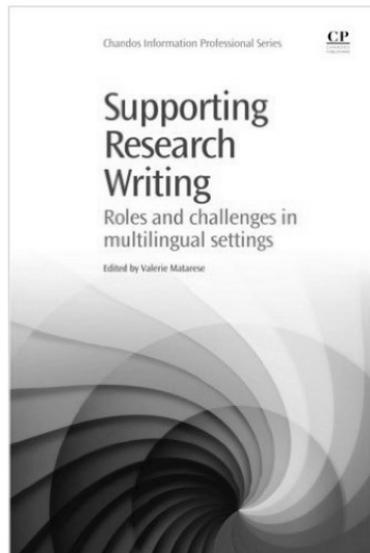


Supporting research writing: Roles and challenges in multilingual settings

Valerie Matarese (editor), *Chandos Information Professional Series*, 2013



Working as an authors' editor in a university, I first learnt how I could better support the researchers at a presentation given by Joy Burrough-Boenisch. There I heard that even carefully worded comments using the standard bubble option in track changes could be used as a teaching tool, and this approach is described in chapter 13 of *Supporting Research Writing*. This volume, with its focus on multilingual settings, is exactly the type of book that would have helped me when, as a scientist with no background in languages or in teaching, I was asked to help set up an English support team.

Supporting Research Writing is a collection of 15 chapters written by language professionals, which are tied together by the editor, Valerie Matarese. The contributors are teachers of academic writing, translators, editors, and sometimes all three. The book comprises four parts: the first three reflect the different focuses of teachers, translators, editors and writers, whereas Part 4 "Blurring the boundaries" consists of three chapters describing the advantages and challenges of developing unique approaches to helping authors get their work published. Although a busy language professional might not find the time to read the whole 285 pages, an invaluable feature of this book is that each chapter begins with an abstract and ends with a list of learning points.

It is generally agreed that academic writing should be a core feature of teaching and learning in higher education, as students who go on to become researchers will have to publish their work. It is almost inevitable that they will have

to do so in English if they are to gain a good reputation. Students therefore need to be taught how to write in English and Part 1 of this book provides an interesting overview of approaches to teaching academic writing, although, as Sally Burgess and Anne Pallant point out in Chapter 2, "it is possible that no two writers succeed by following the same path." Nevertheless, these chapters offer some useful practical information that could help language professionals who wish to set up courses in their own settings.

Part 2, which looks at helping authors through translation, seems a little out of place as the reasons for choosing translation rather than supporting the authors' own writing in English are not explored. But the chapters on the role of the translator are worth reading because they cover cultural aspects that can affect the way that authors write. Also, editors as well as translators sometimes need reminding about the influences of cultural differences on writing styles and of the need to allow authors their own voice.

From my own viewpoint, Parts 3 and 4 are of the most practical use. A clear and concise introductory chapter to Part 3 describes and defines editing, and would be especially helpful to beginner editors. Anyone wishing to become an editor in a multilingual setting, or who is involved in setting up English support services, would benefit from reading the case studies presented here. These cover journal copy-editing, the work of the authors' editor, and what might be thought of as "ghost writing" and the associated ethical issues. The concluding chapters on blurring the boundaries might inspire editors who feel that they could extend their services. Finally, the afterword by Valerie Matarese expertly ties everything together.

Supporting Research Writing provides a whirlwind tour of every aspect of the role of supporting research writing and it is unique in that respect. It should be recommended reading for all academic writing teachers, translators and editors. Unfortunately, those who have the authority to set up academic writing support facilities will probably never even think of reading it and these are exactly the people who could benefit most. Its price of £52.50 means this book is unlikely to become part of every language professional's bookshelf, but it would be well worth having a copy in the library of every university and research establishment where there are authors who need support with their research writing.

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