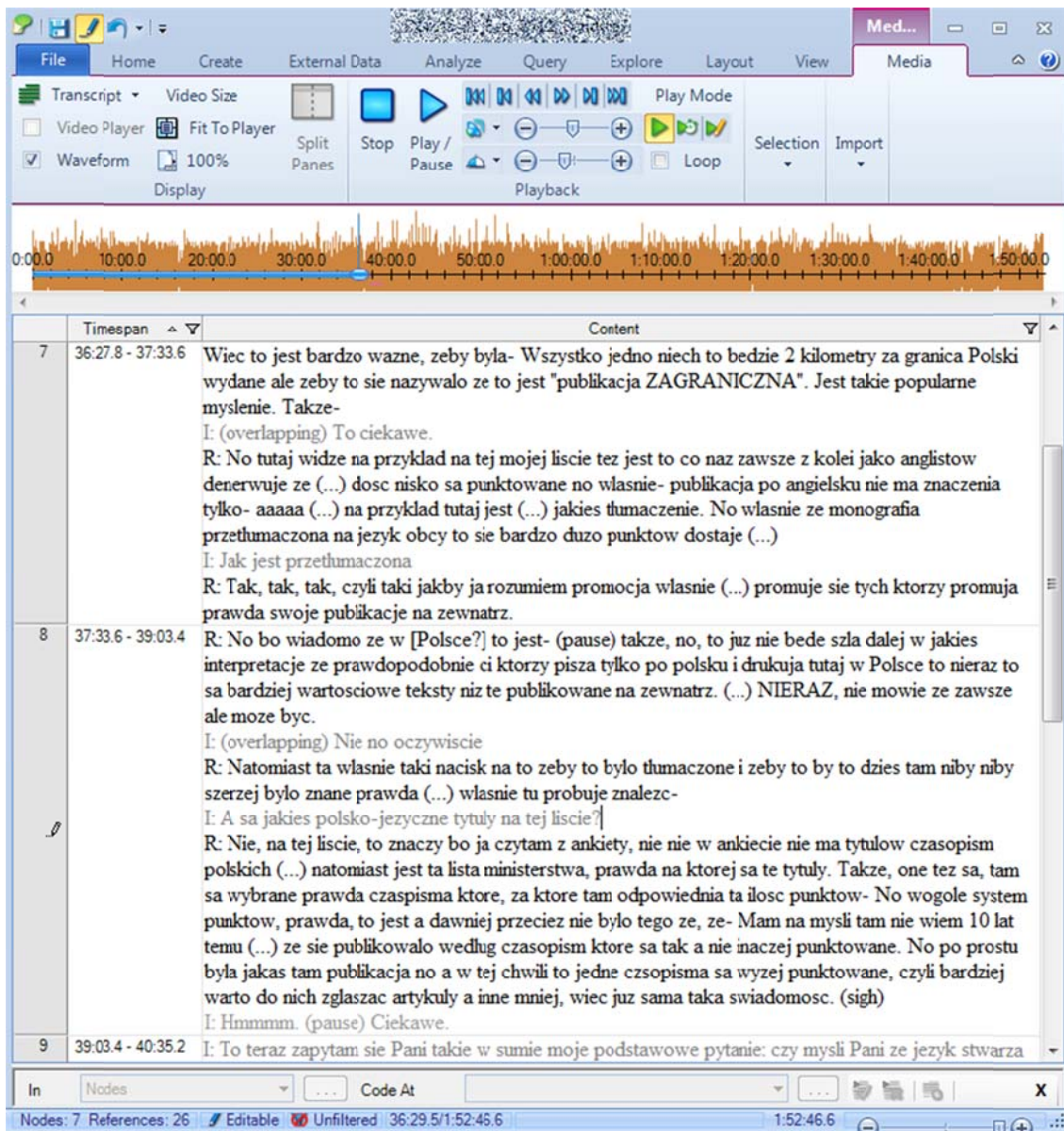
R: Natomiast ta właśnie taki nacisk na to, to, żeby to było TŁUMACZONE i żeby to by to gdzieś tam niby niby szerzej było znane prawda (...) właśnie tu próbuje znaleźć-

I: A są jakieś polsko-języczne tytuły na tej liście?

R: Nie, nieeeeeee na tej liście, to znaczy bo ja czytam z ankiety, nie nie w ankiecie nie ma tytułów czasopism polskich (...) natomiast jest ta lista ministerstwa, prawda na której są te tytuły. (pause) Także, one też są, tam są wybrane prawda czasopisma które, za które tam odpowiednia ta ilość punktów- (pause) No wogóle system punktów, prawda, to jest a dawniej przecież nie było tego że, że-

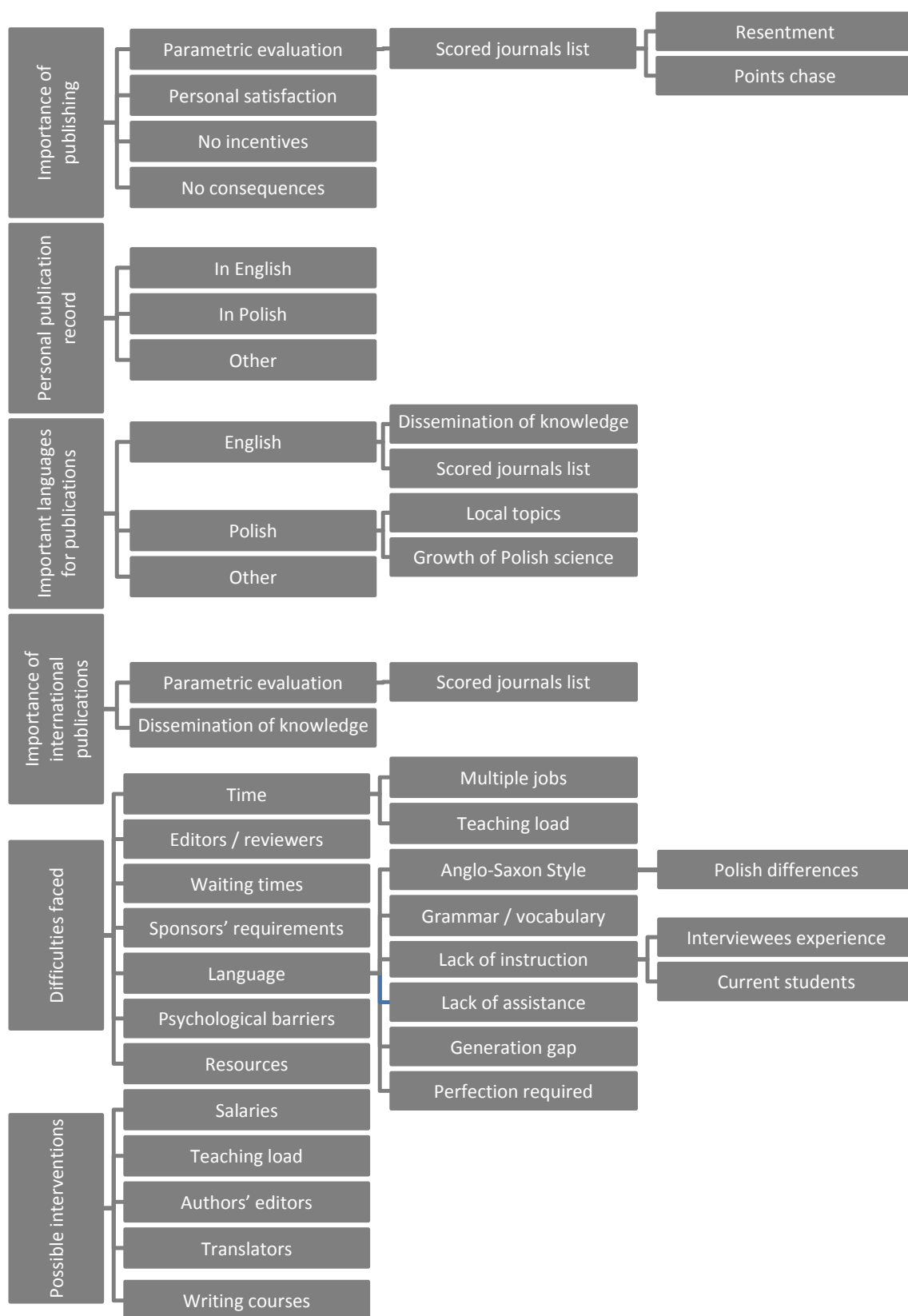
It should be noted that transcripts created in *NVivo* are fully synchronised with the media; in other words, it is possible to selectively replay audio corresponding to a chosen fragment of the transcription. The divisions of the recordings into separate rows bracketed by timestamps, as illustrated in the screenshot below (Figure 9), were made mostly on the basis of separate topics discussed although I have also divided some longer stretches of speech but at natural pauses.

Figure 9: A fragment of transcript and corresponding audio timeline in *NVivo* 10.



Having transcribed all the interviews, I started the process of coding with a priori “broad-brush coding” (Bazeley, 2007, p. 67) by assigning portions of the text into broad topic areas, called *nodes* in *NVivo*, based on the questions I asked in the interviews. This allowed me later to easily compare answers given by different interviewees to the same questions. I then worked through each transcript more in depth and did further, more detailed “topic coding” (Richards, 2005, p. 92) of the data by isolating distinct themes within each broad category into separate nodes. During those two stages, I often stopped and browsed the already coded material to think and reflect on the data, at times uncoding or recoding certain passages into new nodes. Thus, the coding process was concept as well as data driven. Figure 10 on the next page illustrates the hierarchical structure of the nodes developed while coding.

Figure 10: Structure of nodes developed from coding the interview data.



4. Findings and Discussion

The data analysis revealed a number of themes which will be presented in detail in the following sections. Polish scholars do face various difficulties, both linguistic and non-linguistic, which are not unlike those described in the literature relating to NNES in general. However, the research suggests another factor contributing to the low publication rates among Polish academics, the lack of a publishing culture. It is only recently that any real “publish or perish” imperative exists in Poland, and, although this imperative is growing in importance, there still remains little incentive to publish and a lingering resentment of the pressure to publish.

4.1. Polish scholars do face difficulties publishing in English

The interviewees were unanimous that achieving the publication record they had in international peer-reviewed journals was a difficult accomplishment. When asked about the difficulties they had encountered when trying to get their papers accepted by foreign journals, the interviewees spoke about a number of issues which can be broadly divided into linguistic and non-linguistic.

4.1.1. Linguistic challenges

English proficiency is a barrier to publishing, noted my study participants. Not as much for themselves as for their colleagues. My sampling selection had ensured interviewees were sufficiently comfortable in English and with the English publishing process to be able to discuss at length the underlying issues. However, most of the participants observed that, among their peers as well as scholars from other fields whom they are familiar with, language skills vary and are closely related to age, with people in their 30s and 40s being more proficient in English than the older generation. (One person, Joanna, commented that those in their 50s and older are more likely to

speak other languages such as French or German.) What is more, Dorota and Małgorzata expressed the view that younger academics are often very confident – even overconfident – about their language skills.

It is with the writing side of English proficiency that the true barrier to publishing is revealed. More than half of the interviewees (Barbara, Dorota, Karolina, Małgorzata and Marta) stated that the Anglo-Saxon style, in particular text organisation, is the key problem as it is substantially different from Polish writing. They described English academic style as “much more specific,” “very structured” and “requiring clarity of thought.” In contrast, Polish articles, even those in established journals, were described as being frequently “wordy,” “incoherent” and showing “little discipline in thinking.” Proper paragraphing as well as correct and consistent referencing were mentioned as particularly problematic in Polish texts. Barbara commented that Polish journals accept “any style” and that editorial rules, if any exist, are “very general.”

Thus, writing in an appropriate style emerged as the biggest linguistic challenge. Izabela, who was in the process of writing a paper aimed at a foreign journal, explained: “I'm not worried about my content but whether I will get it right with the form.” While Dorota remarked:

I encountered this opinion even during a recent conference, that this is the barrier in academic writing for Poles, that one has to write in a specific style and it doesn't matter what one wants to say but it matters whether it's written in the appropriate format.

The interviewees believed a lack of appropriate English writing instruction both at high school as well as at university was the reason behind their difficulties. They emphasised that they had to discover and learn the rules of academic writing in English by themselves, using various mostly British and American textbooks and

websites, and carefully analysing articles in prestigious Western journals.

They pointed to the writing weaknesses of their own students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels as being another indication of this neglect of writing instruction. They argued that Polish students are often not aware of the English academic writing style and that even their literacy skills in Polish leave a lot to be desired. “Writing is not being taught at schools” was the way Marta phrased it, while Małgorzata and Izabela insisted that the level of student writing proficiency has generally decreased over the last few years. “My students are great when it comes to visual presentations” remarked Małgorzata, “They have mastered the PowerPoint.” However, when these same students were asked to write out what they had included in their presentations, they were not able to do so.

Furthermore, what does pass for writing courses, Marta observed, is quite superficial. Even in writing classes at the university level and in English-related subjects, students write only short texts such as letters, descriptions or summaries, which are required for example for the Cambridge English exams (i.e. exams administered by the Cambridge English Language Assessment). What is more, because most university courses end with an exam and not an essay, students do not feel the need to learn how to write in an academic style. It is only when they are required to write their thesis or dissertation, especially in English, that students show some interest in writing.

Another linguistic challenge mentioned in the data is the editors’ of top international journals requirement for “perfect English.” Their perceived language proficiency notwithstanding, four of the participants indicated that they always turn to native English speakers for editing to improve their chances of having their papers accepted. However, two of them (Izabela and Janusz) highlighted the fact that such

editorial help is very expensive and not always available. “My English is good but to submit my articles to international journals I need money – substantial money – for a professional who can check it over and correct it before I send it off.”

4.1.2. Non-linguistic challenges

The non-linguistic difficulties encountered by the academics in my sample are in line with those mentioned in the literature review. A lack of time is a crucial difficulty. As many as six of the respondents admitted that they have very little time for research and writing. They noted their main reasons as being their excessive teaching loads and/or the number of students they need to supervise. For example, Karolina remarked that she has over 20 master’s students to look after so most of her time is spent repeatedly correcting their thesis drafts.

The lack of time is seriously compounded by the fact that many of the respondents have additional jobs to supplement their low university salaries. Having multiple jobs was described as “Polish madness” and “absurd situation” but nevertheless was considered necessary to maintain a decent lifestyle. Janusz said:

If I had a normal salary in a single place – you know, I live in a city and I have a family to support – I wouldn’t have to teach so much. I mean, I love to teach but why so much! I would... I would have more time to do research and write. I have a grant, I have money for research but I can’t do more [research] because I have to teach to earn a living. I could have two-three additional publications a year if I didn’t have to [teach so much].

Furthermore, publishers themselves create a substantial obstacle by being unwilling to accept papers from unknown authors. Dorota commented that “even a good paper from an unknown person will be rejected because it’s from an unknown

person.” Barbara expressed a similar view saying: “A person from the street who sends their paper has to be prepared for rejection, unless it's outstanding.” Both Dorota and Barbara agreed that the best chance to get published is through personal contacts or an invitation following a conference for instance. However, going to conferences – especially abroad – is expensive and hardly ever financed by their institutions.

Other hurdles quoted in the data included the long waiting times required to have one's paper even considered by the better-known international journals, and then equally long periods needed for corrections and re-submissions. Financial limitations, for research as well as related activities such as international conference participation, were also mentioned by the interviewees. Further, inadequate remuneration for university faculty was also blamed for the reality that many bright PhD students with publishing potential choose to look for careers outside academia. One of the participants, Joanna, also highlighted the fact that many research projects nowadays “end with a report full of raw data” instead of a journal article, which would interpret the data. Such reports are often required by commercial sponsors of some research projects, who are interested in fast, concrete results rather than the lengthy process of journal publications.

Finally, a “psychological barrier” or a fear of rejection, often caused by past experience, frequently stops scholars from sending their papers to international journals, observed Izabela. She also pointed out that many Polish journals are not peer-reviewed and obviously less competitive; thus, the chances of being accepted are much higher.

4.2. A publishing culture in Poland has only recently been growing.

Weak language proficiency and financial constraints are exacerbated by a publishing culture only recently evolving in Poland. As Izabela put it, “Fifteen years ago, publishing was a hobby.” Almost all participants remarked on the fact that even though PhD candidates have always had to have a certain number of publications before they were awarded their degrees, up until only recently, afterwards many published little or not at all. Even those pursuing habilitation (the next step of academic careers in Poland after the doctorate) were not particularly interested in writing research articles and instead concentrated on writing the monographs required for habilitation.

A profound change is now taking place in Polish academia with respect to publishing. This was the most common theme that emerged in all the interviews: all the respondents stressed the fact that, in the last few years, the pressure to publish has been rising, “Now it’s part of the job.” Unlike a few years ago, the academics I talked to are now required to either annually or biannually fill in forms that ask about the details of their publications. Their research output is then converted into points, on the basis of the ministerial scored journals list (see note 15 on p. 32), which are subsequently used for personal evaluations as well as for the assessment of their departments or research units.

Unfortunately, this rising emphasis on publications is not reflected in any incentives, which is counterproductive to enhancing a publishing culture among Polish scholars. Half the interviewees noted that, in practical terms, there are few enticements to expend the effort required to write articles in English. Apart from peer recognition, they receive nothing in return. Thus, in the words of Karolina, “Lots of scholars are more interested in getting second or third job than publications.”

Compounding this lack of encouragements is a lack of consequences for not publishing: “There are no mechanisms allowing to fire an academic who hasn’t published in 20 years – there is no pressure,” explained Izabela. Three other interviewees – Barbara, Dorota and Małgorzata – suggested that to their knowledge the lack of publications does not seem to have any negative consequences in terms of pay or employment. Likewise, having numerous or prestigious publications does not lead to any financial gains or promotions. Nevertheless, at some institutions, the points collected at the departmental or research unit level do influence the extent of funding awarded to it.

Resentment around the ministerial changes adds to a weak supportive culture for publishing. The majority of my interviewees were very resentful of the above changes and considered them to be an “unnecessary bureaucracy”. Only Karolina – notably the youngest of my interviewees – thought that publication-based assessment both at personal and departmental level was a positive development and that the pressure to regularly declare one’s publishing record is likely to make scholars more productive. Karolina also expressed the view that, for the younger generation of scholars, publications are growing in importance regardless of the parametric evaluations.

Revealingly, the increased pressure to publish per se is not what the scholars resent most. Rather, it is the compulsion to target one’s writing specifically at articles in journals from the already mentioned *lista czasopism punktowanych* [scored journals list] crafted by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education (see note 15 on p. 32) as articles accepted by journals from outside the list or even other types of publications are awarded fewer points. As a result, many academics are more interested in *where* than *what* they publish, a sentiment expressed by half of the

participants.

Moreover, my interviewees confirmed what I discovered during the literature review, that the ministerial scored journals list has been highly controversial from its inception and some consider its makeup to be very arbitrary. The fact that publications in little known foreign journals are frequently awarded several times more points than those in prestigious Polish journals elicited the most objections. What is more, Izabela, Janusz and Małgorzata pointed out that the ministerial list does not include journals in the less popular, very specialist or relatively new subjects, putting at a disadvantage those interested in them.

Further, the “points chase”, a phrase used by Barbara, is not leading to research and publications of a high quality. For example, some scholars prefer publishing articles on safe topics rather than writing creative texts about new ideas and interpretations, because such original texts are less likely to be accepted by top journals that carry the most points. Likewise, some researchers favour projects which are likely to bring easily publishable results instead of looking for innovative problems and methods. Małgorzata expressed the opinion that in pursuit of points some academics resort to self-plagiarism and repeatedly publish articles discussing the same investigations or deliberating the same concepts.

4.3. The importance of publishing in Polish as well as English

The controversy over the scored journals list and specifically its emphasis on foreign publications is closely connected to the discussion about the languages in which it is important to publish. Nobody argued with the importance of English in today’s academia; in fact, one of the respondents – Małgorzata – insisted that English is the most important language for her because “It’s about the participation in what is

happening in the world. One cannot limit oneself to their own yard.” Yet another interviewee, Karolina, thought that English-language publications are “the only way to get noticed in the world.”

However, the majority believed that writing in Polish is equally important especially in the social sciences and the humanities which often deal with Poland-specific topics. In the words of Joanna, “Local topics should be written about in a local language.” Interestingly, Barbara said that she considered writing in Polish to be her “patriotic duty” especially as her area of research was not well developed in Polish. Thus, she wanted to write about it in Polish not only to promote the subject and make it accessible for those who do not know English, but also to further develop appropriate Polish terminology in this field. The belief that publications in Polish are crucial to the growth and development of Polish science was echoed by three other participants.

4.4. Summary of the findings

The data collected in this study indicates that Polish academics aspiring to publish in international, peer-reviewed journals encounter many of the multifarious linguistic and non-linguistic challenges described in the literature pertaining to the publishing difficulties faced by NNES. For example, the most critical challenge articulated by study participants is the mastery of the English writing convention: even those whose English fluency is very high find writing in an appropriate academic English style very demanding. Further, the study reveals concrete ways to overcome this important shortfall. Participants note the lack of suitable writing instruction: the few writing courses available are superficial, and none focus on academic writing style. The interviewees emphasise they had to discover and learn the rules of

academic writing in English on their own. They also espouse more readily available access to English editorial services, in parallel with the financial aid to pay for them, in order to help them prepare their manuscripts for international publications.

In fact, improved funding overall would be a boon, believe those interviewed. The study results confirm Polish academia remains seriously underfunded, showcasing several problem areas and suggesting concrete solutions. For example, material resources are limited, there is little funding to help Polish scholars participate in international conferences, and low salaries lead to faculty taking multiple jobs. This has resulted in little time or incentive for research and publications.

The data also highlights the lack of a publishing culture among Polish scholars. Although the situation is changing, thanks to the introduction of parametric evaluations of individuals as well as research units, and the pressure to publish is rising. Nevertheless, in practical terms, there are still few incentives to publish and limited, if any, consequences to not publishing. What is more, the criteria guiding parametric evaluations are perceived as flawed and unfair. In fact, the compulsion to publish in journals from the ministerial list leads to widespread resentment and may undermine the emerging publishing culture among Polish researchers.

4.5. Discussion and implications

Scientific productivity in the international arena could be fostered in a variety of ways in Poland. For many Polish scholars – especially those in fields not connected with English or for the older generation – inadequate language skills may be a serious obstacle. What is more, if writing in an appropriate style or text organisation is viewed as problematic by participants of my study (i.e. linguists and philologists), it is probably an even bigger challenge for those in other subjects. Thus, both the Ministry of

Science and Higher Education and individual universities should do more to improve English writing skills of current and future academics.

This could be done for example by ensuring that English language courses at the university level at the very least introduce the concept of the English academic style as part of the course. As well, writing courses could concentrate more on academic English, as well as general writing. Moreover, as suggested by Izabela and Marta, at the PhD and possibly even at the master's level, academic English writing courses should be compulsory or widely available, and strongly recommended in order to better prepare future scholars for the writing demands of their careers.

The development of writing centres should be funded, along with the specific writing resources such as writing guides and one-on-one tutoring that are typically available to scholars and students almost universally among English speaking universities in North America and the UK. For example, The Writing Center at Michigan State University (www.writing.msu.edu) provides individual and group writing tutorials. The University of British Columbia offers special tutoring services through adjunct programs associated with writing courses, such as the Writing Improvement Program linked to the required writing course that is part of the undergraduate business degree (<http://learningcommons.sauder.ubc.ca/services/tutoring-and-coaching/#WC>). Further, adopting some of the specific guidelines these centres stress would allow Polish scholars to emulate their NES colleagues. Some examples include the use of outlining before drafting any documents and ensuring that outlines lay out the topic sentences that will form the basis of any paper's argument, as well as stressing the value of learning how to self-edit using established checklist templates.

Furthermore, in addition to writing instruction, university departments and other research units as well as Polish journals should try to establish mentoring schemes

where more experienced writers help novice or less experienced academics to plan, draft and edit their papers. Such arrangements would follow the situated learning theory and acknowledge the fact that writing is a skill that is best acquired by engaging in rather than just by learning about (cf. Casanave, 1998). The facilitation of 'mentoring' exchanges between academics in Poland and scholars and HEIs in the more successful NNES publishing countries such as the Netherlands could also allow the Polish scholarly community to adopt proven techniques from these other countries.

Likewise, current academics should be offered workshops raising their awareness of the peculiarities of research texts in English, helping them express their ideas in the appropriate style, and advising them on how to negotiate with journal editors and reviewers or even how to deal with rejection. Such training should preferably be discipline-specific since language demands depend on the rigidity of genre and language which can vary considerably across disciplinary fields (Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014). An example of targeted publication skills workshops described by Cargill and O'Connor (2006) shows that they can not only help researchers develop their competence in English and inform them about the expectations of English-language journals, but also considerably raise their confidence to write papers for international publications.

Ideally, Polish scholars should also have free or subsidised access to professional language brokers (Lillis & Curry, 2006, 2010) or authors' editors (also called "correctors," "revisers" or "language professionals" – see Burrough-Boenisch, 2003) who could assist them in preparing their manuscripts for submission to international journals. Availability of such services would likely encourage those who are not confident about their language skills to write in English and lessen the burden and save time for all authors. According to Burrough-Boenisch (2003), authors' editors

are an established profession in many countries, including the Netherlands which may partly explain why this country does so well in terms of international publications, as was outlined in sections 2.2 and 2.5.1. Since most of such editing services are available online these days (e.g.: OnLine English www.oleng.com.au or Editage www.editage.com) they could greatly benefit Polish scholars if only they were aware of them and could afford them.

Given that using an editor is often a new experience for many NNES writers, guidelines on how to make the most of this relationship would be valuable, particularly, as was noted by Izabela and Janusz, editing can be an expensive and sometimes frustrating and demoralizing process. For example, knowing which of the different kinds of editing¹⁶ may be most applicable can ensure the best results. For most NNES scholars who may struggle with English grammar as well as English writing style, a substantive as well as a copy edit would be the most valuable. Similarly, those who do not know English well enough to write in it but are known to produce valuable research should be offered translation services by their departments or research institutes.

Another boost to publication productivity would be through the facilitation of Polish scholars' participation in transnational academic research networks. A longitudinal study of 50 European scholars by Lillis and Curry (2010) concluded that exclusion from such networks can be an obstacle to publishing equal to that of mastering the English writing conventions. Academic networking, especially at the transnational level, can improve scholars' access to both social and material

¹⁶ The terminology of editing varies but for instance according to the Editors' Association of Canada (www.editors.ca) editorial interventions could be divided into *structural* or *substantive editing* ("assessing and shaping material to improve its organization and content"), *stylistic editing* ("editing to clarify meaning, improve flow, and smooth language"), *copy editing* ("editing to ensure correctness, consistency, accuracy, and completeness") and *proofreading* ("examining material after layout to correct errors in textual and visual elements").

resources that are crucial for high-status English-medium publishing (Curry & Lillis, 2010, 2014). Social resources include research collaboration, text co-authorship or various literacy brokering activities while material resources may involve research funds or bibliographic materials (*ibid.*). Such connections could be encouraged through funding Polish academics' attendance at international conferences and forums.

Meanwhile, since the lack of time for research and publications caused by multiple jobs seems to be a significant challenge for many scholars, the government should make sure that academics are paid well enough to render additional employment unnecessary while universities should reconsider teaching loads of academics who obtain good research output. Such faculty should also be encouraged and supported financially to attend international conferences, which would also improve the visibility of Polish scholars in the global arena.

Attention should also be turned to the best Polish journals and every effort made to increase their quality and improve their chances of indexing by major databases by ensuring, for instance, that they meet selection criteria such as frequency and timeliness of publication, English-language abstracts and peer review of submissions (Testa, 2012). Proper indexing should be considered a high priority by editors and publishers because it can dramatically alter journal's visibility to the international audiences (Salager-Meyer, 2014). The experience of the Korean Association of Medical Journal Editors (KAMJE) can be cited here as an example of how concerted effort of editors, authors and the government can lead to the improvement in the quality of journals and their inclusion in prestige databases (Suh, Oh, & Hong, 2012). KAMJE's activities include training for editors, authors and reviewers on topics such as science writing, peer review, editing standards, scientific

integrity, ethics or copyright issues, and similar undertakings would no doubt be of value to all the stakeholders of Polish scientific journals.

Obviously it would also be helpful if international peer-reviewed journals made more effort to help NNES writers, including Polish authors, by accepting papers written in non-standard English, providing mentoring and editing services and generally offering more support to non-Anglophone would-be contributors (cf. Flowerdew, 2007; Huang, 2010; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Salager-Meyer, 2008). Lobbying efforts towards this end may be best accomplished through organisations such as Academic Publishing and Presenting in a Global Context Research Network (<http://www.aila.info/en/research/list-of-research-networks/academic-publishing-and-presenting-in-a-global-context.html>) who are already established with journal editors and reviewers to offer resources access for multilingual scholars wishing to publish in English.

The literature review has shown that, despite substantial improvements in recent years, Polish research is still seriously underfunded (see section 2.5.2). Thus, further serious investments are needed to make sure that Polish spending on R&D narrows the current chasm separating it from many other countries. Increased funding is needed directly to intensify research but also to provide an environment conducive to publishing. It is unreasonable to expect greater research output from Polish scholars without substantial growth in financial input. Better resources, higher salaries, and more auxiliary support would in all probability lead to an increase in publications.

With respect to the lack of a well-developed publishing culture among Polish academic, it is evident there is a major shift towards the encouragement of more publications. The introduction of the parametric evaluations of individuals and departments is changing the attitudes towards publishing; what used to be an elite practice pursued by the most eager scholars is slowly becoming the norm for all

academics. Nevertheless, the findings in this research study suggest that this change is generally unwelcomed, especially by the older generation that sees this new obligation as an unnecessary burden. However, it is very likely that the points system imposed by the ministerial list of scored journals is to a large extent responsible for the resentment. Its highly prescriptive nature is inevitably seen as limiting, while its emphasis on foreign journals may be perceived as disparaging to Polish language and domestic publications, and particularly unfair towards Poland-specific subject areas.

On the basis of the literature review and the findings it can be said that Polish academia lacks the publishing culture so deeply ingrained in many Western countries. Two decades ago, while discussing a bibliometric survey of leading Polish researchers, Bonheim (1993) wrote “It is also notable that a “publish or perish” system does not seem to exist in Poland” (p. 246), and this state of affairs has only just begun to change. It can be argued that the Communist past is partly to blame for this situation as until the fall of Communism, jobs in Poland – including those in academia – were often “for life” and independent of one’s performance. After 1989, capitalist market forces and rapid privatisation changed this situation in many areas but publicly funded HEIs retained their status quo. It took the Polish government two decades to finally reform the system and start looking at scholars as employees whose productivity needs to be taken into account.

Positive change though it has been, it can be reasoned that the introduction of parametric evaluations has tried to achieve too much too quickly and unnecessarily antagonised many in the academic world by making foreign publications the gold standard. Although it is unquestionable that the visibility of Polish scholars internationally needs to be improved, it may have helped if the government concentrated first on domestic research output and on cultivating the publishing

culture per se. This could be done both with the “carrot and stick” by introducing measures that would actually reward, for example financially, publications in peer-reviewed journals – whether locally or abroad – and remove from their jobs those who persistently fail to publish.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Summary

Polish scientific output is much lower than in many countries (as highlighted in Figure 1) and apart from a few branches of hard sciences Polish academics are hardly visible in the international arena. This is despite the fact that Poland is a medium size (population approximately. 38.5 million) country with nearly 500 HEIs, over 1600 research units (Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyzszego, 2013) and more than 85,000 personnel employed in R&D. These numbers are higher than in countries such as Denmark, Austria, Norway or Finland (Eurostat, 2013b) which nevertheless easily surpass Poland in terms of publishing performance.

This study set out to consider the factors responsible for the low publication rates of Polish academics in international, peer-reviewed journals and the role English language proficiency plays in this process. Semi-structured interviews with eight faculty members from top Polish universities were conducted, transcribed and analysed.

According to the data gathered from these interviews, the reasons behind the small international publication output of Polish scholars appear to be multifaceted. Overall, Polish academics face a number of difficulties which are in line with those described in the literature discussing the challenges facing non-native English speakers attempting to publish internationally. Writing in an appropriate academic English style, which is very different from Polish, is a challenge even for scholars who are otherwise fluent in English. Linguistic hurdles are exacerbated by chronic underfunding of Polish science which means that Polish scholars struggle with inadequate resources and are frequently forced into multiple employments.

However, it seems that Polish academia suffers also from the lack of publishing culture, the language of the publications notwithstanding. In other words, the “publish or perish” imperative, so widespread in Western academic world, is only just taking root in Poland. This change has been brought about by the introduction of parametric evaluations of institutions as well as individuals. Although this change has not been popular with Polish scholars it has definitely been a step in the right direction and it should eventually benefit Polish academia by revitalising Polish research and publications, and in the long run improve the visibility of Polish science internationally.

Nevertheless, it could be argued that it has been a top-down transformation – imposed by official legislation – that resulted in a great deal of distress and resentment. A more gradual, bottom-up approach would have been better. Namely, academics should be given more help and incentives to increase their overall publication output, domestically as well as internationally. For example, academics actively involved in research should have their workload reduced to give them more time for research while their salaries should be increased to discourage the practice of having several jobs. At the same time, aspiring authors, particularly those less fluent in English, should be provided with assistance in preparing their papers for submissions to international journals. Furthermore, academic writing courses should be made widely available if not compulsory for graduate students and novice academics to improve academic English writing skills of the future generations of scholars.

5.2. Limitations

The study is subject to the limitations inherent in qualitative research as described in the literature. For instance, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) “the quality of a piece of research not only stands or falls by the

appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted” (p. 92) and I am afraid that my eventual sample can be considered problematic.

Firstly, using a convenience sample would be disputed by the opponents of the interpretive / constructivist paradigm (cf. Cohen et al., 2000; McMillan & Schumacher, 1989; Wiersma, 1995). They would argue that such samples are unavoidably biased, hardly representative, and susceptible to the response effect that may arise from the respondent trying to give a “socially or professionally preferred response” (Wiersma, 1995, p. 200). All these claims might be true about my sample: it is likely that those who replied to my initial invitation were those who felt confident about their publication record and had published in English.

Secondly, in retrospect I realise that, although I had strong reasons for my participant selection relating to the topic under investigation, interviewing academics from fields not connected to English language and linguistics but rather from a variety of subjects across hard as well as soft sciences might have elicited valuable information. Participants of my study were all fluent in English and were likely to have been extensively exposed to academic writing in English. If I had chosen areas other than English and linguistics, I could have gained a better understanding of “an average” Polish academic even though recruiting such participants would have probably been even more difficult.

Looking back, I also realise that email, even though the most convenient in my circumstances, may not have been the best medium for the initial contact with the potential participants. In today’s world, scepticism about receiving email from unknown contacts is widespread; thus, many potential interviewees may have disregarded my email. Regular mail or telephone contact may have resulted in a

higher response rate.

Sample size is another important concern (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Gay et al., 2009). My sampling strategy was constrained by my access and resources, and the brief time-frame available, and the sample was therefore small. Overall, the sampling strategy I used could have jeopardised the validity of my inquiry (Cohen et al., 2000; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Messick, 1995).

The interviewing medium, that is using the Internet / telephone, may have also influenced the sample and the data collected (Cohen et al., 2000). For instance, it is probable that I reached respondents who were comfortable with using the telephone for social interactions. Likewise, the mode may have skewed my sample towards female participants since research has shown gender differences in the use of the telephone (Smoreda & Licoppe, 2000).

Most importantly, however, the fact that my data was auditory means that the lack of non-verbal cues may have influenced the trajectory of each interview as well as my interpretation of the resulting data (Cohen et al., 2000). Furthermore, a review of literature by Irvine, Drew and Sainsbury (2012) found that “rapport and the ‘naturalness’ of the interaction; comprehension and the transmission or interpretation of meaning; monitoring of responses and emotions; levels of interest and attention; and the duration of interviews” are all affected in telephone interviews (p. 89). Similarly, Shuy (2001) who examined various studies of in-person and telephone interviews determined that the latter result in responses that are less natural, briefer and less thoughtful, while the response rates are lower. Hence my data may have been different, potentially richer, had I conducted the interviews face-to-face.

In addition, my lack of interviewing experience combined with the fact that I was interviewing mostly senior academics and individuals older than me may have also

affected the data collection. During the earlier interviews in particular I was feeling quite anxious and I found the experience of talking to strangers on the phone – without eye contact or non-verbal signals - rather intimidating. At the same time, my interviewees seemed used to leading conversations and dictating the topic. Thus at times, the interviews strayed into areas unrelated to my research questions. On such occasions and with some of the interviewees, I found it difficult to reassert the topic without appearing impolite. As a result, it was often very challenging to steer the interviews in the desired direction and at times I failed to obtain answers to some of the questions I had asked.

Subjectivity, difficulty in judging validity and the use of small, non-probabilistic samples all share a significant consequence: they make generalisations of the findings to the parent population hardly viable (cf. Firestone, 1993; Verma & Mallick, 1999). As noted by Donmoyer (1990), the procedures leading to satisfactory generalisations in traditional forms of statistically oriented research are well established and meticulously described but they have little if any relevance to qualitative forms of investigation, where small samples and the nature of the data collected render inferential statistics futile. Thus, although my findings may not be representative of scholars in Poland more generally, they do reveal some of the trends, tensions and factors that at least these eight participants reported in their own experiences of getting published.

5.3. Suggestion for future research

The outcomes of this project offer a number of interesting themes that are worthy of additional research. In discussing their research, Irvine et al. (2012) wrote: “The findings of this small-scale, exploratory study must be treated as tentative and non-generalizable. However, they provide a number of emerging themes that could be

investigated further in a larger-scale study” (p. 100). These same words apply well as a description of my study and its findings. Although “tentative and non-generalizable,” the outcomes of this project point to a number of areas that merit further attention.

Firstly, this study would benefit from a significantly larger and more methodically chosen sample: it would be very interesting to examine on a larger scale the publishing difficulties of Polish scholars and the role English proficiency plays across a broader scope of Polish academia. A large sample drawn from various fields in both hard and soft sciences could yield more generalizable findings.

Secondly, a study comparing older scholars with those recently awarded doctorates and perhaps PhD students could shed some light on the potential differences in the difficulties faced by the older versus the younger generations of Polish academics. Such information could potentially help to decide what type of assistance is most needed by the different generations.

Furthermore, the qualitative studies suggested above would benefit from an accompanying quantitative survey which would have the potential of reaching a more extensive and diverse group of participants and generating results that could be extrapolated to other academics.

Yet another possible project would be a longitudinal study examining the situation in Polish academia some years after the introduction of the compulsory periodic evaluations of scholars. A look at the impact (or the lack of it) of the 2011 legislation could prove very interesting. It would be fascinating to examine whether, and if yes to what extent, the attitudes towards publishing have changed and what, if anything, is being done to help Polish academics improve their research output.

Any of the suggested investigations would also benefit from an accompanying analysis of the texts produced by Polish scholars to explore their actual linguistic

needs and challenges and thus allow for more precise targeting of any assistance offered.

Finally, it would be exciting to conduct research into the few existing university level English writing courses and see whether, and if yes how, they teach academic English. Similarly, the attitudes towards writing of students both at master and doctorate level could be investigated to help develop appropriate interventions designed to increase interest in writing skills.

5.4. Concluding remarks

The findings of this thesis reveal two new content themes critical to understanding the barriers that underlie the low academic publication rate among Polish scholars in international peer-reviewed journals. The first theme relates to the lack of a strong publishing culture among Polish scholars; the second, to mastery of English writing conventions. Such a deeper analysis as is offered by this thesis research is important because a better understanding of the details around publishing issues of Polish academics allows for more practical strategies that could be implemented to increase research output in Poland, both in the domestic as well as the international arena.

Firstly, the literature highlights certain attitudes among Polish scholars that, taken together, are suggestive of a weak publishing culture: a preference for teaching over research, the lack of incentives to encourage publication, and a lack of enthusiasm for the English language in academic discourse. This study substantiates the near absence of the imperative to publish in Polish academia but it also emphasises the fact that the situation is changing, thanks to the new ministerial rules on parametric evaluations of research units as well as individuals. In fact, this was the

most common theme that emerged in all the interviews: all the respondents stress the fact that, in the last few years, the pressure to publish has been rising and, “Now it’s part of the job.”

Yet, study participants also articulate continuing attitudes and practices that undermine any successful transformation to an established publishing norm. Participants express clear resentment at being pressured by what they call “the points chase”; and they note that, even now, no clear incentives exist to encourage them to publish, and there is no downside for them to choose not to publish. Further, what was noted in the literature as a preference for teaching over research among Polish academics is not a preference, say the study participants, but a requirement. The low academic salaries coupled with the lack of any financial (or other) incentives to publish have forced participants and their colleagues often to carry multiple positions simply to earn a decent living.

Secondly, participants in this thesis were almost universally adamant that they struggle more with the skills associated with learning English writing structures than they do with English language proficiency in general. Here again though, the literature suggests that adherence to the unique structural conventions of writing in English may be the greater problem for NNES; this thesis, on the other hand, clearly confirms that, for Polish scholars, this is their key problem. More than half of the interviewees stated that the Anglo-Saxon style, in particular text organisation, is one of the key barriers to their publishing.

In addition, this study provides information as to roadblocks that exist preventing Polish academics from attaining this all-important structural mastery. Study participants note the lack of suitable writing instruction at Polish universities and most of them emphasise they had to learn even the basics of English academic writing on

their own. Hence, to fulfil the requirement on behalf of journal editors and reviewers for the adoption of “perfect English” – something participants believe is outside the realm of their competence – majority of them feel they require the help of a NES editor to prepare their manuscripts for publication. However, such editorial professionals are not readily available to them, say study participants, nor is any funding to overcome the large costs associated with this assistance. Thesis interviewees also stress the lack of awareness even of the need to learn writing skills. They point to the writing weaknesses of their own students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, adding that it is only when students are required to write their thesis or dissertation, that they show some interest in writing.

Furthermore, this thesis research suggests concrete recommendations to overcome the challenges mentioned above. For instance, to bolster a nascent publishing culture in Poland, research interviewees point to the lack of incentives to publish, and the lack of disincentives not to publish, and recommend this status quo be altered. To overcome the weak mastery by Polish scholars of the structural differences in English writing, in particular English academic writing, the findings offer several concrete solutions – ready access to English editorial services in parallel with the financial aid to pay for such services, writing courses that are specifically aimed at helping Polish scholars learn and apply the rules of academic writing in English, and a greater emphasis on writing (and the value of this skill) at all educational levels in Poland, particularly at the university level.

The findings of this thesis also corroborate the claims made by numerous authors that most academics who do not have English as their mother tongue and live outside Kachru's (1985) *Inner Circle*, face serious and multifarious non-linguistic challenges when trying to write for international publications. These non-discursive

factors, most often caused by inadequate funding, are a barrier to participation in scientific discourse on a par with linguistic considerations. In Poland, as in countless other reported cases, underfunding results in limited material resources, restricted access to global scholarship networks, and lack of logistical support as well as excessive workloads which limit time available for research and writing.

The problems underlying low publication output in Poland may be applicable to the research dissemination issues of other non-Anglophone academics in countries from Kachru's (1985) *Outer* and *Expanding Circles* as publications play a critical role in ensuring that research and ideas from any scholarly community, NNES as well as NES, get a hearing on the global stage and thereby contribute to the greater knowledge of all. Therefore, some of the recommendations proposed in this thesis for the Polish situation as a result of this study's findings may help other NNES achieve higher publication productivity. Specifically, if other scholars experience a weak publishing culture or a significant struggle mastering the English writing convention as do Polish academics, then not addressing these in parallel with language deficiencies and funding constraints may undermine any well intentioned efforts to "level the publishing playing field" for NNES to ensure maximum dissemination of all ideas.

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Appendices

Appendix A: First Letter of Initial Contact (via e-mail)

The Challenges Facing Polish Academics Trying to Publish in English-Language Peer-Reviewed Journals

My name is Magdalena Kijak and I am writing to ask for your help in a study of the challenges facing Polish academics trying to publish in English-language peer-reviewed journals. I am a Master in Teaching English as a Second Language student at the University of British Columbia (Canada). I am conducting this research for my Master thesis.

The purpose of this work is to contribute to understanding of the problems that may prevent Polish scholars from sharing their findings with the wider international audience. Specifically, this study will attempt to understand to what extent – if at all - English language proficiency is considered an obstacle. It will also investigate Polish researchers' general perception of the importance of international publications and the degree to which the “publish or perish” imperative is considered true in Polish academia. The scarcity of appropriate research makes it very difficult to speculate about the above issues.

As a faculty member of a top Polish university, I invite you to offer your knowledge and opinion by participating in this research. This would involve taking part in a 30-45 minute long interview conducted over the phone or the Internet. I would very much appreciate your help in taking the time to share your views on these issues.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. If you decide to be involved, your name and the interview data will be held in confidence; and you will also be able to withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions about this research, please contact me at xx@ubc.ca.

Thank you very much for considering being a part of this important study.

Sincerely,

Magdalena Kijak
(BEd, MA, PGDip)
MA in TESOL Candidate

Department of Language & Literacy Education
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Appendix B: Second Letter of Initial Contact (via e-mail) - Polish

Subject: Zaproszenie do udziału w badaniach

Szanowny/a Panie/Pani...

Nazywam się Magdalena Kijak i jestem studentką na wydziale "Language and Literacy Education" na University of British Columbia w Kanadzie.

W ramach mojej pracy magisterskiej prowadzę badania na temat potencjalnych trudności polskich naukowców którzy chcą publikować rezultaty swoich badań na arenie międzynarodowej w języku angielskim.

Jako pracownika naukowego na jednej z najlepszych polskich uczelni, chciałabym zaprosić Pana/Panią do wzięcia udziału w moich badaniach. Pana/Pani udział byłby całkowicie anonimowy i miałby postać krótkiego (30-45min) wywiadu prowadzonego za pomocą internetu lub telefonu stacjonarnego. (Szczegóły moich badań a także przykładowe pytania przesyłam w załączeniu.)

Jeśli jest byliby Pan/Pani zainteresowany wzięciem udziału w moich badaniach, proszę o kontakt pod adresem xx@ubc.ca

Będę bardzo wdzięczna za udział w moich badaniach.

Z uszanowaniem
Magdalena Kijak

(BEd, MA, PGDip)
MA in TESOL Candidate

Department of Language & Literacy Education
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Appendix C: Consent Form



Language and Literacy Education Department
University of British Columbia
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC
Canada V6T 1Z4

CONSENT FORM

The Challenges Facing Polish Academics Trying to Publish in English-Language Peer-Reviewed Journals.

Principal Investigator: Ling Shi (Associate Professor)
Language and Literacy Education Department
Phone: (+1) XXX XXX XXXX
Email: xx@ubc.ca

Co-Investigator(s): Magdalena Kijak (graduate student)
Language and Literacy Education Department
Phone: (+1) XXX XXX XXXX
Email: xx@ ubc.ca

This research is conducted for a **graduate thesis** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of *MA in Teaching English as a Second Language*.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges that Polish scholars face when they attempt to publish in international journals, and to find out if English language proficiency is considered an obstacle by Polish academics.

Study Procedures:

The study involves taking part in a single semi-structured interview of 60 to 90 minutes, which will be conducted at the date and time most convenient for you. The interview will take place over the phone or the internet, using secure webinar software called WIMBA Live Classroom. (You will be sent an internet link which will take you directly to an online “interview room”).

The interview will be archived directly through the software and you will be able to access or download the recording afterwards, should you wish to do so.

The interview will be conducted in Polish unless you express a preference for English. If any of the recordings is translated into English with a view to direct citations, I will make the Polish transcript and the English translation available to you in case you do not agree with the choice of English words used. During the interview, you will be able to refuse to answer any of the questions or withdraw from the study altogether.

Potential Risks:

Given the nature of this study, it involves very few – if any – potential risks or discomforts to you.

Potential Benefits:

This study will enable you to talk about the challenges that face you and other Polish academics who aspire to publishing in English-language peer-reviewed journals. Although it may be of little direct benefit to you personally, your input will contribute to a seriously under-research area in Polish academia.

If you so wish, you will be provided with the results of the study in form of a PDF copy of the thesis written on the basis of this research.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be strictly confidential and you will not be identified by name in any reports of the complete study. The recordings as well as any medium used to store them (i.e. USB drives) will be password protected.

Contact for information about the study:

If you have any questions or desire future information with respect to this study, you may contact Ling Shi (the Principal Investigator at xx@ubc.ca) or the Co-Investigator at xx@ubc.ca. You may also request phone call at your convenience.

Contact for concerns about the rights of research subjects:

If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail to RSIL@ors.ubc.ca.

Consent:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without any risks or consequences. Should you decide to withdraw; any data provided by you will be destroyed. However, please note that once the thesis is submitted to the department, it will be impossible to withdraw your data.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Subject Signature

Date

Printed Name of the Subject