# *English Writing for Publication in International Journals: Basic Criteria in Globalization Era*

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**Abstract**

*Publishing research articles in international journals has become a precondition to PhD graduation in higher education. In the era of globalization, non-native English PhD students devote much scholarly attention to English writing for publication purposes to share and author their own academic researches for international journals. Thus, this paper aims to demystify the most important requirements of English writing for publication and draw some strategies to successfully publish written English manuscripts in international journals. Along this line of thought, a documentary analysis of 12 different research manuscripts of non-native English academics was undertaken. To cross-check the data, a questionnaire was directed to the manuscripts' owners and the peer reviewers of journals. The findings reveal that manuscripts which are successfully accepted for publication have features related to both macro and micro criteria. The former includes the procedural strategies that allow manuscripts to be highly and immediately accepted from the first sight such as the originality or timeliness of the work, its direct relevance, appropriateness and interest to the journal targeted, and its*

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*effective contributions and solutions to the new emerging era problems. The latter incorporates the specific details and segments that reviewers spot at the second sight such as maintaining coherent and cohesive texts, using authentic and well-cited references, providing relevant arguments, framing data to appeal to different audiences, discussing and synthesizing the results. Depending on these findings, a number of recommendations are provided to remediate the situation*

## 1. *Introduction*

Within the era of globalization and the emergence of English as an international language, all people around the world are directing themselves to the belief of intensifying the "worldwide social interdependencies and exchanges" and "growing awareness of deepening connections between the local and the distant" (Steger, 2003, p 13). In the field of higher education and research, non-native English academics, among them non-native English PhD students, in different fields of studies such as humanities and social sciences (HSS) or science and technology (ST) find themselves conditioned with the task of English writing for publication purposes in international peer reviewed journals. In the university context, the ultimate objective of English writing for publication is to give this category of students the opportunity to share their own experimental studies, results, and implications with other researchers and scholars around the world. The extensive and rapid worldwide exchanges of research findings under the globalization circumstances may lead to maintaining collaboration and inspiration among scholars and increase sources of knowledge productions Khosrow-Pour, M. (2021, p 450).

Higher educational institutions and organizations have considered publishing English articles in international peer reviewed journals as a prerequisite for PhD students' graduation. Achieving this academic prerequisite seems to be a hard task to non-native English PhD students simply because most English international journals in different countries do not accept manuscripts to be published expect if these manuscripts have certain writing requirements and publication ethics; this would include the academic writing style, coherence, cohesion, paper structure, format and referencing, and both the methodological and analytical aspects of an academic paper. Maintaining all these academic requirements in a particular manuscript in order to be published seems to be a challenging task and thus students may encounter problems during the process of English writing for publication purposes. In this respect, Belcher (2009, p XIII) emphasizes that most problems PhD students experience when writing for publication are not related only to the aspects of language including syntax and word choice, cohesion and

coherence, but also difficulties related to the aspects of writing for publication purposes such as formatting texts, citing information, providing relevant arguments, discussing and synthesizing the results, maintaining originality, and targeting the journal's needs and interests.

Based on the foregoing, the problem of the study revolves around the following main questions:

1. What are the different problems and errors behind non-native English PhD students' failure to publish articles in international journals?

2. How should the stages of writing for publication be orderly undertaken by authors in order to successfully publish an article in a peer-reviewed international journal?

Along this line of thought, the present paper tends to explore the different barriers and errors non-native English PhD students encounter when writing manuscripts for publications. It attempts also to make the process of scholarly English writing more understandable by listing the most important academic features which effective English articles should incorporate. Then, it orderly draws the framework and steps to successfully publish written English manuscripts in international journals.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing articles for publication is considered as an overwhelming task which most academics seek to achieve in their career (Barroga & Mitoma, 2019, p 1). This task can help researchers and professionals in their academic journey gain critical thinking skill, discipline-specific output, and competencies for communicating and processing information in a professional setting. The importance of writing for publications has been discussed by many researchers such as Anne Sigismund Huff (1999); Diane Duff (2001); Wendy Laura Belcher (2009); Meng Ge (2015) to indicate that knowledge which most students acquire in schools about the writing skill does not necessarily equip them for their entire career. That is, experiences and feedbacks which academics may receive as a result of their manuscript submission to journals can foster the writing skill itself. Murray (2013, p 6) synthesizes the main benefit from writing for publications by saying that "Some writers argue that they like writing and do not lack confidence, but see no reason to get into print. They have other ways, they argue, of gaining professional recognition and other outlets for their communications than academic journals. Of course, this is always an option, as long as you are clear about and comfortable with any consequences there may be for your career. And what about consequences for your learning? If you do not regularly submit your writing to journals, where else will you get the type of hard critique provided by journal reviewers?" One of the most crucial advantages of writing for publications is the opportunity academics have when obtaining critiques about their manuscripts in specific and their writing process in general. Critiques that journal

reviewers provide can help writers reflect on their strengths and drawbacks which in turn lead to producing good academic research articles and fostering the writing skill.

The task of writing journal articles has recently been the main concern of students for not only publishing manuscripts, but also for using this academic task to contribute to the advancement of the writing skill in specific and obtain a progressive academic career in general (Cargill & Burgess, 2017, p.188) . In this respect, Jalongo & Saracho (2016, p 7) list the main advantages of writing for publication purposes. According to them, the first benefit of writing for publication is that it helps academics to be considered as experts in their field of studies. In other words, people who write a paper on a particular research topic can prove their ability of organizing their own thought and shaping a good understanding of information in a deeper way. This automatically gives them a status of knowledgeable people within the research topic they have addressed. Another reason which encourages academics to write and publish articles is the rewards that most universities and institutions offer as a result of any new publication. Rocco & Hatcher (2011) emphasize that most universities provide different financial rewards to employers and researchers who succeed in publishing articles and other research papers in peer reviewed national and international journals. Besides these rewards, publishing successful research articles play a pivotal role in tenure and promotion decisions of employers in their institutions and work positions (qtd in Jalongo & Saracho (2016, p 7). Above all, writing for publication can build satisfying professional networks and maintain a positive energy towards the task of searching and investigating the efficiency of knowledge. Thus, "establishing a professional network beyond the local context can exert a powerful, positive influence on career satisfaction. Across their professional lives, faculty members who have learned to balance teaching, writing, research, and service not only exhibit high levels of publication productivity but also enjoy their careers more than colleagues who focus on just one facet of academic life" Jalongo & Saracho (2016, p 8).

In a university setting, publishing research papers is considered nowadays as an arduous task to doctoral students specially for those whose native language is not English. In other words, students may find it difficult to maintain certain features in the manuscripts which they write for publications (Yan, 2021, p 45). Therefore, they are turning now to learning the different writing requirements and publication ethics in order to produce good academic manuscripts. The fact that English for research publications has recently attracted the total attention of students in different fields of studies is attributed to the situation that this language is viewed as the "unrivalled lingua franca of academia, the language in which most research articles are published, conferences held, reading is done and learning transmitted" (Bennet,2005, qtd in Burns & Richards, 2018, p 131). Numerous statistics and proofs confirm that English has not become only the language of communication among humans but also a means of progress and

research in the field of technology and science. Examples of these statistics include the ones which are made by Hamel (2007) and Cindoc (1999). The researchers confirmed that overall 74.57% of all articles shared in various databases and from a range of disciplines are written in English. For instance, within the field of Psych Info, Cindoc (1999) showed that the number of articles which are provided in the English language has reached the percentage of 95.2% (Hanauer & Englander, 2013, p 7). These quantitative results can lead to a one single conclusion which assumes that English for publication purposes is considered now as an imperative academic skill which students need to master in order to maintain an ongoing academic progress. Hence, countless efforts are undertaken by non-native English-speaking academics in the "periphery" to try the experience of publishing articles in peer reviewed international journals.

Due to the high attention given to the importance of English writing for publication purposes, different researchers such Barrass (2016); West (2010); Flowerdew (1999) and Erna Iftanti (2016) have devoted their efforts to demystify the process of English writing for publications with the considerations of globalization circumstances. Their research objective was oriented towards the identification of errors, obstacles, and reasons behind non-native English PhD students' failure to publish manuscripts in international journals. In the context of higher education, English academic writing for publication is in general a challenging skill due to its discreet and interconnected features. Academics who successfully prove the ability of publishing English articles in international journals may have certain skills and strategies which are related to both the writing task itself and the discreet decisions made before the manuscript submission process (Jump, 2002, p 13). Therefore, Stewart and others (2021, p vii) emphasize that writing and publication are two processes which require a lot of tactics, strategies, and carefulness in making decisions. This means that the mastery of grammar and the steps through which an academic writer goes through are not the only requirements needed to successfully guarantee the opportunity of publishing English articles in peer reviewed international journals. However, the process involves academics to be good decisions makers before, during and after the process of submitting the manuscript. Studies which are undertaken by researchers such as Abdulkareem (2013) and Al-khasawneh (2010) confirm that most manuscripts writing problems in higher education contexts are not highly related to issues of sentence and text structure, expressing ideas, using vocabulary, spelling, paraphrasing, achieving coherence, cohesion, but also matters related to the procedural strategies which allow manuscripts to be highly and immediately accepted from the first sight such as the originality or timeliness of the work, its direct relevance, appropriateness and interest to the journal targeted, and its effective contributions and solutions to the new emerging era problems Hidri (2018, p 161).

On the basis of the abovementioned studies, it is viewed that the task of writing for publication does not highlight only parameters related to the linguistic structure such as correct sentences, vocabulary choice, and the writing stages like brainstorming, proofreading, and editing, but it requires also elements which are beyond the linguistic level. Writing for publication obliges academics to make good and careful decisions about the whole process of writing and submitting the manuscript (i.e., the procedural strategies). Pollock (2021, p 145) explains that the decision of which journal an academic will send his/her manuscript to should be made before the starting point of the whole writing process. Valiela (2001, p 138) states that the careful decision about the journal choice helps the writer to gain an insight about what to write to target the journal's interest, how to write it to attract the reviewers' attention, and when to write it to successfully obtain the opportunity of the journal acceptance in comparison to the other corresponding authors who are also competing to publish within the same journal. Digout and others (2019, p 28) view also that the careful understanding of the journal targets and standards is a crucial part of the writing process of a manuscript. Therefore, Belcher (2009, p XIII) emphasizes that the reasons behind PhD students' failure to publish English articles in international journals are attributed to both macro and micro criteria. The former includes the procedural strategies which allow manuscripts to be highly and immediately accepted from the first sight such as the originality or timeliness of the work, its direct relevance, appropriateness and interest to the journal targeted, and its effective contributions and solutions to the new emerging era problems. The latter incorporates the specific details and segments which reviewers spot at the second sight such as maintaining coherent and cohesive texts, using authentic and well cited references, providing relevant arguments, framing data to appeal to different audiences, discussing and synthesizing the results.

## 2. RESEARCH DESIGN

This investigation purports to explore the barriers and errors to English writing for publication, make the process of scholarly English writing more understandable, and draw the framework and steps to successfully publish written English manuscripts in international journals. Along this line of thought, a documentary analysis of 12 different research manuscripts of non-native English academics was undertaken. To carry out this study, the researcher followed a certain research design carried out with a particular sample of students.

### 2.1. Participants

The sample of this research includes 12 of non-native English speaking PhD students. Six of the non-native students succeeded in publishing articles in international journals. The other six students of the sample were not able to provide manuscripts accepted for publication. The students are in the process of

preparing for their Ph. degrees in the fields of social sciences, English language, and psychology. They are affiliated to different Algerian universities namely M'sila, Djelfa, Tlemcen, and Blida. Since the main objective of this research is to check the correlational effect of students' awareness of the errors and lacks in their manuscripts on the possibility of the international journal's acceptance, the researcher has first insured that all non-native participants possess the basics of English in order to write English articles. Nine reviewers of different international journals are also included in this current study in order to provide the researcher with their basic evaluation criteria and judgmental decisions regarding the acceptance and rejection of the English written manuscripts. Three of the reviewers are native English speakers and belong to American universities. The other six reviewers are non-native English speakers and work at different universities around the world such as Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria.

### 2.2. Data Collection and Procedure

The study tends to examine types of errors, lacks, and obstacles non-native PhD speaking students make when writing articles for publication and know the most important components international research articles should contain. To reach the objective, the researcher used two main research instruments for collecting the necessary data; a documentary analysis of the students' manuscripts and a questionnaire. In other words, the six non-native English speaking PhD students whose articles have been accepted for publication in international journals were asked to submit their manuscripts to be analyzed and compared to the other six non-native English PhD students whose manuscripts have been rejected for publication by international journals. As a result of this procedure, the researcher collected 12 manuscripts written in English for publication in international journals. The manuscripts of both groups of students were analyzed and compared according to the evaluation criteria provided by the reviewers in order to recognize what errors and lacks the six non-native English PhD students have made to make their written papers rejected and the most important conventions and components which have made the other six students' articles accepted for publication. The researcher used an alternative research instrument to cross-check the data gathered from the documentary analysis tool. That is, a questionnaire was directed to the manuscripts' owners and the peer reviewers of different international journals. The results collected from the documentary analysis and the questionnaire provide the researcher with a framework to first demystify the most important requirements of English writing for publication from different perspectives (i.e., the authors' perspectives and the reviewers' perspectives), and second explain the conventions, steps, and criteria which are taken into consideration when evaluating a written manuscript for international publication.

### 2.3. Data Analysis

The research instruments used in this study include a documentary analysis and a questionnaire.  The documentary analysis is based on analyzing both the accepted and rejected manuscripts of the non-native English PhD students. Consequently, the researcher used a descriptive analysis to analyze the data gathered from this instrument. When analyzing these manuscripts, the researcher relied on certain criteria related to both macro and micro levels. On the one hand, the macro level refers to the strategies, procedures, and decisions students are supposed to appropriately recognize in order to make their written manuscripts highly and immediately accepted from the first sight of the journal reviewers. Examples of these macro procedures include decisions made regarding the originality or timeliness of the work, its direct relevance, appropriateness and interest to the journal targeted, and its effective contributions and solutions to the new emerging era problems. Decisions and procedures related to the macro level are supposed to be undertaken before the writing process of the manuscripts. On the other hand, the micro level incorporates the specific details and segments which reviewers spot at the second sight such as maintaining coherent and cohesive texts, using authentic and well cited references, providing relevant arguments, framing data to appeal to different audiences, discussing and synthesizing the results. These discreet criteria are supposed to be made during the writing process of the manuscripts. Each criterion of both levels is given an equal importance in comparison to another. In other words, the researcher tends to give the same importance to all these criteria when evaluating the English written manuscripts of the students. The results gathered from this descriptive analysis helps the researcher answer the two main research questions which concern the different errors and lacks the six non-native English PhD students have made to make their written papers rejected and the most important conventions and steps which have made the other six students' articles accepted for publication. The results collected from the questionnaire which was directed to the manuscripts' owners and the peer reviewers of different international journals were quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed in order to provide the researcher with a framework to demystify the most important requirements and steps of English writing for publication from the different participants (non-native English PhD students and the journals' reviewers).

## 3.  RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Since the current study involves a documentary analysis of different manuscripts, the evaluation relies on a Likert scale where the researcher specifies the degree of each criterion with a corresponding number of scale (e.g., extremely relevant, very relevant, relevant, moderately relevant, not relevant). Therefore, table 1 indicates the various criteria with their corresponding scale numbers implemented during the evaluation process.

**Table1.** Scale number corresponding to each macro criterion

| Scale Number | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| Originality | Not original | Slightly original | Moderately original | Very original | Highly original |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Timeliness** | Not modern | Slightly modern | Moderately modern | Very modern | Completely modern |
| **Relevance and appropriateness** | Not relevant | Slightly relevant | Moderately relevant | Very relevant | Extremely relevant |
| **Contributions and solutions** | Not satisfying | Slightly satisfying | Moderately Satisfying | Very satisfying | Completely satisfying |

The data presented in table 2 indicate the results collected after the process of evaluating, analyzing, and comparing the six English written manuscripts which are accepted for publication to the ones which are rejected by the journal reviewers. They concern criteria related to the macro level. The first above section of the table represents feedback of the accepted manuscripts. The second below section of the table shows remarks of the rejected manuscripts.

**Table 2.** The Results of evaluating the accepted and rejected manuscripts' Macro Criteria

| Levels of Criteria | Accepted Manuscripts | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Macro Criteria** | **S1** | **S2** | **S3** | **S4** | **S5** | **S6** |
| **Originality of the research** | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| **The timeliness of the research** | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| **Relevance and appropriateness to the journal targeted** | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| **Effective contributions and solutions** | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| **Levels of Criteria** | **Rejected Manuscripts** | | | | | |
| **Macro Criteria** | **S1** | **S2** | **S3** | **S4** | **S5** | **S6** |
| **Originality of the research** | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| **The timeliness of the research** | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| **Relevance and Appropriateness to the journal targeted** | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| **Effective Contributions and solutions** | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 |

Regarding the first macro criterion, the data presented in this table show that manuscripts which have been immediately accepted for publication address research topics which are highly and very original. On the other hand, the English

written manuscripts which are rejected for publication cover research issues which are slightly or moderately original. This difference in scale concerning the originality of the research topic proves one of the most important conventions which authors need to maintain in order to successfully publish a manuscript in peer reviewed international journals. This finding is highlighted by Greenhalgh (2001) when he provided a set of reasons behind the direct rejection of manuscripts sent for publication. According to him, manuscripts' authors receive remarks regarding the originality of their work such as "study was not original, or you did not make a strong enough case for its originality. If you cannot make the case for 'originality', try another term, one that suits your work better" (qtd in Murray, 2013, p 207). This means that the extent to which a particular work is highly original encourages the possibility of its acceptance.

The timeliness of the research topic is another factor which intervenes during the process of reviewing and evaluating a written manuscript for publication. When comparing the data related to this macro criterion in both sections of the accepted and rejected manuscripts, it is noticed that most research topics which are accepted for publication address issues which are completely and very modern to the new emerging era of needs. However, the rejected manuscripts include research subjects which are either slightly or not modern at all. Moran and others (2014, p 358) emphasize that the point which writers are not aware of is the huge number of manuscripts international journals receive. This challenging situation obliges authors to direct their attention to research topics which are highly recommended and modern to be published and read. Journals do not devote space to publishing manuscripts which are outdated or old fashioned. In this respect, Belcher (2009, p 13) states that "If your paper is quite old, and subsequent research may have vitiated its findings, you may want to think twice about picking it for revision".

The third macro criterion incorporates the relevance and appropriateness of the research manuscript to the interests of the journal targeted. The data presented in table 2 show that the content and depth of the whole manuscript extremely suit the interests, needs, and requirements of the journal targeted. Whereas, manuscripts rejected for publication include content sections which are slightly relevant to the journal's needs and interests. To clarify this finding, it is important to highlight the suggestion given by Moran and others (2014, p 355). According to them, writers do not have to find journals for their articles, but have to write articles specifically for the targeted journal. This strategy shows the direction of the writing process for publication which may encourage the possibility of the manuscript acceptance. Moran and others emphasize that the process of writing for publication goes backward rather than forward. The process begins by choosing a targeted journal, scanning and identifying the lacks and issues which are highly recommended in that journal, and then structuring the content of the manuscript to fit the lacks, needs, and interests of the recent issues published by the targeted journal. These procedural decisions can speed the review process and

encourage the possibility of the manuscript acceptance (West,1992, p 132). In other words, writers should make deliberate decisions regarding the above matters at an early stage before the writing process (Thomson & Kamler, 2013, p 36).

The last factor which is embedded in the process of evaluating and reviewing manuscripts for publication refers to effectiveness of the solutions, contributions, and recommendations the research paper has provided to the current emerging era, society, or the research field. The results related to this macro element indicate that most manuscripts which are immediately accepted for publication hold completely satisfying solutions and contributions to the field of research in comparison to the rejected manuscripts (i.e., slightly or not satisfying solutions). This means that manuscripts which do not provide additional contributions to the emerging research field requirements are supposed to have less possibility of acceptance. Belcher (2009, p 13) explains that articles which hold exhausted and virtually unassailable solutions and contributions to the society or the research realm are less accepted. That is, reviewers are expecting writers to figure out effective solutions and contributions to the current emerging problems and situations within the field of research; they do not seek for manuscripts embedding a set of theoretical concepts which can be found easily on the internet.

Table 3 shows the data collected regarding the evaluation procedure of the micro level criteria. It represents the type and frequency of errors identified by non-native PhD students when writing their manuscripts using the English language for publication purposes. The frequency of the error type is given in form of percentages. Therefore, the researcher compared the percentages of errors detected in manuscripts which are rejected for publication to the percentages of errors recognized in manuscripts which are accepted for publication. The types of errors identified are related to the discreet micro elements such as using correct grammatical structures, maintaining coherence and cohesion, using authentic and well cited references, providing relevant research arguments, framing data to appeal to different audiences, discussing and synthesizing the results.

**Table 3.** The Results of evaluating the accepted and rejected manuscripts' Micro Criteria

| Levels of Criteria | Frequency of errors identification (%) | |
|---|---|---|
| **Micro Criteria** | Accepted Manuscripts | Rejected Manuscripts |
| **Correct grammatical structures** | 23.02% | 21% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Maintaining coherence** | 35.64% | 39.95% |
| **Recognizing cohesion** | 31.57% | 33.75% |
| **Authentic and well cited references** | 39 % | 31% |
| **Relevant research arguments** | 34% | 32.02% |
| **Framing data to appeal to different audiences** | 37% | 28.32% |
| **Discussing and synthesizing the results** | 32% | 29.75% |

According to the results presented in table 3, it is noticed that the frequency of errors identification regarding the specific micro skills such as using correct grammatical structures, implementing correct cohesive devices, and maintaining coherence is approximately the same recorded by both students whose English written manuscripts are accepted and rejected for publication. That is, the frequency of errors related to these previous mentioned micro skills is low and does not reflect any possible problems related to students' lack of competence related to their English language.

Regarding the other micro criteria namely using authentic and well cited references, providing relevant research arguments, framing data to appeal to different audiences, and discussing and synthesizing the results, the data gathered show that the percentages of frequency of errors identified within the accepted articles for publication is slightly higher in comparison to the percentages of frequency of errors detected in the rejected manuscripts. This slight difference in errors frequency indicates that the reasons behind the rejection of the manuscripts were not completely attributed to the errors found in these discreet elements. This finding was also confirmed by the journal reviewers in their questionnaire when they were asked to list the most frequent reasons of rejecting the English written manuscripts for publication. In other words, seven reviewers ratify that errors related to the micro level are slightly occurred and can be revised by directing contrastive feedback to authors.

McNulty and Selmer (2017, p 516) explain that most manuscripts which hold high quality of macro criteria like the originality and timeliness of the research, relevance and appropriateness to the journal targeted, and effective contributions and solutions are immediately accepted and sent to the second step of the reviewing process despite of the identification of some errors found in the same manuscripts related to the micro level criteria. They highlight the importance of the macro level criteria by stating that manuscripts can be rejected due to the topic which does not match what the journal publishes and not due to the slight the number of errors linked to grammar, coherence, and the discussion of the results.

The second research instrument used in this study incorporates a questionnaire directed to both reviewers of journals and writers of manuscripts. The main objective of this research instrument is to demystify and understand the different steps of writing a manuscript for publication from both reviewers' and authors'

perspectives. The data exhibited in table 04 contain the answers of the participants. The steps of writing a manuscript for publication are given in a specific order according to the participants' responses. Therefore, the analysis does not only include the identification of the various stages of writing an article for publication, but specifies also the way these stages are orderly undertaken. The results gathered provide two different perceptions about the stages of writing for publication process. The first perception belongs to manuscript writers who speculate that writing for publication goes forward (finding journal for a specific article). The second perceptive is attributed to journal reviewers who assume that writing for publication goes backward (finding an article for a specific journal).

According to manuscript writers, the process of writing consists of three main stages. The first stage begins by specifying the research topic and its literature review to write the body of the article. The second stage requires careful attention to specify the discreet elements of the research design. In other words, it involves demonstrating the research procedure writers have followed in their study and discussing the results to draw conclusions and recommendations. The last stage requires writers to choose a journal for publication where they download its own template in order to list the manuscript sections according to the template guidelines. On the contrary, journal reviewers emphasize highlight the importance of choosing first some major journals of the same research areas and interests of writers. The second stage involves what both Mertkan writers to consider the make-up of the target audience in these five journals by and Mertkan highlight (2016, p 143). It is the step of reviewing and analyzing the scope area of the very recent issues and topics published. Writers need then to understand and analyze the content and structure of the research articles which are immediately accepted for publication and highly read by the audience. This previous step paves the way to authors to identify and choose the research topic of the manuscript, its interest, depth, and content. Making an outline for the body manuscripts relevant to the template of the journal is the last stage which leads to the starting point of the manuscript content parts.

To clarify the distinction found in both perspectives mentioned above, it is important to highlight the conception presented by Moran and others (2014, p 355). Their perspective assume that writers should not find journals for their articles, but have to write articles specifically for the targeted journal. This effective strategy can speed the review process and encourage the possibility of the manuscript acceptance (West,1992, p 132). Moran and others emphasize that the process of writing for publication goes backward rather than forward. Hence, the process of writing for publication is supposed to start by choosing a targeted journal, scanning and identifying the lacks and issues which are highly recommended in that journal, and then structuring the content of the manuscript

to fit the lacks, needs, and interests of the recent issues published by the targeted journal.

**Table 4.** Steps of writing an article for publication

| Manuscript Writers | Journal Reviewers |
|---|---|
| • Choosing a research topic<br>• Drawing the literature review of the topic<br>• Writing the body of the paper<br>• Demonstrating the research design sections<br>• Discussing the results<br>• Drawing the conclusions and recommendations<br>• Choosing a journal for publication<br>• Downloading the journal template<br>• Listing the manuscript sections according to the template guidelines<br>• Organizing the references list according to the template | • Choosing a research area rather than a specific research topic<br>• Selecting five major journals of the same research area<br>• Considering the make-up of the target audience in these five journals<br>• Reviewing and analyzing the scope area of the very recent issues and topics published.<br>• Understanding and analyzing the content and structure of the research articles which are immediately accepted for publication and highly read by the audience<br>• Identifying and choosing the research topic of the manuscript and its interest, depth, and content<br>• Making an outline for the body manuscripts relevant to the template of the journal<br>• Starting the writing process |

## 4. CONCLUSION

This investigation reported the results of an exploratory study which was conducted by the use of two groups of samples; non-native English PhD students. It aimed at exploring the different errors that non-native English PhD students make when writing their English manuscripts for publication in international journals. It tended also to make the process of scholarly English writing more understandable by listing the most important academic features which effective English articles should incorporate. Then, it finally drew a framework which demystifies the methodical steps that writers should orderly follow to successfully publish written English manuscripts in international journals. The results collected from this investigation yielded interesting findings in relation to the research questions. The data obtained from the documentary analysis concern the

first research hypothesis which stipulates that problems of non-native English speaking students are attributed to mainly certain macro and micro level criteria. The macro elements include the procedural strategies which allow manuscripts to be highly and immediately accepted from the first sight such as the originality or timeliness of the work, its direct relevance, appropriateness and interest to the journal targeted, and its effective contributions and solutions to the new emerging era problems. The micro level incorporates the specific details and segments which reviewers spot at the second sight such as maintaining coherent and cohesive texts, using authentic and well cited references, providing relevant arguments, framing data to appeal to different audiences, discussing and synthesizing the results. The results gathered from the questionnaire adds different findings to the second research hypothesis which tends to frame the correct order of the writing steps for successful publication. The findings confirm that writers do not have to find journals for their articles, but have to write articles specifically for the targeted journal. As a result of the current study, a number of recommendations are presented. First, authors are highly recommended to devote their efforts to developing and maintaining the two types of macro and micro criteria when trying to maintain a successful process of writing for publication. Second, they are advised to begin the process of writing for publication by holding an intention of writing articles for the targeted journals rather than finding journals for their articles.

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