1. Interrelation of first and second language teaching of writing

When Cultures Collide: personal pronouns in academic writing across Europe and Asia

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Numerous cross-linguistic and cross-disciplinary studies have looked at the manifestation of author stance in academic texts, frequently from the global vs local culture (Atkinson 2004) perspective. One of the most recurrent areas of contrast has been the use of personal pronouns across languages and disciplines. This review paper focuses on the results reported in 35 studies on personal pronouns in research articles in 15 lingua-cultural contexts of Europe and Asia. They have been extracted from relevant publications in the fields of EAP and ESP. A close analysis of this research highlights different cultural trends in constructing writer-reader relationships in this academic genre. The existing research points to clear differences in pronoun usage across languages and cultures both in L1 texts published in a national context and in L2 texts published in an international context. Results have important implications for English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) (cf. Mauranen 2012, inter alia) as used in international publications and highlight the need to make scholars aware of this salient rhetorical feature and challenging area of scholarly writing in the construction of stance to meet the expectations of particular national and international disciplinary communities. Results are also of importance for ESP and EAP as they show identity expression options available for non-native students writing in English for international publication. We end the paper by evaluating and discussing pedagogical and methodological issues relevant from a cross-cultural rhetorical perspective.

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