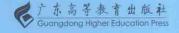
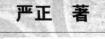
36 Questions
on Publishing and Writing
English Journal Articles

英语论文 投稿与写作36问





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36 Questions on Publishing and Writing English Journal Articles



Preface

This book is primarily for graduate students and junior scholars who are interested in publishing English journal articles in social sciences. Therefore, readers of this book are expected to have (1) sufficient experience in scientific research, (2) basic English writing skills, and (3) strong motivation in publishing journal articles.

This book is based on my own successful and unsuccessful experiences as a writer, a reviewer, and an editor of various English journals. Thus, both the main strength and the weakness of the book are its practical focus. Interested readers may refer to widely available academically-oriented books on journal article publication in English, Chinese, or other languages.

This book is written bilingually, in English and Chinese. The basic aim of doing so is to help many readers better familiarize themselves with both the actual process and professional terminology of English journal article publication, while providing convenience for those readers who prefer to read in Chinese.

This book is organized in a series of practical questions rather than a series of academic topics as its main storyline. I tried to use a dialogue style to write each question in a relatively quick and relaxing rhythm. As a Chinese, I literally grew up into adolescence by reading A Hundred Thousand Whys and grew up into adulthood by reading Later Qin Mu's "Yihaishibei (Picking Shellfish Shells from an Ocean of Arts)". I hope that this style of writing may help many readers feel useful, effective, and enjoyable while reading it. Currently the book answers 36 major questions, and in the future it will be ideal to collect 40 – 60 more frequently asked questions and then answer them well.

This book consists of three major sections, general questions about English journal article publication, strategic questions about English journal article submission, and technical questions about English journal article writing. Each chapter within each section starts with a specific question, asking readers first to answer it based on their own everyday intuition, and then follows with a real-life case that I

observed and a discussion of a number of important professional concepts, and finally ends with a number of practical suggestions. I hope this is a good learning and training method. Psychological research indicates that people often rely first on their existing everyday intuition, and then on rational reasoning gradually, and finally on a newly formed scientific intuition to guide their judgment and behavior.

This book was originally designed to be used for an intensive English article writing camp for 2-3 days. The book provides basic concepts, basic materials, and basic methods, while the writing camps will provide practical examples, class discussions, and homework practices. Both are relatively independent and coherently interrelated.

Finally, I sincerely thank many teachers and students in School of Psychology at South China Normal University, in particular Prof. Wei Zhang and his doctoral student Jianping Hu for their support and assistance. I sincerely thank Xiaojuan Pang, the book editor of Guangdong Higher Education Press for her guidance. Without these true heroes behind the scenes, it would simply be impossible to complete and publish the book.

English journal article writing is both a science and an art, which requires sufficient real-life practice in the actual submission process to learn, develop, improve, and master it. So here I provides my formal email (zyan@ albany. edu) and school website (www. albany. edu/educational_psychology/faculty/yan. shtml). I welcome readers to discuss with me about their actual problems encountered in publishing English journal articles. I also welcome readers to email me about how to revise and improve the book.

Zheng Yan
Finalized in August 2013 in Boston
Drafted in August 2012 in Boston, Beijing, Wenzhou, Hangzhou

序 言

开门见山, 我非常高兴能用我的母语中文为这本小书写个短序。

本书是专门为在中国的有志于在国外社会科学英文杂志发表学术论文的学生、学者而写的。因此,本书的读者应该是具有足够科学研究经验、基本英语读写能力与明确英文投稿兴趣的中国学生与学者。

本书的内容主要根据自己身为来自中国的学生、学者多年来作为作者、读者与编者在英文杂志投稿、审稿、组稿等方面的实际的失败经验与成功体验而写。因此,其好处与短处都是实用性。有兴趣的读者可再看一些学术性强的中英文专著。

本书用双语即英文与中文写成,基本目的是,使许多读者能尽快熟悉英文杂志文章投稿的过程并直接学习英文杂志文章投稿的术语,同时也能给一 些愿意用中文阅读的读者带来方便。

本书的结构是以一系列实际问题为主线,而不是以一系列学术课题为主 线。而每个问题的行文力争用短小精悍的对话体写成。我从小是读《十万个 为什么》长大的,后来是读秦牧的《艺海拾贝》成人的。我希望现在这样写 能够让许多读者觉得有用、有效、有趣。目前回答 36 个主要问题,将来最 好能累积成 40~60 个主要与常见问题。

本书的具体写法是从一个问题开始,首先要求读者自己凭直觉进行回答,然后介绍若干实际案例和讨论若干重要概念,最后提出若干应用建议。心理学研究指出,人们思考问题经常是依靠自己的直觉想法(或直觉思维),然后依靠科学结果思考(或理性思维),最后逐渐形成新的科学的直觉思维来指导自己的判断与行为。我希望这是一种好的训练方法。

本书原先是配合一个历时数天的英文期刊论文强化训练营而写的。本书 提供一些基本概念、基本思路与基本方法,而训练营提供实际案例、课堂讨 论与练习作业。两者相对独立而相互联系。

最后,我衷心感谢华南师范大学心理学院的许许多多老师、同学,尤其 是华南师范大学的张卫教授与心理学博士生胡谏萍的鼎力帮助。没有这些伟 大的幕后英雄,本书的出版是不可能的。

英文杂志文章写作既是一门科学更是一门艺术, 需要在实际投稿过程中

真刀真枪地学习。因此,我留下我的电子邮件(zyan@albany.edu)与学校网址(www.albany.edu/educational_psychology/faculty/yan.shtml),欢迎读者就自己在投稿中遇到的问题与我进行商讨,也欢迎读者就本书的修改完善向我提出建议。当然,"非诚勿扰"。

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(1)

Section

General questions about English journal article publication

QUESTION 1

How do you feel about writing English journal articles?

Please quickly circle one answer below:	
When I think about publishing English journal articles, I feel: (a) very happy; (b) very
excited; (c) very nervous; or (d) others:	
Please briefly write why you chose your answer below:	
This is because	

➤ What is the correct answer to this question?

Well, this is not a simple question and therefore there is no simple answer. To start thinking the question, let us start with my recent observation.

In the recent years, I have been invited to give talks on how to publish English journal articles at different universities and research institutions in China. I was told that PhD students and university professors at many universities in China are now required to publish English journal articles, even with very high impact factors (e.g., 10 or higher) or on top journals (e.g., Nature or Science), rather than Chinese journal articles. This way, one can graduate with PhD or be promoted to be an associate or full professor. However, many graduate students and junior faculty members have limited first-hand ex-

perience of publishing English journal articles. More challengingly, it is not easy for them to find someone who can guide them in publishing English journal articles. Instead of giving technical advice, typically, I start my talk by asking one question first: How do you feel about publishing English journal articles? Typically, audience was initially a bit surprised by this question. Then they gave various answers. Among these answers (e. g., feeling nervous or feeling excited), I hardly heard more sophisticated ones (e. g. feeling both sad and heroic).

Why did my audience respond with simple rather than sophisticated answers? Typically, a simple feeling may be related to a simple understanding; a sophisticated feeling may be related to a sophisticated understanding. We can have at least two specific reasons. First, people are not used to considering journal article publication in a much broader historical, scientific, social, and cultural context. They would consider this just a matter of publication in a different language. Second, many of them do not have the first-hand experience of publishing English journal articles. Thus, they might not be able to be aware of the importance and sophistication of this matter involved. In both cases, they might oversimplify this matter.

➤ How to think about this question further?

Many of you might feel happy to consider writing English journal articles because you are interested in learning a useful skill. Many of you might feel excited because you will be proud of yourself if you can publish English journal articles. Many of you might also feel nervous because it is quite challenging to you. However, we must go beyond our personal perspective and consider this question from much broader historical perspectives. We should be aware of historical meanings about publishing English articles today, besides the everyday practical implications such as graduation or promotion, as young scholars and graduate students in the world in general and young scholars and graduate students in China in particular.

First, from the historical perspective, we might feel sad. Sad could be the first general theme underlying the matter of publishing English journal articles to young scholars and graduate students in the world in general and young scholars and graduate students in China in particular.

Generally, young scholars and graduate students in the world face an unprecedented challenge in publishing journal articles. This is because a degree including a doctoral degree will not automatically lead to a good job or even a regular job. One of my senior colleagues in my department told me that in the 50s and 60s, a PhD will land a university job easily. However, nowadays, job markets especially the academic and research job markets are much more competitive than that in the 50s and 60s. A university position in USA usually has 100 ~ 200 PhD applicants to compete with each other. More competitive job markets lead to more demanding needs to publish journal articles among young scholars and graduate students in order to be competitive after entering the job market. This further lead to more competitive journal publication enterprises among young scholars and graduate students in order to be able to publish more and better. This, again, further lead to a much larger volume of manuscript submission, much longer turnaround time, and much higher rejection rates. This new intellectual competition is analogous to a Summer Olympics now that so many strong competitors run to be qualified for 100 meters and eventually win a gold medal.

While we all know that writing for publication is a core advanced academic skill for our degrees, jobs, and professional careers, however, we generally do not have formal training on journal publications during graduate and undergraduate programs. Very few, if any, universities offer courses in scientific journal publication. Very few, if any, university professors teach how to publish scientific journal articles. Very few, if any, graduate students learn how to publish scientific

journal articles in a formal and systematic way. We all learn how to publish journal articles in an informal and unsystematic way, differing from many other substantive areas of study. And we need to go out with our limited knowledge, skills, and experience and compete intellectual gold medals of 100 meters in an academic Olympic game with well-published full professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and strong post-docs from major research universities!

Specifically, young scholars and graduate students in China face even more unprecedented challenges in publishing journal articles. First, they have to use their second language, English, rather than their mother tongue, Chinese, to publish their research findings for worldwide readers. Due to various historical reasons, English is a world language, especially a standard language in the scientific community across the world, while Chinese is not. Unlike Spanish, French, Russian, or Germany, Chinese is a language that has a large linguistic distance from English. That means they need to make extra efforts to develop English writing skills. Second, the time period of graduate and undergraduate studies is the golden age of creativity and productivity. They should spend most of their time to think of how to generate creative ideas and produce scientific findings, like all the students do in Englishspeaking countries. As most of Chinese students have indicated, they need to spend a lot of time and efforts to learn how to write in English. As a result, non-native students and scholars are in an unfavorable position when competing with those native English students, let alone competing against native English writers, PhDs, professors, veteran authors, and even top researchers to publish English journal articles. This is analogous to a scene in the Summer Olympics when a runner with only one leg race against other normal runners and try to win a gold medal.

Second, from the contemporary perspective, we might feel heroic. Heroic could be the second general theme underlying the matter of publishing English journal articles to scholars and graduate students in the world in general and scholars and graduate students in China in particular.

Generally speaking, young scholars and graduate students in the world should feel heroic because they will grow up much stronger and better than former generations of researchers and scholars to become professional athletes in competing in the academic Olympics. We can see that more and more university professors are willing and determined to offer journal publishing opportunities to graduate students and even undergraduate students by co-authoring journal articles. They will become the first generation of graduate students in human history that can compete against or even once a while win over former generations in academic publication.

Specifically, young scholars and graduate students in China should feel more heroic in publishing English journal articles. This is because they are really lucky in learning to publish English journal articles in the right place at the right time! First, for the right place, China can be generally considered as one of the countries with cultural power, political power, and economic power. Publish-

ing more English journal articles can help China become a country with scientific power. Right now, from the government to local universities, with a wide variety of policies and procedure, publishing English journal articles has been particularly encouraged, supported, and rewarded at an unprecedented scale. China wants to win more gold medals not only in the Summer Olympics but also in academic Olympics. Second, for the right time, in the scientific publication community, now we are seeing more and more Chinese students and scholars publish English journal articles. We are seeing more and more Chinese scholars become editorial board members, associate editors, and editors of English journal articles, including some top ones. In fact, the requirement of publishing English journal articles for graduate students and junior professors is a strong sign of publishing more and better English journal articles by new generations of Chinese scholars.

➤ What should we do now?

Well, the best way to answer a question

is to act upon it timely and effectively. Here, I have two suggestions.

First, do feel sad and heroic at the same time when writing English journal articles. Please remember that it is a special honor for you to write English journal articles, just like an athlete is qualified for competing in the Summer Olympics. If you do so, you will have good motivation and enough energy to write and publish English journal articles successfully and enjoyably.

Second, I also recommend a very good English article. I have read it many times by myself because it tells a lot of behind-scene stories of well published scholars. You can search PsycINFO or other databases to find it. The citation is; Kiewra, K. A., & John W. Creswell, J. W. (2000). Conversations with Three Highly Productive Educational Psychologists; Richard Anderson, Richard Mayer, and Michael Pressley. Educational Psychology Review, 12 (1), 135 – 161.

QUESTION 2

Why do we publish English journal articles?

	Please quickly circle one answer below:		
	We publish English journal articles because we want to become (a) rich; (b) famou	ıs;	
(c)	knowledgeable; or (d) others:		
	Please briefly write why you chose your answer below:		
	This is because		

➤ What is the correct answer to this question?

This question is a little bit easy for us to answer than the first one. If the first question concerns macro-level strategic meanings of publishing English journal articles, now for the second question, we need to think further about micro-level tactic meanings of publishing English journal articles.

Let me tell you a true story. I know an excellent doctoral student at an excellent university in China one year ago. He was finishing his dissertation and planned to graduate in May of 2013. At that time he even received an excellent job offer. However, he had a major challenge. As one of the requirements of a PhD degree, he needs to publish at least one English journal article before the May graduation. He was very anxious and emailed me his manuscript for my advice. I first asked him why he wanted to publish an English journal article. He answered honestly that he really needed to publish an English journal article by May of

2013 and unfortunately his advisor knows only Japanese but not English. Then I asked why he wanted to publish this manuscript. He answered honestly that this manuscript is his best work. Finally I asked why he thought this is his best work. He answered honestly that he can feel it but does not know how to say it.

Clearly, this student had a very practical but very vague answer to the question of why to publish English journal articles: that is, to graduate with a PhD degree in 2013. Is this answer correct? I would say that his answer is an understandable one but not a useful one. Why? This is simply because a journal, an editor, or a reviewer will not publish his manuscript based on his urgent needs to graduate in 2013.

→ How to think about this question further?

This question concerns one important concept in publishing English journal articles: major purposes and major outcomes of publishing English journal articles. Different