

ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION: WRITING RESEARCH PAPERS AS A CULTURALLY CONDITIONED ACTIVITY

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Abstract

Lately there has been growing pressure on modern academics to be a part of the globalized community. As a result, in all genres of communication, international academia has adopted Anglo-Saxon patterns of research presentation, both written and oral.

The first aim of this paper is to describe the differences in how scholars present their findings in research articles (RA) in international journals in English and in local journals in Russian. The second aim is to present the reasons for these differences, seeking explanations from the sociocultural contexts in which these RAs were written, as well as to provide advice to local authors as to how to make their RAs more competitive at the international level.

To achieve this aim, this study examines six RAs in English and six RAs in Russian, published in peer-reviewed international and local journals. The analysis draws upon the theory of contrastive rhetoric (Kaplan 1966; Connor 1996), which stresses the necessity of studying texts in the contexts of society and thus views academic writing as a culturally conditioned activity. The methodology used to unveil discursive conventions of RAs relies on a contrastive approach, which facilitates the identification of the structural differences and linguistic features of RAs in both English and Russian. The conclusion is made that the RAs differ in terms of writer/reader responsibility, form/content orientation, and reader engagement level. These differences are a result of sociocultural environments that affect the process of identity construction in academic discourse.

1. Introduction: the challenge of publishing cultures in flux in a global age

As English has become a lingua franca of the academic community, and its knowledge a basic qualification for modern academics, much is being said about how the use of English affects discourses within local and international academic domains. The increased academic exchange, the growing cultural diversity of student composition (Hyland 2009), the intensified competition among the universities for attracting prospective students' attention, and the importance of lifelong learning in the span of a modern professional's career are some of the reasons for the current scholarly interest in academic discourse. All of these changes in educational domains have affected academic publishing, most of which is presented in English to be heard or read at the international level. As Canagarajah (2002b: 34) points out: "the Anglophone grip on the publishing industry is well documented". Indeed, more than ten years ago, publications in English already constituted about 75% of all RAs (*ibid.*).

The growing pressure on local scholars to publish in international peer-reviewed journals can be explained by the need to integrate into the international scientific community, which brings an awareness of the most recent research conducted globally. Taking a more active part in various international academic projects (for instance, publishing in multi-authored monographs or research journals) also offers researchers the possibility of gaining access to international scholarly journals to increase the Hirsch citation index, which is currently the international standard for measuring a scholar's productivity.

Russian academics are no exception to this trend. Officials of the Ministry of Education, as well as university management, began to introduce incentives in early 2013 to encourage Russian academics to publish in international peer-reviewed journals. However, there are a number of reasons why Russian scholars face numerous obstacles when publishing their research.

Firstly, there is the poor knowledge of English (according to the EF website). The research conducted by the English First Company in 2015 showed that the Russian people's knowledge of English is very poor. Russia took 39th place with respect to its English knowledge rating among 70 countries (<http://www.ef-russia.ru/epi/>). Secondly, the peer-review culture in the Russian academic environment has been very weak. The acceptance of RAs to local peer-reviewed journals for many years was determined by proper formatting, a timely paid fee, and an easily obtainable reference from a reputable scholar in the same field. Most importantly, the academic writing traditions in Russia, as well as in other non-English-speaking countries, are different from what is expected of a research paper by international English-language journals. These differences stem from writers' sociocultural backgrounds, which are reflected in their thought patterns and language use.

Drawing upon the research in contrastive rhetoric, this paper strives to determine the main differences between RAs published in international English-language journals and those published in local journals by Russian scholars. To achieve this aim, it is necessary first to describe the main developments in studies in contrastive rhetoric. Then this paper will go on to explain the methods of research based on these studies. After that, having analysed the RAs published in English and in Russian, it will be possible to uncover their typical characteristics and differences. Having summed up the differences that might prevent local linguists from publishing in international English-speaking journals, this study will formulate the main strategies that will prove helpful to scholars willing to publish in English.

2. Studies in contrastive rhetoric in uncovering cultural traditions in academic writing

Contrastive rhetoric is an area of research that is mostly concerned with explaining how rhetorical traditions in the first language, conditioned by culture, are reflected (and often interfere with the process of writing) in the second language (usually English). The American applied linguist, Robert Kaplan (1966), initiated the research on this topic and, though highly criticized, laid the foundation for the new perspective on contrastive rhetoric (Connor 1996).

In his paper, Kaplan (1966: 12) claims: “logic *per se* is a cultural phenomenon.” Logic, according to Kaplan, is the basis of rhetoric. That is why foreign students who have mastered English demonstrate difficulties in academic writing, which appears to native English readers to be “out of focus” since foreign students are employing a rhetoric and sequence of thought that is accepted in their culture (*ibid.*: 13). Kaplan describes the typical structure of the English expository paragraph, which usually consists of a topic statement, a series of subdivisions that are supported by examples and illustrations, and the central idea of the essay. Thanks to this structure, the academic essay (or research article) successfully proves or argues something. Analysing the paragraph written by Macaulay, Kaplan describes it as the one with normal paragraph development because “[w]hile it is discursive, the paragraph is never digressive. There is nothing in this paragraph that does not belong here; nothing that does not contribute significantly to the central idea. The flow of ideas occurs in a straight line from the opening sentence to the last sentence” (*ibid.*: 14). As can be deduced from Kaplan’s analysis of the paragraph, linearity in English-language academic writing is understood as a straight line; any kind of digression disturbs the coherence of the text.

Kaplan’s ideas were later modified and elaborated upon by linguists, whose findings were similar to Kaplan’s original observations. Clyne (1987), for instance, observed that digression to extraneous information indeed occurs in Italian, Spanish, Latin American, and German discourses. Regarding the latter, he indicates that linearity – the English ideal of academic written discourse – “is not a prerequisite of academic writing in German” (*ibid.*: 163). East European and Russian academic discourses usually feature an absence of rounding-off information (Bowe and Martin 2013).

Cultural differences in rhetorical traditions have become especially evident in the context of globalization, particularly when international students from different cultures appear in the same university classroom. Shea (2011) points out that American academic writing follows the Socratic (and Aristotelian) tradition (see also Connor 1996), according to which the main idea should be stated at the beginning – a rhetorical tradition not shared by many other cultures (*ibid.*). The conclusion, which often provides guidelines for further research, is also very important in Western rhetoric. However, Chinese scholars ascribe a different function to their conclusions: they may finish their essay with a proverb or another question. Shea notes that Chinese scholars may never voice their opinion and instead focus on both sides of the argument, which stems from the Confucian tradition of peace and harmony. The classical Chinese pedagogical tradition of writing does not stress the importance of expressing one’s opinion, but instead focuses on expository and argumentative writing styles (*ibid.*).

A certain degree of indirectness in Chinese writing is also explained by the political climate of the country, in which it was unusual to stress one’s opinion. Thus, the pronoun *I* was always substituted by collective nouns such as party, country, or the pronoun *we* (Shen 1989). For Shen, a linguist of Chinese origin, mastering academic writing in English meant acquiring a new identity, switching from the passive voice and plural *we* to *I*. In order to learn writing in English, Shen (*ibid.*) recommends reprogramming one’s mind and redefining one’s values about society and the universe.

Contemporary studies of Arabic writing from the perspective of contrastive rhetoric maintain that such cultural characteristics as the principles covered in the Quran, loyalty to one’s family and larger in-groups (that is, a community of friends or relatives

with which one communicates on a regular basis and provides all kinds of support) affect students' writing styles both in Arabic and in English. This can be seen in the use of *we* or *us*, as well as in other discursive tools that allow individuals to express all kinds of group orientation, digression from the topic, and repetition as a form of persuasion (Hamadouche 2013).

The analysis of the differences in how Russian- and English-speaking linguists treat their readers in terms of dialogicity reveals that the use of engagement features¹, which help scholars establish a dialogue with their readers, is culturally conditioned. Russian linguists frequently do not strive to express their personal stance on a given subject in their research (by using reader pronouns); they do not establish a rapport (by asking questions and inserting personal aides) with their readers. The scholars often feel that it is improper to express their opinion openly and to convey authority (Khoutyz 2013).

The fact that Russian academics are reluctant to include engagement features and follow international standards for research presentation can be explained by the isolation of the Russian scientific community from the international community. More importantly, this fact can also be explained by the country's past: the Soviet collectivist system was not conducive to professionals expressing their individual, creative arguments. This collectivist influence continues to make authors less inclined to express their identity and state their contribution to a particular area of research (which is similar to what Shen writes about the Chinese society, see Shen 1989). This influence affects the clarity of their writing: Russian linguists – representatives of a high-context culture (see Dumetz, for instance), in which a message is “either in the physical context or internalized in a person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message” (Hall 1976: 91) – often write their RAs starting with very general information about their research, and never getting into the specifics. This generality coupled with a lack of concluding information, as well as the absence of a linear structure, makes RAs written in Russian very different from RAs written in English. By comparison, English-language cultures were characterized by Hall as being low-context, which means that when communicating, “the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code” (*ibid.*). Thus, there is a longstanding tradition to verbalize the message clearly for the benefit of the addressee.

The collectivist past and high-context characteristics of Russian culture appear to be the factors that have most greatly affected the cultural rhetoric and, therefore, existing traditions of Russian academic writing.

An analysis of the differences between English and Russian academic writing rhetoric found in RAs, however, might help to determine how the role of academic writing is perceived by scholars from these cultures. Understanding that academic writing as an activity integrated into the socio-historic flow of events (Canagarajah 2002a) will help Russian scholars create their new international identities and join the global scientific community.

¹ According to Hyland (2009), these engagement features include reader pronouns, directives, personal aides, appeals to shared information and questions.

3. Description of the methodology and the corpus

The methodology used in this research to uncover the main difficulties which local scholars might face when trying to publish their research in English mostly relies on the methodology described by Suresh Canagarajah (2002b) in his book *A Geopolitics of Academic Writing*. Canagarajah compares the structure of RAs in English and Tamil and identifies both linguistic tools of discourse construction and such culturally-specific phenomena as the understanding of the role of knowledge in society, as well as the ownership of knowledge and plagiarism, establishing authority, reader/writer responsibility, and so on.

For the analysis presented here, six RAs in English and six RAs in Russian were selected. The RAs are devoted to the issues of linguistics or communication theory. Two of the English-language RAs come from the *Journal of Pragmatics* (published by Elsevier), one from *Discourse & Society* and one from the *Journal of English Linguistics* (Sage), and two from the *Journal of Communication* (International Communication Association). The journals are peer-reviewed and have a consolidated international reputation.

A similar approach was used when compiling the corpus of RAs in Russian: six analysed RAs were found in highly reputed peer-reviewed journals: *Vestnik Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta imeni A.S. Pushkina*, *Vestnik Maikopskogo gosudarstvennogo technologicheskogo universiteta*, *Vestnik VGU: Seria "Linguistika I mezhkul'turnaya kommunikatsiya"*. The journals are all university publications. The RAs from three different publishers are selected in both languages to make sure their possible structural and discursive variations are taken into consideration.

Thus, the RAs included in the corpus are written in the native languages of their authors. In order to uncover local traditions of academic discourse construction, it is essential to analyse RAs written by scholars in their native language (here Russian and English). In this way it is possible to see how local scholars organize their thoughts, present their arguments and view their readers.

The corpus of RAs was analysed by means of a top-down approach that consists in: first, identifying a unit of analysis that is a part of an RA aimed at fulfilling a certain communicative function (for instance, introduction); then, analysing typical linguistic – grammatical and lexical – features of these parts. This type of analysis is also described as a move analysis (Swales 1981, 1990; Upton and Cohen 2009) when the text is viewed as a sequence of moves, each serving a certain communicative purpose. This type of analysis is typical with texts from the same genre. The use of a corpus in a move analysis allows us, according to Upton and Cohen (*ibid.*), to better understand typical linguistic features applied to fulfil a communicative aim which often means clearly transmitting information on some professional issues. The results, obtained from such analysis, according to the same scholars, are very important in instructional contexts, as they can be used when teaching English for Specific Purposes (English for lawyers or academics, for instance).

The seven steps required for the top-down analysis are described by Upton and Cohen (*ibid.*) who, in their research, adopted the steps originally recommended by Biber *et al.* (2007). These steps include: determining communicative/functional

categories presented in the analysed texts, segmentation of texts into units of analysis and their classification; conducting linguistic analysis of each unit and presenting a description of discourse categories used in each unit; presenting a characteristic of the text structure and discourse organization tendencies after the study of all texts in the corpus. Communicative categories were determined by identifying a rhetorical purpose of each unit. In the RAs in English each unit coincides with a part of an RA that has a title (the conclusion, for instance). In RAs in Russian these communicative units were identified by means of determining a function of each segment of an RA. The analysis of the linguistic characteristics of each unit was conducted manually and is qualitative in its nature.

As this paper attempts to identify and compare the structural and linguistic features of RAs in Russian and English, a contrastive analysis approach is also applied. This approach brings the two languages into focus and allows the researcher to ascertain the differences between them. The data are further examined qualitatively to explore the culturally specific features of RAs as a sample of academic writing to describe and explain the differences in the analysed RAs. The author of this paper has translated the examples from the Russian RAs and has strived to preserve the grammatical and lexical features of the original version.

The contrastive analysis showed the greatest differences between the RAs in Russian and English in terms of writer/reader responsibility, form/content orientation, and reader engagement level – the aspects moulded by the sociocultural environments in which scholars work and construct knowledge.

4. Contrasting conventions of the research article

4.1. *The structure and the abstract*

The analysis of the RAs published in English in international journals showed that usually the articles are very carefully structured into sections. The body of the RA is always preceded by the abstract. Though rather short (not more than 165 words), the abstract performs several functions: it provides brief but precise information about the aim of the RA, and also describes the steps that the authors undertake in their research to reach this aim. The abstract can also point out the limitations of previous research, as well as the methodology used by the author. The abstract sums up, sometimes in one final line, what the RA is going to achieve:

- (1) This article uses the excited utterance exception to develop a theory of recontextualization, building on research that shows that texts do not merely constitute contexts [...] (Andrus 2011: 115)

The RAs in Russian have no apparent structure. The only clearly delineated section is an abstract followed by its translation into English (obligatory for peer-reviewed journals) and keywords; the rest of the sections can be identified only intuitively. The abstract typically consists of one or two sentences and briefly informs the readers about the main topic of the RA (not its purpose), and sometimes (in four analysed RAs out of six) gives a very general idea about the corpus used by the authors to bolster their point

of view. The author may describe the actions performed in an RA; the discourse is very impersonal due to the use of passive voice and reflexive verbs.

(2) *Анализируются функции данных текстов [...] Затрагивается вопрос о причинах номинации книг лексемой “theatrum”.* (Бычков 2014: 13)

The functions of these texts [...] *have been analysed.* The reasons for the nomination of the books by the token “theatrum” *have been considered.* (Bichkov 2014: 13)

Thus, the abstract in English language journals provides readers with all the information about the essence of the RA – its aim, methods, and stages of the research, often describing the author’s personal input into the area of research (thus establishing the research niche). By reading an abstract in an English RA, readers can determine whether they need to read the presented research or not. For Russian authors, the abstract is just a formal part of the research that is not granted any special attention. By preserving a very detached and impersonal tone, the authors either enumerate the actions that they perform in the presented RA, or they give a general idea about the topic of the research.

4.2. *The opening: introduction, overview of previous research, and the methods sections*

The introduction section in English RAs (although this section might be called differently or have no title) states the main idea of the RA, presents the overview of the previous research, creates a niche for the findings, and describes the stages of the research. The methodology can be presented separately or might be incorporated within a bigger section. The authors describe the methods used and explain why these were the preferred methods by correlating them with the aims of their RA and the corpus. Great attention is paid to how the corpus was collected, why these particular data were chosen, and so on.

The authors often reference their previous works, showing the readers that this particular RA is part of a bigger and more complex study (see Bolden 2009; Kelleher 2009). When they want to highlight their personal input in the research, they switch to first-person pronouns: *In this article, I continue* (Andrus 2012: 116); *Here I will give a very brief discussion (ibid.)*. By switching to the pronoun *I*, the authors show what they will do to fill in the gaps. The aim of the paper is usually stated in the first paragraph of the introduction section.

(3) It is the aim of this article to better understand the relationship between texts and contexts that results from [...]. (Andrus 2011: 116)

All the authors use references to previous research to place their RAs in the proper context. They touch upon the challenges that they had to overcome while working on their research. In this section, authors draw their readers’ attention to the main idea, often by asking a question.

(4) When ‘so’ is not used to mark inferential connections, what is it used for? The article argues that [...]. (Bolden 2009: 975)

Having introduced the readers to the main points (or terms) of the RA, the authors might present a more detailed overview of previous research (or “literature review”) while at the same time informing readers about what has been done in this particular area of research. The purpose of these discursive actions, according to Canagarajah (2002b: 114), is to “aggressively demonstrate the importance of the paper and assert its place in the disciplinary discourse”.

English-speaking authors use tables and figures to better illustrate the material of analysis to the readers. This information is then explained in detail. The authors end the introduction section, once again underlining their points of view, and discussing how they use the mentioned research to reach their goals, often presenting the outline of the RA.

(5) I analyze the definitional structure [...] I use this precedential backdrop to analyze the discourse ... I focus here on [...]. (Andrus 2011: 119)

The introduction section in the RAs in Russian consists of about two to five short paragraphs long. First, there is an enumeration of the names of those who devoted their works to a similar field of study (this section was absent in two of the analysed RAs). The differences in their approaches or views are not usually explained. The authors sometimes cite outstanding linguists to prove the significance of their research. The quotes from these linguists are not necessarily explained. There are also two RAs in which no introductory information is presented (see Bichkov 2014; Kravchenko 2012).

Russian authors usually view the topic of an RA from afar. For instance, when trying to present readers with the right definition for the term “national mentality,” the author (Nechaeva 2009) begins with linguistic relativity theory; the creators of this theory are cited in Russian. In five out of the six analysed RAs, the aim of the research and the methods used by the author are not stated. The material content of the research may be pointed out in the middle of an RA.

(6) Мы используем в качестве материала диалоги из серии книг о Гарри Поттере т.к. нам видится крайне выгодным пошаговое развитие персонажей. (Букин 2014: 228)

As a material for the research we use dialogues from the series of books about Harry Potter, as a gradual development of characters seems very beneficial for us. (Bukin 2014: 228)

The development of the RA in Russian is quite unpredictable, as there is no aim defined at the beginning, nor is any plan of action presented. Therefore, a series of observations (which I call a bullet-point strategy) related to the title of the paper are presented. The authors do not describe their personal inputs into the development of the topic. Two of the analysed RAs in Russian have no opening section and they immediately start with the main ideas. None of the authors provides readers with information on the methods used in their research.

4.3. *Results and discussion*

To make the discussion and results section clear for the reader, the English-speaking authors repeatedly enumerate their arguments and steps undertaken to prove them. The authors explicitly inform their readers when they move to a new stage

of discussion. The beginning of the next section is the continuation of the information provided previously (the linearity that Kaplan mentioned in 1966).

(7) *First*, the excited utterance must be about an event [...]. *Second*, the context to which the utterance responds is [...]. *In sum*, the excited utterance is [...]. (Andrus 2011: 120)

To prove their points of view, the authors use examples profusely. For instance, Binnick (2005) uses 145 examples in his RA to illustrate the markers of habitual aspect in English. In a case study (Kelleher 2009; Lwin *et al.* 2010), all of the components (survey procedure, samples, operational definitions, hypotheses, etc.) are explicitly stated: although excerpts from transcripts might seem self-explanatory, the authors analyse them carefully, providing the reader with detailed explanations. Thus, this section is usually filled with numerous examples, tables, and figures, as well as explanations that connect theory with real-life contexts. To hold the readers' attention, as in the previous sections, the authors ask questions, which are then answered.

(8) How, then, do we account for the use of *would* in such cases of an unambiguously habitual simple past? [...]. The key to answering these questions is the concept of distributivity. (Binnick 2005: 361)

The discourse of the RAs continues to be very interactive. Questions establishing dialogue and enhancing the friendly tone of the RA, the inclusive *we* involving the reader in the scope of the discussion, collective directives that invite the readers to participate in the discussion help the authors establish a dialogue with their readers and grab their attention.

At the end of the discussion section, the authors once again sum up the results of their analysis. To guide the readers' attention, the authors often use such words and expressions as *indeed*, *thus* (Binnick 2005; Lwin *et al.* 2010), *once again* (Bolden 2009), *what if*, *but if*, *what it does show*, *what we can know*, *what I have labelled* (Hanks 2011), and *in fact*, *specifically* (Lwin *et al.* 2010). Needless to say, each subsection ends with a short summary of the results as well.

The results and discussion section in Russian RAs begins by presenting more general information about the area of research, and then the author marks the theory that he/she is going to elaborate on. Usually, the author supports the choice of his or her line of thinking by including at least one reference to a scholar who is considered to be important in the research area. If there is a citation, it is not critically incorporated within the text. Referencing in general is not given much careful attention. For instance, the author might say that numerous scholars have come to a certain conclusion, yet these scholars will not be referenced.

(9) Как известно, в современном языкознании получило широкое хождение положение о том, что речь по своей неизменной природе диалогична. (Букин 2014: 226).

It is well known that in modern linguistics there is a widespread assumption that speech is dialogic in its nature. (Bukin 2014: 226)

In this part of an RA, while the authors might mention what their theoretical conclusions are, once again the corpus is not specified; the methods that allowed the

authors to collect and analyse the examples used in an RA are not described. Some of the authors, when they do mention what they will try to accomplish in an RA, provide no further explanation about how they intend to support their thesis and elaborate on the topic of the research presented in an article:

(10) Мы остановимся на некоторых наблюдениях, касающихся описания одного из подобных интернет-сообществ, попытаемся через «жанровое окно» отразить ценностные предпочтения его участников. (Денисова 2014: 11)

We will pay attention to some observations concerning the description of one such Internet-community; by means of the “genre window” we will try to understand the value preferences of its members. (Denisova 2014: 11)

Here, the terms “Internet-community” and “genre window” appear for the first time, but further on in the RA the author does not make an attempt to make these concepts clearer for the reader or to connect them with the title of the paper. Moreover, after this information is presented, the author then switches to the topic of Internet shopping without, once again, establishing any logical connections between paragraphs. Basically, the results and discussion section is presented by a series of author observations, often with scant examples that are not thoroughly explained; the information regarding where exactly the examples come from might also be missing. However, some authors might try to illustrate their brief observations with examples. For instance, Shishkina (2012) uses 21 examples (which is a large number when comparing it with the number of examples used in the other RAs in Russian) when describing differences in communicative strategies (no explanations are provided). What becomes apparent (especially after reading RAs in English) is the absence of logical transitions and explanations of the connections between the Russian author’s thoughts that are presented in separate paragraphs. A similar observation about the minimal attempt at the “building of smooth transitions between sections” is made by Canagarajah (2002b:144) when analysing RAs by local scholars in Tamil.

Therefore, in the results and discussion section of the Russian RAs, the authors do not present clear arguments; in fact, their thoughts might not seem to be directly connected with the title of an RA. The research is mostly theoretical with just a few examples, which the author does not integrate into the text of the article (and does not carefully explain to the reader).

4.4. *Concluding section*

The conclusion is a very important part of the Anglo-American RA. While in some academic cultures it seems that the conclusion is obvious from the discussion, and that it is not necessary to repeat what has already been said, in the IMRD model (Swales 1990), the conclusion cannot be omitted. In addition to summing up the results of their research, the authors inform the reader as to how they can continue their work described in the RA in the future and how they can improve it:

(11) In our study *we emphasized* symbols that were highly identified with a specific country. *In future studies*, we could identify and examine symbols that [...]. (Lwin *et al.* 2010: 510)

In the final paragraph of the conclusion, the authors give advice about how to efficiently conduct a research study in the specific area of interest and how their RAs can help in this endeavour. The authors either stress the fact that their aims have been fulfilled, or they once again underline what they have achieved in their RA (the first-person singular pronoun is often used in this case).

The conclusion section in Russian RAs is usually one final paragraph, which is sometimes introduced by discourse markers to sum up information, such as *итак* (*thus/so*) (Denisova 2014), *подводя итог/to sum up* (Bichkov 2014), *таким образом/therefore* (Kravchenko 2012). In three out of the six analysed RAs, the concluding section has no obviously logical connection to the previous information; rather, it presents a generalized idea that is distantly related to the topic addressed in the discussion. This idea is sometimes filled with emotional and grandiose connotations. For instance, in an RA that is devoted to the study of non-cooperative dialogue (Bukin 2014), the conclusion tries to speak about the topicality of the research presented. For this purpose, the author deviates from the main research topic by switching to a discussion of globalization and intercultural communication, which gives the conclusion a connotation of pathos.

The conclusion can be partially devoted to the topic of the RA; in an RA about the means of manipulation in political discourse (Kravchenko 2012), the conclusion sums up the role of these means in political discourse, and engages in a discussion of when these methods are most actively applied by the mass media (the precise means of manipulation are not mentioned). The author makes no mention of how she has come to these findings. Thus, the conclusion presents the author's conjectures rather than the data based on a case study or the use of a quantitative method. The Russian authors clearly suppose that it is the work of the reader to make an attempt to understand how the information in the previous part of an RA is connected with the conclusion.

5. Discussion of the results

Having analysed the six RAs published in prestigious international English-language journals by three different publishers and the six RAs in Russian published by local peer-reviewed journals, we can identify the main differences in how the authors present their research in an RA. The English-speaking authors structure the presentation of their research very carefully. The analysed RAs written in Russian have no obvious structure: for instance, the introductory section might be absent. The RA in English usually includes an abstract, introduction, methods, literature review, results and discussion and, finally, conclusion and reference sections.

The purpose of the paper is stated repeatedly in RAs written in English: first, it is stated in the abstract, and it is then repeated in the introductory and discussion sections. The reader is presented with the results of the research at the beginning of the RA, and he/she is informed as to how the research contributes to the development of the academic field. In RAs in Russian the purpose is not stated, and the methodology and research corpus are not described. The English-speaking authors describe the methodology in detail to let the reader clearly understand how the conclusions were reached. Much attention is paid to the corpus; the authors scrupulously discuss why and how it was compiled. If citations are used, they are integrated critically into the

text. Numerous examples help the authors illustrate their points of view. The Russian authors cite well-known scholars to give weight to their research; however, quotations are usually not carefully incorporated within the discourse. There are few examples; as a rule, authors do not explain their use.

The conclusion in RAs in English reminds the reader about the aim of the paper and how it has been achieved. The authors often describe their personal views on the topic of discussion and provide the reader with further insight into the possible development of their research. The conclusion is usually featured in the last paragraph. A reader with insufficient background knowledge about the topic of a Russian RA might see no cohesion between the paragraphs due to the lack of logical connections or discourse markers. Enumerating their ideas, the authors use a so-called bullet-point strategy, presenting their observations to readers without establishing obvious connections between these concepts. There is no enumeration of the results, unlike in English-language RAs. Often a conclusion only partially corresponds to the topic of an RA and appeals to the emotional state of a reader by adopting a solemn or grandiose tone.

Thus, RAs in Russian, compared to those written by English-speaking authors, are implicative. Russian authors stress the collective nature of the research by hiding their identity; there are no arguments set forward by the authors to lay claim to the originality of the research. The impersonal tone, the use of the collective *we* and the hidden voice of the author make the RAs in Russian sound humble and modest.

The main differences in how English and Russian language scholars present their research in RAs are summarized in Table 1:

RAs in English	RAs in Russian
are very carefully structured into sections.	have no apparent structure.
The purpose of the paper is stated repeatedly.	The purpose of the paper is not stated.
Methodology is described in detail to let the reader clearly understand how the conclusions were reached. Much attention is paid to the corpus.	Methodology and research corpus are not given much attention.
Citations are integrated critically into the text. Numerous examples help the authors illustrate their points of view.	Citations are usually not carefully incorporated within the discourse. There are few examples; as a rule, authors do not explain their use.
The conclusion reminds the reader about the aim of the paper and how it has been achieved. The authors often describe their personal views on the topic of discussion and provide the reader with further insight into the possible development of their research.	The conclusion places the research in a wider social context. As a result, a reader with insufficient background knowledge about the topic of an RA might see no cohesion between the title and the conclusion. There is no enumeration of the results.
The discourse is interactive and explicative.	The discourse is impersonal and implicative.

The results obtained from contrasting English and Russian academic traditions of constructing an RA have obvious pedagogical implications and can be used in a classroom setting with students of graduate and postgraduate levels as well as with academics wishing to learn how to publish their research in English. Looking into cultural background and finding explanations for these differences equips students and scholars with a better understanding of these differences and makes it easier to interiorize and use the approaches to writing an RA in English in a proper way.

We can speculate as to what causes these differences in writing traditions. Contrastive rhetoric recommends examining them within the context of societies that affected the construction of these traditions.

Canagarajah (2002b) cites Mauranen (1993) who observes that for American authors it is necessary to compete to publish in respectable journals “to sell the findings to the readership for a variety of symbolic and material rewards” (Canagarajah 2002b: 115). In many local cultures, including Russian, for scholars there is no need to attract the attention of their readers. Hence, there is a lack of engagement markers and a less aggressive tone of stressing one’s personal input in the academic field. As there is no pressure to market one’s RA, authors see no need to explain everything to the reader (*ibid.*).

The need to attract attention to one’s findings is connected to the writer/reader orientation that determines who is responsible for making an effort in order to decipher information. In a writer-responsibility language (English), it is the writer who is expected to present information clearly to the reader. The examples of this kind of relationship in an RA are illustrated by presenting a reader with the overview of a field of research, explaining the methods and corpus, and constantly summing up the results. Any questions that the readers might have are foreseen and answered by the author.

Other cultures have different expectations about information exchange: “It is the reader’s responsibility to understand what the author intends to address” (Qi and Liu 2007: 148). This approach is adopted by Russian writers and is representative of a high-context culture. Russian academic writing follows the tradition of a reader-responsibility language, in which it is assumed that much information is shared by the writer and the reader, and if not it is the reader’s duty to fill in the gaps. The methods must be deduced from the presented RA; the reader trusts the writer in that the corpus has been compiled and analysed, and the author’s aims are worthy of an RA being published. The reader-responsibility languages are also called diffuse or intuitive, whereas the writer-responsibility languages feature discourses with logical organization (Hinds 1990). That is why RAs written in Russian have no distinct structure; the conclusion section can be absent as authors expect their readers to draw a conclusion on their own. The writing styles of scholars can be indirect. When form-oriented cultures – including many English-speaking cultures – present information in linear structures, it might seem simplified to those cultures accustomed to a content-oriented presentation of ideas: “Content orientation often appears to be associated with a cultural idealisation of knowledge and the authority of the academic or intellectual work. For example, if a text can be readily understood, then, from a German perspective, it may be seen to be dubious and unprofessional” (cited in Bowe and Martin 2013). In content-oriented cultures the reader is supposed to “make an effort to understand the text produced by the knowledgeable, and therefore, authoritative person” (*ibid.*). “From the perspective of content-oriented cultures, the English linear structure might be considered simplistic,

due to its high usage of advance organisers and its emphasis on the careful presentation of thought structures and strategies of expression" (*ibid.*).

Finally, the hidden identity of Russian academics in their RAs, which causes them to adopt an impersonal and formal style, can also be explained by two factors. First, this style can be attributed to the country's Soviet past, when the collectivist system kept people from voicing their opinions. Second, Russia's strong collectivist past certainly influenced the academic writing tradition, as "collectivists employ 'we' often and they depend on context [...] to convey meaning" (Triandis 1995: 76).

6. Conclusion

The differences outlined in the analysis of the six RAs in English and in Russian suggest that modifications need to be made when presenting local scholars' research so they can publish their RAs in international journals.

When publishing in international English-language journals, local scholars should understand that they need to appeal to a much wider audience than when presenting RAs in their native tongue. This makes it necessary to place the research in an international context, referencing local and international scholars and clearly describing one's input in the research field. As the discourse is expected to be more explicit, attention should be given to the methodology section. The reader, who might be lacking sufficient background to understand all of the author's ideas, should be provided with necessary explanations. When competing at the international level to make their research more widely known, authors strive to establish a dialogue with their readers and claim responsibility for their results, which should be presented in a conclusion section.

All of these changes presuppose that an author will switch from a reader-responsibility (Russian) approach to a writer-responsibility approach (English). This can be enhanced by adopting a clearly structured RA (form orientation), in which the authors explain at the very beginning what they are going to write about and what their findings are.

As a result of adopting all of these discursive changes, scholars will construct new international identities, different from their local ones, in voicing their opinions by the use of the pronoun *I*, while at the same time engaging the reader in a discussion with the help of dialogic tools. Shedding their local identity and constructing a new international one, authors will have more chances to succeed when competing for publishing space and readers' attention; however, at the same time, being aware of all the changes that Russian (and other international) authors need to introduce into their RAs when presenting their research in English scholarly venues also means that the author gains a major opportunity to be globally connected with scholars who have similar research in a meeting of minds and a sharing of ideas.

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