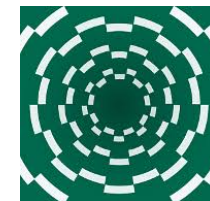


# Evaluation and career

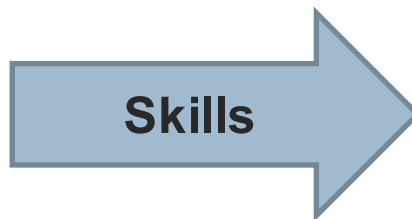


**Jolanta Šinkūnienė**  
Vilnius University, Lithuania  
The Research Council of Lithuania

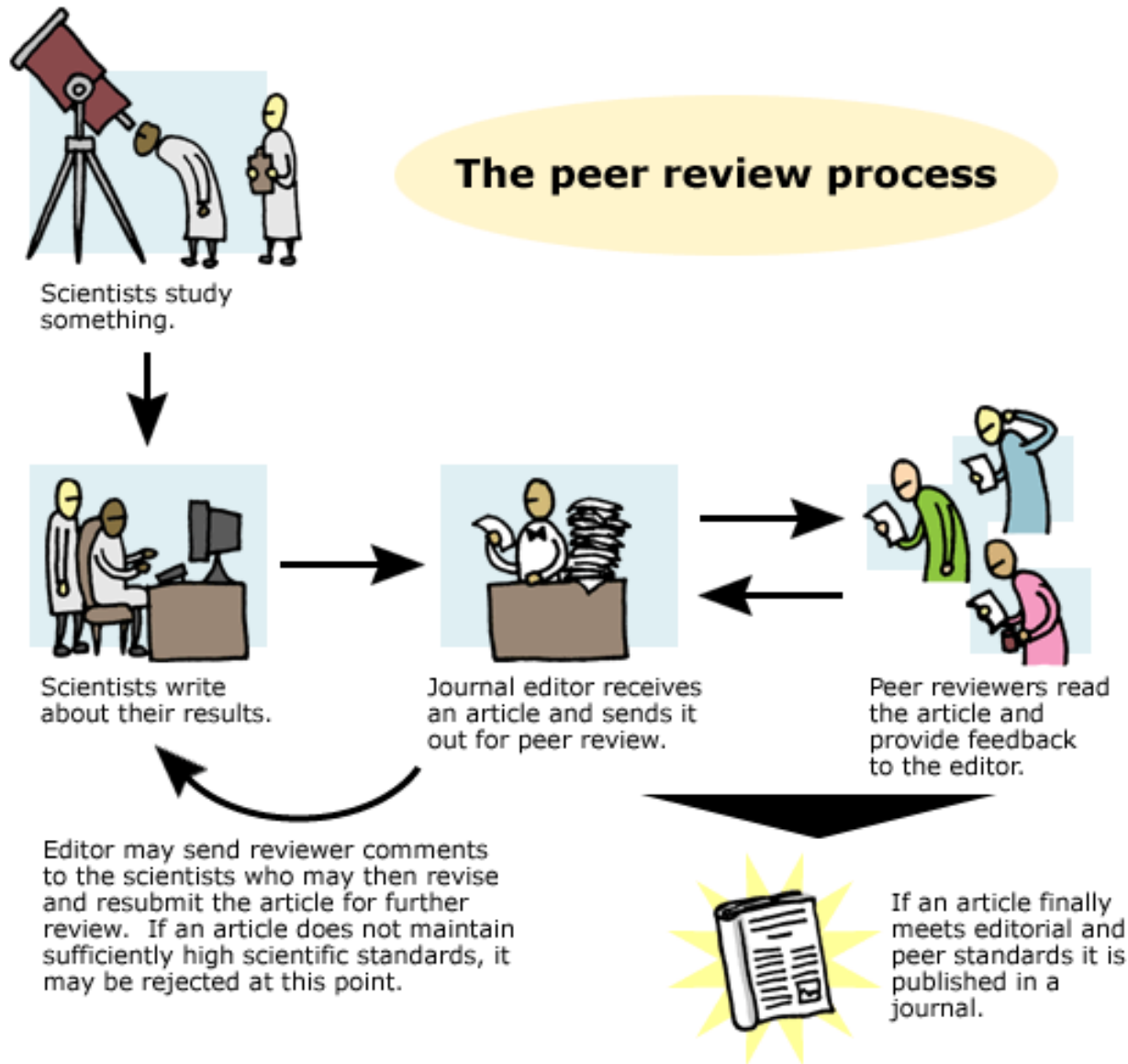


# Would I do it?

- TALK AT A NATIONAL CONFERENCE
- TALK AT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
- LECTURE TO SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS
- POPULAR SCIENCE ARTICLE
- SETTING UP A BLOG
- PEER REVIEW AT A NATIONAL JOURNAL
- ARTICLE IN PROFESSIONAL NON-RESEARCH JOURNAL
- ARTICLE IN A LOCAL RESEARCH JOURNAL



# The publishing process (<http://undsci.berkeley.edu>)



# The publishing process

“There were over 1.1 million peer-reviewed research articles published globally in English in 2005 and this number has been increasing by 4 per cent annually” (Hyland 2011: 173).

“Top general and specialty journals have an overall rejection rate of about 85-90%. For instance, at *AJS* currently, about 80% of manuscripts are rejected at the initial review. About 20% are given revise and resubmits. About 50% of the revise and resubmits subsequently are accepted. So this is an overall rejection rate of 90% (acceptance rate of 10%). *ASR* figures are strikingly similar.”

(<https://www.soc.umn.edu/~uggen/PeerReview.pdf>)

But why papers are being rejected?

„There are formulations that, in my view, are a little bit over the top and too pretentious. <...> Maybe it is not the language, but it is just **too Latin** for a North-West European.“ (Lillis & Curry 2010: 152)

„Poor writing doesn't encourage the reader to turn the page to read more about X. This comment is not about the authors' competence in scientific English. **It is about thinking.**“ (Lillis & Curry 2010: 152)

# Cross-cultural differences in research writing <sup>5</sup>

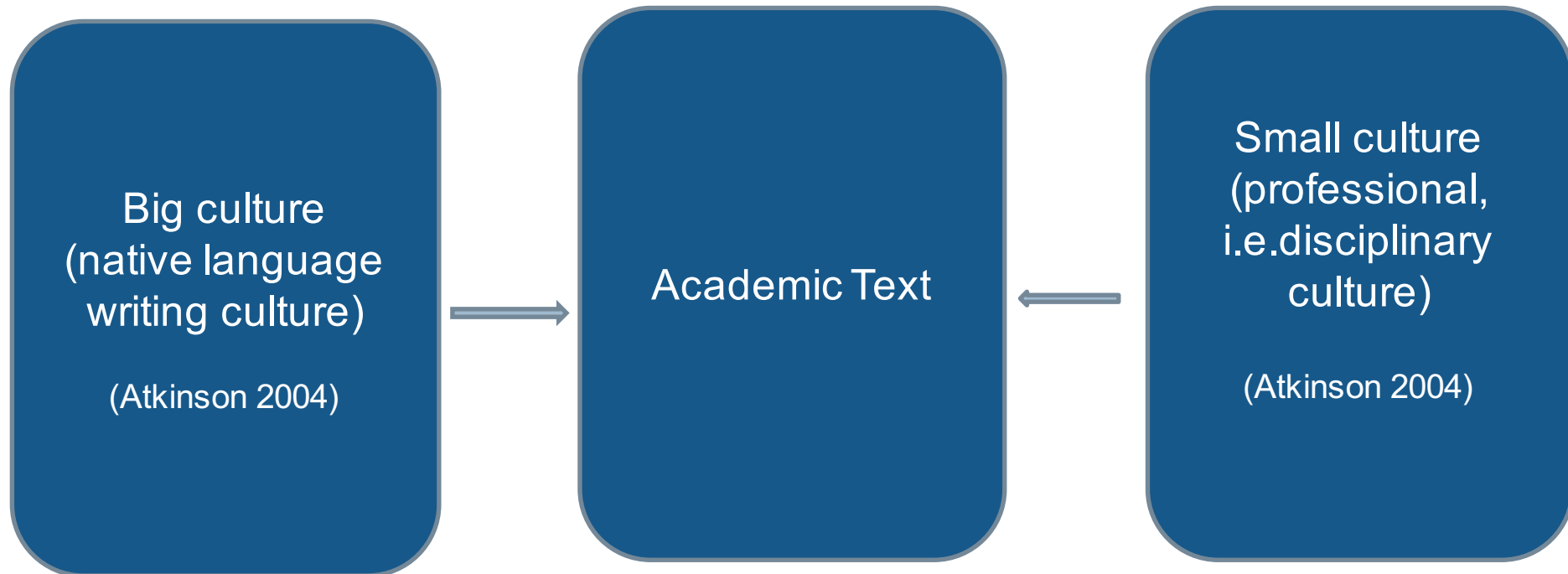
Why would awareness of different cultural practices be important in research writing?

“Ignorance of, or misconceptions about, the communication styles of others can hinder understanding among academics and ultimately obstruct cooperation and advancement of scholarship” (Duszak 1997: 3).

“<...> by breaking rules of a text-linguistic type, a writer may appear incoherent or illogical; by breaking culture-specific rhetorical rules a writer may seem exotic and command low credibility” (Mauranen 1993: 263).

# Academic text: influencing factors

6

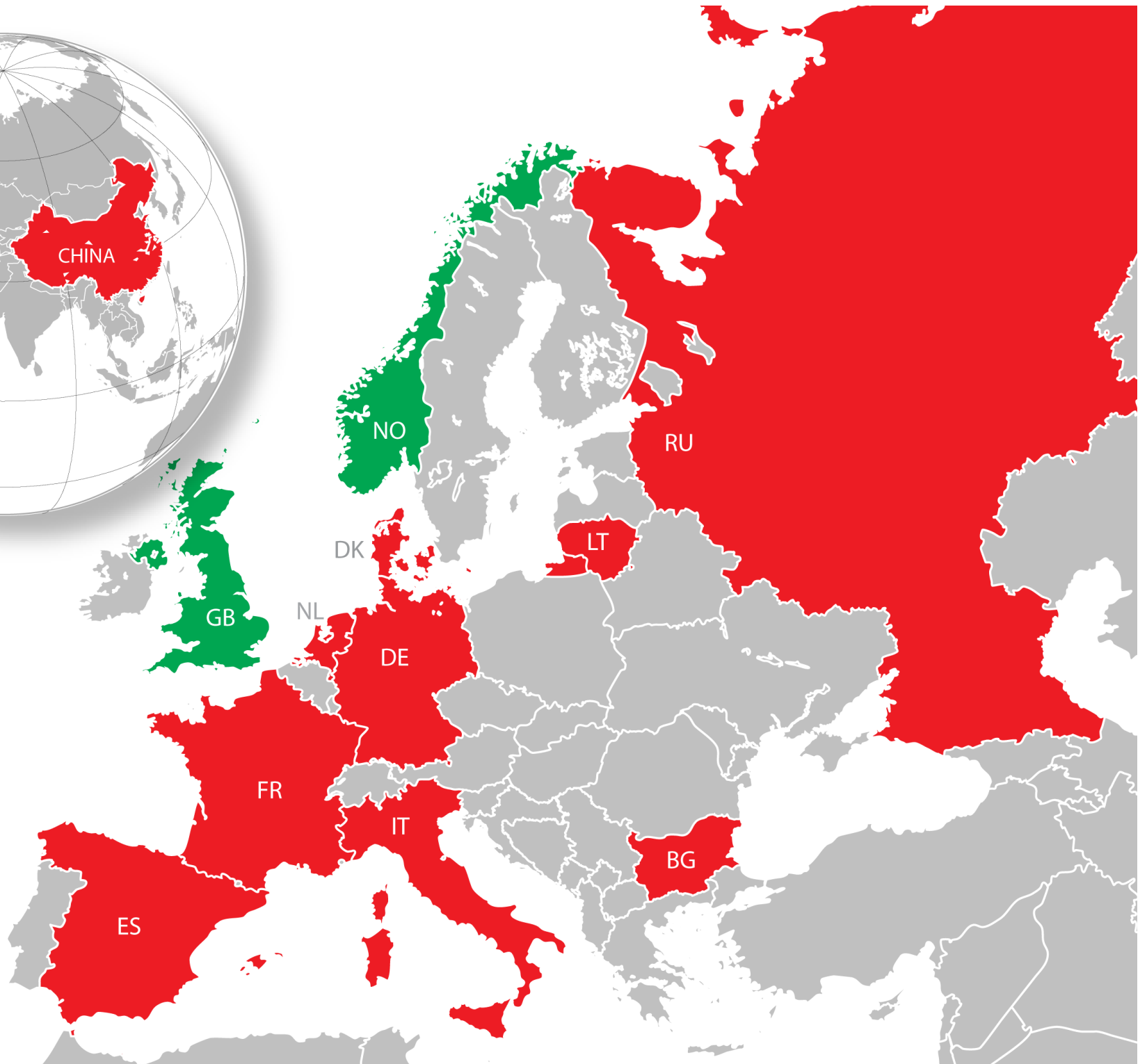


# Cultural differences: personal pronouns

7







Mur Dueñas,  
Šinkūnienė  
(2016)

# Why personal pronouns are avoided?

- Vassileva (1998: 181) refers to Clyne's (1993) distinction between "collective" and "individualistic" cultures: "the Russian and Bulgarian discourses obviously favour the 'collective approach' resulting in 'collective responsibility'".
- Sanderson (2008: 59): 'Ich Verbot' [I taboo]: "The avoidance of explicit person reference is one way in which academics attempt to conjure an impression of objectivity."
- Fløttum et al. (2006: 81, 113): the well-known French cultural maxim 'le moi haïssable' traditionally taught in French schools explains why "French researchers avoid the first person singular and use the first person plural as little as possible."

# Risks of rhetorical clashes (1)

*Toliau apžvelgsime angliškojo should kiekybinius vartosenos ypatumus.*

‘Now we will review the frequency distribution of *should*.’

Reviewer comment:

Aš tokių asmeninių formų vartojimo moksliniam tekste labai nemėgstu... Su kuo Jūs rašote straipsnį? Juk viena, tai kam tas MES?

‘I dislike such personal forms in research texts very much. Who are you writing the article with? You are a single author so why this WE?’

# Risks of rhetorical clashes (2)

*In Lithuanian linguistics people do not tend to take an explicit position on what they did, which is very well reflected in the verb **argue**, like In this paper I argue this. Lithuanians are clearly missing on that. And then the impersonalisation or the lack of a clear position makes the article weaker. (Linguistics)*

*What then can **we** draw from this study in terms of pragmatics research in this area? Firstly, **I** suggest that more studies of the emotional aspects of interpersonal interaction using different methodologies could yield valuable insights. Secondly, more conceptualisation is needed on the meaning of 'relational', drawing on theorising and empirical findings from a range of sources. **We** need to take a wide range of data into account and to avoid pre-conceived ideological stances that may narrow down our conceptualisations too soon. Thirdly, **I** would argue that since relational issues are of such importance in the management field, a key aim of our work should be to develop conceptual frameworks that are meaningful and relevant to practicing managers. **I** hope this exploratory study offers a small step in that direction.*

# Contrastive studies on hedging (1)

- (1) *It is **possible** – and **likely** – that readers of other genres and/or in other fields may attend to different textual features and construct the author's voice in different ways, if at all.*
  
- (2) *This **suggestion** is, **I think**, reinforced by the observation that the main verbs in (40)–(43) **appear to** serve the same function as the parentheticals and adverbials <...>.*
  
- (3) *We **speculate** that this molecular marker **may** be a way of distinguishing patients <...>.*

# Contrastive studies in hedging (2)

13



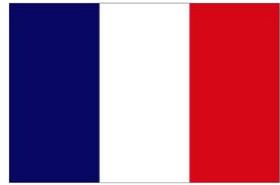
Serbian

“Consistent failure to use epistemic hedges <...> may be an instance of cultural behaviour in accordance with a possible cultural script regulating ‘directness’ in Serbian.”  
(Trbojevic Milosevic 2010)



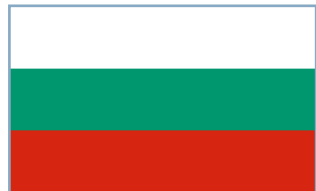
Lithuanian

English researchers in linguistics and medicine used roughly 1.5 times more hedges than Lithuanian scholars in the same disciplines (Šinkūnienė 2011).



French

“French scientists are much more prescriptive, authoritative and categorical than their English-speaking colleagues.” (Salager-Meyer et al. 2003: 232).



Bulgarian

“The Bulgarian educational system presupposes mainly reproductive writing and focuses rather more on the content than on the structure of the texts.” (Vassileva 2001: 99)



Finnish

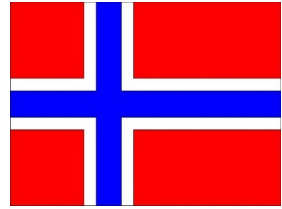
“Arrogance and over self-confidence (that is, a lack of hedging devices) have also been noted in Finnish academic writing.” (Salager-Meyer 2011: 36)



Greek

“<...> Greek authors tend to project a rather authoritative and knowledgeable persona, and their main persuasive technique is the presentation of claims as certain, consensual, and self-evident.” (Koutsantoni 2005: 127)





Norwegian

“But why should English-speaking and Norwegian-speaking researchers be more humble and polite and express themselves with more caution than their French-speaking colleagues? Norwegian academic culture is to a large extent influenced by the Anglo-Saxon culture” (Vold 2006: 82).



German

“Research papers written in German and English by German authors <...> show a higher degree of hedging and of tentative affective statements than papers written in English by English-speaking writers” (Salager-Meyer 2011: 36).

# Publish (in English) or perish dilemma (1)

Lillis & Curry (2010: 137) talk about publication hierarchy: “local publications” (in local languages & national journals) are frequently considered as of lower value in comparison to “global publications” (in English & international journals).



# Publish (in English) or perish dilemma (2)

18

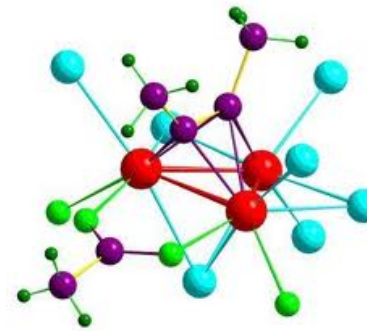
“The number of non-native English speaking academics publishing in English language journals now exceeds papers authored by native English speakers.” (Hyland 2011: 173)

The story of Cranio-mandibular muscle (Swales & Feak 2000)

First fully described in a publication in German in **1954**

Then “discovered” by Portuguese scientists in **1978**

Finally “discovered” for the English-speaking world in **1996!**



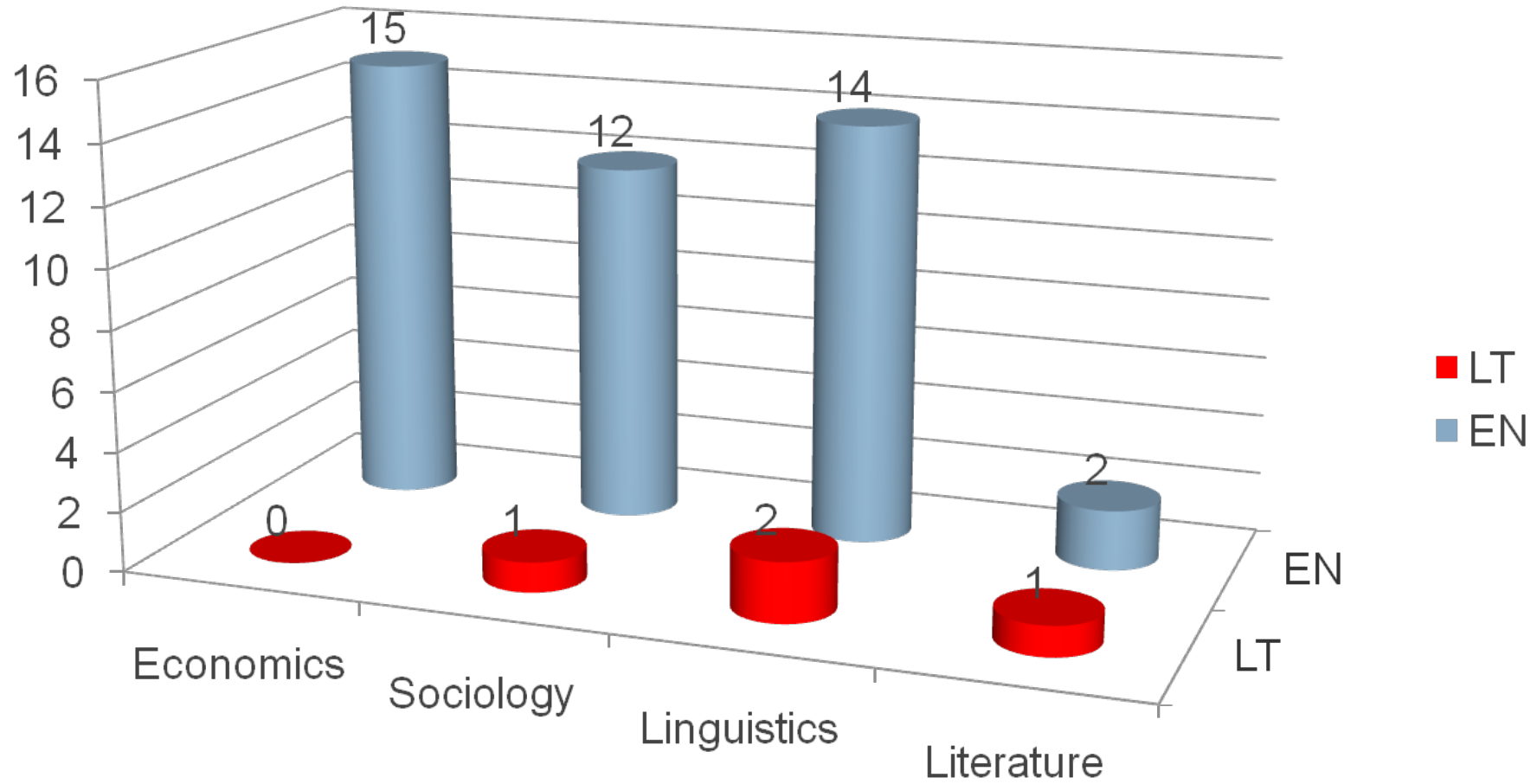
“An individual’s sense of belonging to his or her academic tribe is manifested in a variety of ways. A chemist’s desk is prone to display three-dimensional models of complex molecular structures, an anthropologist’s walls are commonly adorned with colourful tapestries and enlarged photographic prints of beautiful black people, while mathematician may boast no more than a chalkboard scribbled over with algebraic symbols.” (Becher 1989: 23)

“It is, however, through the medium of language that some of the more fundamental distinctions emerge. A detailed analysis of disciplinary discourse can help <...> to discern differences in the modes in which arguments are generated, developed, expressed and reported, and to tease out the epistemological implications of the ways in which others’ work is evaluated.” (Becher 1989: 23)

# Acknowledgments (1)

- (1) We are grateful for funding under Research Grant FD/00236B from the Leverhulme Trust <...>. We also thank seminar participants at ISER and Swansea as well as the referees and editor for extensive and helpful comments on this article. (Eko AN 4)
- (2) Many thanks to Robyn Carston and Deirdre Wilson for numerous discussions on the subject of this paper and their comments on several drafts. I'm also grateful to Eliza Kitis, Chris Potts, Su Olmos, an anonymous referee, and, especially, Kent Bach for feedback on earlier versions of the paper. (Klb AN 6)

# Acknowledgments (2)





# Acknowledgments: disciplinary variation <sup>24</sup>

“Cronin, McKenzie, and Rubio (1993) discovered disciplinary variations in the frequency of acknowledgements, suggesting a continuum across the soft-hard spectrum, with virtually all articles in the hard sciences carrying one (McCain, 1991).

Philosophers, for instance, are more likely to inhabit dispersed communities with little reliance on close interaction with others and so have low acknowledgement rates. Hard scientists, in contrast, recognize financial support and their engagements in highly developed webs of mutual transmission and exchange, trading the materials and preprints upon which their research depends.” (Hyland 2003: 245)

(3) *Straipsnis parašytas vykdant Lietuvos valstybinio mokslo ir studijų fondo (LVMSF) remiamą projektą „X“. (Soc LT 1)*

‘The article was written within the project “X” funded by the State Science and Studies Foundation of Lithuania.’

(4) *Tyrimas atliktas ir straipsnis parašytas, vykdant Lietuvos mokslo tarybos (LMT) finansuojamą projektą „X“ (MIP-14/2010).*

*Autorė nuoširdžiai dėkoja projektą finansavusiai LMT.* (Klb LT 15)

‘The research was conducted and article written within project “X” (MIP-14/2010) funded by the Research Council of Lithuania.

The author expresses sincere thanks to the Research Council of Lithuania for the funding.’

*Mes vieniši kūrėjai. Recenzentai – jeigu tu publikuoji ir tai yra, bet kas jie yra tu nežinai, galima dėkoti, kad tiesiog skaitė. Aš niekada nesu dėkojus. Nebuvau tiek dėkinga. Labai dažnai recenzija frustraciją sukelia. (Lit Inf 1)*

‘We are lonely scholars. Reviewers – if you publish, and if there are reviewers, but you do not know who they are, you can thank them for reading. I have never thanked anyone. I wasn’t that grateful. Very frequently the review causes frustration.’

*Taip, aš turiu kolegą, kuri kiekvieną savo tekstą atsiunčia. Bet niekad nedėkoja. Man tai taip savaime suprantama. Kažką patariu pakeist, čia kompozicija, čia pavadinimas... Bet dėkojimas... mums nejprasta, mes tai suvokiam kaip būtinybę, orą, kuriuo kvėpuoji. (Lit Inf 2)*

‘Yes, I have a colleague who sends me every text she’s written. But she never thanks me. It is so understandable to me. I normally suggest some changes, composition of the text, title ... But thanking ... we are not used to that, we understand this as necessity, as the air that we breathe.’

# The opinion of informants (3)

*Viena vertus nėra normos, kita vertus nėra už ką dėkoti.*

*Pats procesas yra toks, kad į jį neįsiterpia kiti <...>. O ten [Vakaruose] visas departamentas skaito, keletas žmonių, ir čia pat pateikinėja konkrečias pastabas ko pats tu nebūtum sugalvojęs <...> tai neparašyti padėkojimo, tai savotiškai apsivogti. (Soc Inf 1)*

‘On the one hand there is no tradition, on the other hand there is nobody to thank. The whole process is such that other people do not interfere. And there [in western universities] the whole department reads your article, several people, and they give you specific suggestions which you’d never think of yourself. So not to acknowledge this would be like a kind of theft.’

- The importance of keeping disciplinary and cultural epistemological practices in mind to appear as an insider of that disciplinary community.

The aspect of negative or positive politeness, especially in expressing criticism. As Walter Nash (1990: 20) jokingly puts it:

“Never, never say „Professor X is a jackass”, or even „Professor X is wrong.“ Say, rather, „Notwithstanding the great learning and skill that Professor X deploys in defense of a highly original thesis, the book leaves some important questions unanswered.“ This tells the world that you are moderate and judicious and that Professor X is a jackass.”

“As academics, we are not disposed to say, „I know the world is round.“ Our tendency is toward propositions stoutly hedged and qualified, and shored up with evidential timber: „It has been convincingly argued that for figurative purposes (Slipstream, 1968a) as well as in a cosmological perspective (Nobodaddy, Merriweather, et al., 1981) the earth (Tellus) has, approximately speaking, the properties of an oblate sphere.“ The retreat from stout and simple assertion is due not only to respect for strict truth; it is also motivated by something perhaps less admirable but wholly human: the urge to deflect criticism and avoid blame”. (Nash 1990: 20)



**Thank  
You** *Mahalo*  
*Kiitos*  
*Tack*  
*Grazie*  
*Obrigado* *Toda*  
*Takk* *AČIŪ!* *Thanks*  
**Gracias** **Merci**

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