9 Teaching English for Research Publication Purposes in China: Developments and Challenges

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Abstract / 摘要

English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP) as a pedagogical enterprise has witnessed continuous development in China since the early 2000s. The internationalization drive of Chinese higher education and the sector's need to cultivate "interdisciplinary talents" were among the factors that promoted this growth. In this chapter, we begin by highlighting several boosters of China's international research output, i.e., publication policy, research and development (R&D) investment, and the science and technology (S&T) workforce. We will then outline the inception of ERPP in China in the 2000s against a backdrop of internal drive for change and external influences. The ERPP development in the country in the 2010s and early 2020s will be examined next along two dimensions: face-to-face-taught courses and beyond such courses, focusing on textbooks and online instruction for the latter. Within the two dimensions, we distinguish between the initiatives led by English language teachers and those led by disciplinary content specialists and underscore a continued "silo" phenomenon separating the two streams of specialists. In terms of challenges, we highlight a shortage of support at policy and resource levels for English teachers' professional development and career advancement, and a risk for the momentum in developing high-quality ERPP-oriented instruction at Chinese institutions to be undermined by the proliferation of ERPP-related resources on Chinese social media as well as the affordance of Generative AI tools.

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科研發表英語教育在中國自21世紀初期以來經歷了持續發展。中國高等教育的國際化及培養‘跨學科人才’的迫切需求為此提供了驅動力。在本文中，我們將首先强调推动中國國际科研产出的若干因素，即出版政策、科研经费投入以及科技人力資源。接著我們溯源科研發表英語于21世紀初期在内、外部因素影響下在中國的起步。其後我們從高校的相關課程、學術英語寫作教材、及網絡資源等方面綜述科研發表英語教育在 21世紀頭二十多年在中國的發展。我們區分英語教師和學科教師在這些領域的工作，并指出這兩批專業人士各自爲營的現象仍然普遍存在。關於科研發表英語教育發展在中國面臨的挑戰，我們認爲，對英語教師的職業發展的支持在政策和資源層面都顯不足；同時指出，與國際論文發表相關的自媒體資源的大量湧現及生成式人工智能帶來的便利，對中國高校的教師與政策制定者們在發展高質量的科研發表英語課程方面的動力構成了挑戰。

In this chapter we present a concise state-of-the art overview of the landscape of teaching English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP) in mainland China. In line with Cargill and Burgess' (2008) definition of the term, we are concerned here with "a branch of EAP addressing the concerns of professional researchers and post-graduate students who need to publish in peer-reviewed international journals" (p. 75). Over the years since the term *ERPP* was coined, the field of ERPP has developed its own disciplinary identity (Flowerdew & Habibie, 2022). More recently, ERPP pedagogical practices in non-Anglophone contexts have attracted attention and become a focus of interest for practitioners and researchers (e.g., Corcoran et al., 2019). While previous reports on the pedagogical front tended to focus on individual initiatives such as courses and workshops, we aim to chart and reflect upon the Chinese scene more holistically, with a critical edge, hoping to provide a point of reference for practice and research in the field.

A country with over 2,700 regular higher education institutions (PRC MoE, 2021), mainland China has been seeking to claim an international reputation as a global research powerhouse. The case of the Chinese context is interesting in ERPP terms, given the huge demand for ERPP education at Chinese universities. The trend towards internationalization of higher education and the need to cultivate "interdisciplinary talents" (as it is phrased in China) who can use English for academic and professional communication to compete in the international arena have put ever-mounting pressure on Chinese universities to shift gear from the traditional EGP-focused English education to EAP.

It is, therefore, of interest to practitioners of ERPP internationally to investigate how this pressure to change or reform English teaching has been

responded to, by which segments of the academic spectrum, and with what current and potential effects in broader academic and reputational terms. The Chinese case we present here will thus be enlightening to English language educators and policy makers in many parts of the world. In terms of terminology, it is important to recognize that, in Chinese universities, in-course assignments requiring extended writing in English are not a feature for students who are not English majors. The term "EAP" thus sometimes overlaps with ERPP in the Chinese context. On the other hand, the term "ERPP" is not yet in wide circulation in China, although it is being picked up, with a Chinese translation, namely, *keyan fabiao yingyu*. In this chapter, we will use "ERPP" and "ERPP-oriented" in describing the various lines of development on the Chinese scene.

"We" are a two-person international author team that grew out of a serendipitous post-conference meeting in Hong Kong in the mid-2000s, through intersecting individual and collaborative teaching and research interests. Yongyan is based in Hong Kong but has some involvement in other parts of China as a result of her previous teaching experience and some research projects over the years. Margaret is recently retired from university teaching and research in Australia, a field she embarked upon with foundations in foreign-language teaching and scientific project support, and with an underlying goal of supporting the international publication of scientific research outcomes for world-wide benefit.

In what follows we begin by highlighting several boosters of China's international research output, i.e., publication policy, research and development (R&D) investment, and the science and technology (S&T) workforce. We then take a chronological approach, overlaid with a focus on the ways and means through which ERPP has emerged and developed in the Chinese context. We outline strands of development in ERPP terms in the Chinese context in response to both internal drive for change and external influences in the 2000s, and then survey continued development in the 2010s and the early 2020s along the lines of face-to-face taught courses, textbooks, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) courses, and resources available on Chinese social media platforms. A "silo" phenomenon separating English language from other academic disciplines (Cargill et al., 2012) emerges from our survey of ERPP-oriented courses that English specialists and content (other-discipline) specialists separately taught, as well as the English academic writing textbooks that they separately produced. From looking into MOOC courses and the proliferation of video-based ERPP-related resources on the Chinese social media platform of Bilibili, we point out the risk that such easily accessible online resources could potentially be seen by university policy makers as

reducing the need for high-quality ERPP-oriented instruction at their home institutions, and argue for an alternative interpretation.

Boosters of China's International Research Output: Publication Policy, R&D Investment, and the S&T Workforce

While this chapter focuses on ERPP instruction in China, it is important to situate this discussion within the broader context of China's emergence as a scientific superpower. China's growing dominance in global science and its dramatic surge in international research output since the 1990s—frequently highlighted in media headlines such as "China declared world's largest producer of scientific articles" and "China's scientific dominance is a done deal"—can be attributed above all to sustained increases in R&D investment, the sheer scale of its S&T workforce, and institutional policies that mandate publication in international journals.

The Science Citation Index (SCI) drive began at China's top universities in the late 1980s and early 1990s, marked by the regular release of eye-catching "SCI Paper League Tables" prominently featured on the front pages of major national newspapers and university bulletins. For example, a December 2000 report in *Guangming Daily*, a leading government-sponsored newspaper, announced the "Top 10" universities in one such ranking: Tsinghua University led with 773 SCI-indexed papers, followed by Peking University (705) and Nanjing University (626) (Guo & Huang, 2000). While the initial excitement surrounding these rankings eventually diminished, they remained closely linked to the rise of institution-level publication mandates—initially introduced at elite universities and progressively adopted by non-elite institutions across the sector. The publication mandates were enacted through a range of official documents (and hybrids thereof), including journal lists, publication-based reward schemes, academic performance evaluation policies, postgraduate "training targets" (*peiyang mubiao*), and recruitment guidelines. "Grade points" (*yeji dian*) are often assigned to publications based on journal tier, a system resembling those reported at universities in parts of the Global South (Lillis & Curry, 2010), though China occupies a distinct and more geopolitically ambivalent position.

Criticism of the widespread "SCI worship" began to surface in the late 2000s; however, it was not until 2020 that national-level policy documents were issued with the aim of reversing the tide of "SCI supremacy" (e.g., PRC MoE, 2020; PRC MoST & MoE, 2020). In response, a few elite universities

moved to abolish the mandatory publication requirement for master's and/or doctoral students (e.g., Chen, 2021). Overall, however, institutional reactions to the new policies have been mixed, and the long-term impact of this policy shift remains to be seen (Tao, 2020). In the foreseeable future, the tension between official reform rhetoric and ground-level institutional inertia may shape the landscape of research evaluation in China.

Beyond publication mandates and policy developments, China's investment in S&T has grown at an unprecedented scale. In 2019, national S&T expenditures reached 2.21 trillion yuan (approximately 322 billion USD), accounting for 2.23% of the country's GDP, second only to the U.S. in absolute terms (Normile, 2020). Since 2013, China has led the world in the number of full-time R&D personnel, reaching 7.13 million in 2019, an increase of 130% from 2015 (Yang, 2021). The country also produces the largest number of graduates in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields: in 2020, China saw 3.57 million STEM graduates, followed by India with 2.55 million and the U.S. with 820,000 (Oliss et al., 2023). The continuous expansion of China's R&D talent pool and S&T expenditures, combined with long-standing policies that have incentivized international publishing, has contributed to the country's dramatic rise in scientific output, surpassing the U.S. for the first time in 2017 (Tollefson, 2018).

In addition to publication mandates, R&D investment, and the scale of China's S&T workforce, it is also important to acknowledge the significant and rapidly expanding industry of language editing services that support Chinese researchers in preparing English-language academic manuscripts. This commercial sector has played a substantial role in facilitating Chinese authors' success in international publishing (Luo & Hyland, 2021). The broader issue of language brokering in academic publication, an important topic within the ERPP field (see, e.g., Matarese, 2012), lies beyond the scope of the present chapter, and warrants separate and focused attention.

Taking into account the background outlined above, the suggestion that China's "seeming outperformance" is, to some extent, "a function of size" (Smith, 2024) should not be dismissed outright. This argument is supported by the notable gap, over the period from 2012 to 2022, between the volume of China's internationally published research, ranked second globally, and its average citations per document, which ranked only 16th (ISTIC, 2022). This contrast suggests that the quality or impact of a substantial portion of Chinese-authored articles remains limited. Although this may seem to contradict a recent study indicating that China has taken the global lead in producing the top 1% most highly cited articles—with 8,422 such publications in 2019, compared to 7,959 from the U.S. and 6,074 from the European Union

(Wagner et al., 2022)—the two observations are not incompatible. Given the sheer scale of China's research output, even with a relatively modest average citation rate, the absolute number of highly cited articles can still exceed those of other countries.

The traditional English language education in China has undoubtedly contributed to the country's rise in international research output, by equipping generations of scholars with basic English proficiency. Nevertheless, the more recent emergence of EAP/ERPP at Chinese universities has lagged behind this publication "achievement." It is therefore difficult to attribute China's past international publishing success in any significant way to its EAP/ERPP infrastructure. However, viewed from our current vantage point, the ongoing expansion of EAP/ERPP initiatives within Chinese universities, along with the proliferation of ERPP-related resources online and on social media platforms (as detailed later in this chapter), is likely to have a growing and lasting influence on Chinese authors' ability to publish internationally. For this reason, the account and reflections we offer in the remainder of the chapter may hold relevance and value for educators in other parts of the world.

The Inception of ERPP Endeavors in China in the 2000s

The emergence of ERPP-related pedagogy in China in the early 2000s unfolded against a backdrop of expanding international publication requirements, state-driven research evaluation reforms, and the country's broader ambition to enhance its global scientific standing. These structural shifts created conditions for pedagogical responses to take shape. The early 2000s witnessed several lines of development in China in ERPP terms, as reviewed below.

The Introduction of John Swales' (1990) Book into China

The first development to highlight was the introduction in 2001 of John Swales' book *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings* (1990). The beginning of the 21st century witnessed a wave of English-medium books imported into China for re-publication, notably an Oxford and a Cambridge applied linguistics series. Swales' (1990) book was in the latter series and was republished by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, with a Chinese title added on the cover and a brief Chinese guide to reading at the beginning of the book.

Relatedly, it is worth mentioning that paired conference sessions entitled "Research & Practice in Professional Discourse" were hosted in Guangzhou

(in south China) and Hong Kong in 2000. John Swales and Jim Martin were among the keynote speakers, and notable overseas conference participants included Christopher Candlin, Vijay Bhatia, Thomas Huckin, and Charles Bazerman. Margaret Cargill also attended with an Australian colleague. The pioneering event facilitated the uptake of Swalesian genre analysis in China, alongside the strong uptake of Systemic Functional Linguistics, as espoused by Jim Martin.

The Start of a Paradigm Shift from EGP to EAP at Some Universities

At the policy level, a Ministry of Education (MoE) document was released at the beginning of the 21st century, calling for the creation of English-Medium Instruction (EMI) courses in the fields of biotechnology, information technology, finance, and legal studies, disciplines considered closely bound to the country's international participation as it gained membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 (PRC MoE, 2001).

Better-resourced universities responded by developing bilingual courses for a start, using imported English-medium textbooks with instruction conducted in Chinese. Yet the limited English ability of the disciplinary teachers and of students sometimes led to course cancellation or student dropout. For example, in 2003, at the top-tier Tsinghua University, a quarter of the students dropped out of a bilingual course in physics within two weeks (Ye, 2005). In the first two decades of the 21st century there was a growing understanding among English language educators that "bridging" courses were needed between the traditional EGP and the new bilingual/EMI-oriented courses, and that the bridge would be EAP courses (Cai & Chen, 2013). Meanwhile, the traditional general English courses were extensively criticized; it was widely recognized that tertiary English education did little to prepare students to communicate in English in their disciplines. Against this backdrop, an EGP-to-EAP transition in the undergraduate curriculum began at some better-resourced universities and those with a heavy presence of science and engineering disciplines.

Concerning the postgraduate level, an *Action plan for invigorating education (2003–2007)*, an MoE document released in March 2004, emphasized the development of high-level talent in higher education, including through advancing a Postgraduate Education Innovation Program (PRC MoE, 2004). Then in January 2005, another MoE document was issued, providing guidance on the Program: *Opinions on implementing the postgraduate education innovation plan, strengthening the cultivation of graduate students' innovative capacity, and further improving training quality* (PRC MoE, 2005). These

official documents provided rationale and guidance for innovating postgraduate curriculum at Chinese universities in the subsequent years. The focus of such innovation consisted in reforming the traditional EGP and developing EAP and ERPP-oriented courses at the postgraduate level.

It should be clarified that such a paradigm shift from EGP to EAP at undergraduate and postgraduate levels primarily concerned the English education provided to non-English majors, a domain traditionally staffed by English teachers who, at many universities, have held lower institutional status than their counterparts teaching English majors (Cheng 2016). Although in recent years this division has blurred somewhat, with some institutions merging teaching responsibilities or discontinuing English majors altogether, the legacy of this status hierarchy continues to shape EAP/ERPP development and recognition within Chinese universities.

The Rise of ERPP-Oriented Courses for Postgraduate Students and the Growth of a Market for Textbooks on English Academic Writing

The third line of development was thus the rise of ERPP-oriented courses for postgraduate students at some universities, with a concomitant growth of a market for textbooks on English academic writing. In these courses, teaching about presentation at international conferences seemed an early focus. A course with a pioneering orientation to international publishing was a 15-week "Academic Articles Reading and Writing" doctoral-level course initiated by a team of English teachers at Renmin University (Beijing) in the early 2000s, in response to decade-old student complaints that the traditional general English courses were boring and unhelpful (Li, 2007, p. 1). The course had a stated focus on learning from English journal articles to nurture international publishing ability among doctoral students specializing in economics and management, as can be seen in Li (2007), a textbook compiled for the course. The textbook contains an ample collection of extracts from English journal articles, and an approach of rhetorical analysis was applied to the extracts.

Notably, "genre analysis" was not featured in Li's (2007) textbook, despite the introduction of Swales' (1990) book into China in 2001, indicating that in the early 2000s, Swalesian genre pedagogy was perhaps not yet well-known among English education reformers in the country. However, it would gradually become a strong feature of ERPP-oriented courses at Chinese universities, together with Australian genre pedagogy, as seen in the language teacher-authored course reports published in Chinese journals in the decade of 2006-2016 (Li & Ma, 2018). The early textbooks on English academic

writing published in China in the 2000s typically promoted a more general focus in the emerging academic writing instruction (although Li's 2007 textbook was an exception). Nevertheless, as illustrated later in this chapter, a growing number of ERPP-oriented textbooks appeared over time.

Margaret Cargill's Teaching of ERPP in China from 2001

While the above initiatives were not uniform in origin or orientation, they were shaped, at least in part, by institutional pressures to improve research visibility through English-language publication. Within this broader landscape, and introduced here as a fourth line of development, the ERPP work led by Margaret Cargill offered a pedagogically distinctive approach shaped by international collaboration. It aligned with a longer tradition of inviting foreign experts to support English education in China, dating back to the early years of the country's Reform and Opening-up in the 1980s (Adamson, 2004).

Margaret Cargill, a language professional then based at the University of Adelaide, Australia and consulting internationally on publication skills training, started to visit China with her scientist collaborators in 2001 to offer workshops and short courses on writing for international publication, making a total of over 30 trips to China by 2019, often with her ecologist collaborator, Patrick O'Connor (see Li & Cargill, 2021 and Li & O'Connor, 2019 for details) and other well-published scientist colleagues. Their textbook, *Writing scientific research articles: Strategy and steps* (Cargill & O'Connor, 2021, first edition 2009), was written back-to-back with their development of PowerPoint slides and teaching materials. Margaret's teaching in China thus began at the universities and research institutes of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, spread across the country, and extended to some other universities, in particular in several coastal cities. Along with her teaching to science research student authors, their supervisors and early-career research scientist cohorts, Margaret was also committed to training English teachers and promoting collaboration between language and content specialists during her visits to China (Li & Cargill, 2019a, 2019b), an emphasis that expanded as her experience grew. There is some evidence of uptake of her ERPP teaching methodologies by EAP teachers at Chinese universities (Li et al., 2020).

Margaret's sustained work in China as an external ERPP specialist over the duration of a good part of her academic career is a unique case, perhaps even on a global scale. As for the interdisciplinary collaboration that Margaret and her scientist colleagues steadfastly demonstrated and advocated, there is evidence of its growth at Chinese universities over time (see Li et al., 2024 for a review). Nevertheless, language-content partnership remains

uncommon and somewhat sporadic, for which evidence will be noted in the rest of this chapter.

Developments of ERPP in China in the 2010s and Early 2020s

The four strands of ERPP initiatives in the Chinese context of the 2000s outlined above demonstrate both internal drive for change and external influences. The early initiatives were followed by new developments. We will examine these developments along two dimensions: face-to-face-taught courses and beyond such courses, focusing on textbooks and online instruction. Within the two dimensions, we also categorise developments in terms of the disciplinary home of the teachers under whose names they were carried out: English language teachers with a broad focus on student skill development, and content specialists in other disciplines, likely focusing on skills for publishing in English in a particular disciplinary field.

Face-to-Face-Taught Courses

Useful insights for an international audience are provided by a modest number of English-medium case reports on EGP-to-EAP curriculum reforms (e.g., Cai, 2019; Liu & Zhang, 2015) and on ERPP courses (e.g., Dong & Lu, 2020; Li et al., 2020) at Chinese universities. Yet for a broader picture of ERPP-oriented instruction in China, Chinese-medium publications provide an important source of reference. As will be seen below, focusing on the period of 2017–2023, we identified 44 ERPP-oriented course reports, with about two-thirds (29) featuring English language teachers' courses and one-third (15) reporting on those of disciplinary teachers. This overall modest number, together with the fact that these papers were predominantly brief course reports rather than research papers and were mostly published in non-indexed national journals, indicates that research on ERPP instruction is yet to be developed and gain status in the Chinese context.

ERPP-Oriented Courses Taught by English Language Teachers

Extending a previous study which surveyed language teachers' ERPP-oriented courses based on 26 Chinese publications between 2005 and 2016 (Li & Ma, 2018), here we present a brief overview of such courses based on reports published subsequently. Twenty-nine course/curriculum reports (2017–2023) were retrieved from the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) (https://cnki.net), a mega-database of Chinese academic publications,

through multiple rounds of searching and selection using search terms such as "teaching academic English," "teaching academic writing," and "genre pedagogy" in their Chinese equivalents. Only those papers sole- or first-authored by English language specialists and providing a relatively complete picture of reported courses were selected, leading to a set of 29 short reports (3 to 13 print pages). These papers were published in a total of 22 Chinese journals and featured courses in 27 universities located in 15 cities around the country. Of the 27 universities featured, a few are comprehensive universities (including Fudan University, Zhejiang University, and Chongqing University); but most are universities oriented to science and technology (e.g., Beijing Institute of Technology, and Kunming University of Science and Technology). Although the papers do not always make it clear, it can be seen that 13 of the courses targeted Master students, 8 targeted doctoral students, and 3 were for undergraduates; the remaining 3 had mixed target audiences. Classes of mixed disciplines were the norm. Several papers mentioned the year when an EAP curriculum or an ERPP-oriented course was introduced at their universities: from as early as 2004, or in 2012–2013, 2015, or 2018.

A range of pedagogical theories or notions were drawn upon in course designs, but genre pedagogy in the Swalesian tradition was commonly adopted, a trend which became increasingly clear from the late 2000s (Li & Ma, 2018). A prominent feature was the teacher demonstrating genre analysis in class, using journal articles from the students' disciplines, and the students, working in groups by disciplinary proximity, practicing analysis after class and presenting their work in class (e.g., Cai, 2019). For the teaching/learning materials, other than journal articles, the teaching of the courses sometimes inspired the teaching team of language teachers to write new textbooks. For example, Chun et al. (2021) reported the local teaching team at China University of Petroleum (East China) producing two textbooks (one on scientific writing in English and the other on international academic communication in English), in addition to creating a database of teaching materials.

One-third of the course reports mentioned project-based learning, which required selection of a topic relevant to one's discipline, preparation over time, presentation at the end of the course (e.g., at a mock conference), and submission of a short paper (a miniature of a research article, ranging from 1,500 to 5,000 words) for assessment. For assessment, a combination of formative and summative assessment and integration of peer-, group-, self-, portfolio-, and teacher-assessment were emphasized. Finally, it is worth noting that about one-third of the papers reported some form of collaboration between language teachers and disciplinary teachers, featuring a continuum of scenarios

in the level of interaction between the two groups, though generally leaning toward the latter's relatively light involvement.

While genre analysis is widely adopted in the language teachers' ERPP instruction, and there is an emphasis on providing discipline-relevant writing support (cf. Hyland, 2002), the potential of genre analysis to support deeper rhetorical or epistemological engagement with disciplinary knowledge-making practices is often underexploited. In contrast, a growing body of international ERPP literature, drawing on academic literacies and genre-based theories (e.g., Englander & Corcoran, 2019; Hyland, 2000; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Tardy, 2009), treats writing not only as a set of conventions to be mastered, but as a means of participating in and shaping disciplinary ways of knowing. Such epistemic and critical perspectives have not yet been widely integrated into ERPP pedagogy in China.

ERPP-Oriented Courses Taught by Disciplinary Teachers

ERPP-oriented instruction by disciplinary teachers at Chinese universities (often under the course title of "Scientific English Writing"), found typically at the postgraduate level, may have been derived from reforming a traditional "subject English" course in a disciplinary department/faculty, or newly set up in response to a perceived need.

Following a similar CNKI-based literature searching and selection procedure as for surveying language teachers' instruction, and likewise focusing on literature dated from 2017, we were able to collect 15 course reports (2 to 7 print pages) sole- or first-authored by disciplinary teachers (2017–2023), published in a total of 14 Chinese journals and featuring courses in 15 mostly science and engineering universities located in 13 cities around the country. Fourteen of the courses were for Master students, and 1 for doctoral students. All 15 papers reported courses targeting science or engineering disciplines.

A few papers mentioned the commencement date of the reported English scientific paper writing course at their institution: 2013, 2014, 2017, or 2018. This range of starting points for course innovation is comparable to that for language teachers' ERPP-oriented writing courses discussed above, indicating that the early 2010s started to witness some wide-spread efforts to offer ERPP training to graduate students at Chinese universities, as the need continued to rise (see also Li & Ma, 2018). The courses taught by disciplinary teachers both resembled and differed from those taught by language teachers. One point of difference is that in contrast to language teachers' common adoption of genre pedagogy, disciplinary teachers' course reports generally do not mention genre-related terminology, although one exception is Jin's article (2021) titled "Genre pedagogy and English writing in biological sciences." A possible explanation is

that Jin's discussion of genre pedagogy reflects the transfer of learning from relevant publications by language specialists. Yet, the general absence of genre pedagogy terminology in disciplinary teachers' course reports suggests limited communication between language and content teachers, despite both groups being engaged in writing-for-publication-oriented instruction.

As seen in content teachers' course reports, journal articles from disciplines were almost always used, with the disciplinary teachers analyzing text structures to identify sentence patterns and emphasizing the learning of distinctive lexico-grammatical features. The content specialists also did not use language teachers' terms for pedagogical theories, but like language teachers, they organized group work, combined formative and summative assessment, and integrated assessment by peers, self and the teacher, while also often mentioning submission of a short paper as part of the assessment. These similarities to language teachers' practices could be further investigated to form a collated set of components to be considered by teachers wishing to design an ERPP intervention in their context—although the use of a ready-prepared textbook may be more appealing to time-pressured teaching staff, as suggested below.

As for teaching materials, other than using journal articles, as noted above, disciplinary teachers were more likely than language teachers to mention using existing writing textbooks, which could be titles published in English-speaking countries or their Chinese editions, or domestic titles, with occasional mentions of a new textbook being compiled for the teaching. These teachers, perhaps unsurprisingly, were also more likely to include a focus on article submission and publication process in their courses. For example, Li et al. (2023) reported a design of "simulating a journal's editorial department" in a course for Master students of civil engineering: each group played the role of an editorial department, and meanwhile, each group wrote a literature review of within 2,000 words and submitted it to other groups for blind peer review; the entire process of submission, revision, and publication/rejection was simulated.

Interestingly, although nearly half of the course reports by language teachers reported some form of collaboration with disciplinary teachers, none of the latter's course reports mentioned involvement of English language teachers. This indicates that in Chinese universities, overall, there has been some measure of effort on the part of English teachers to seek collaboration with their disciplinary counterparts, but not vice versa. English teachers generally having fallen out of the vision of content specialists has also been highlighted by us previously in reviewing disciplinary teachers' sporadically reported endeavor of facilitating undergraduates' scientific English writing abilities (see Y. Li, 2023), and in discussing bilingual and EMI teaching, at Chinese universities (see Li et al., 2024). Given that English teachers who

work with non-English majors have traditionally been accorded lower institutional status at Chinese universities (as noted earlier in this chapter), their exclusion from considerations by content teachers in the context of formal writing-for-publication instruction is perhaps unsurprising. Systemic constraints and workload pressures may have also limited disciplinary teachers' capacity to initiate collaboration with language specialists.

Beyond Face-to-Face-Taught Courses

In contrast to the modest number of course reports found (<50) is the notable proliferation of ERPP-related materials available for individual access, both as affordable and readily available textbooks, a traditional and well-trusted source of learning in the Chinese context, and online in various forms. We discuss textbooks first because of their long-standing and continuing place in Chinese education as a first cut, go-to resource. We will then survey relevant online offerings, including MOOC courses and resources on Chinese social media platforms, which constitute more recent trends.

ERPP-Oriented Textbooks Published in China

Chinese textbooks on academic writing in English, with varying degrees of ERPP orientation, come in two strands: those first- or sole-authored by English language specialists, and those first- or sole-authored by content specialists. The former are mostly of English-medium, and the latter consistently Chinese-medium with English text examples, perhaps reflecting respective levels of confidence in using English in teaching, or the perceived proficiency levels of the intended users of the books. By searching several online bookstore platforms with a focus on publication dates from the early 2010s to the present, we were able to gather 30-plus titles of the former and 20-plus titles of the latter. Generally priced below US$10 each (an affordable price), these books offer an important source of reference and learning materials for average teachers and students alike.

Many of the textbooks may be linked to ERPP-oriented courses in the authors' home institutions. Cases of the following scenario can be identified: a language or disciplinary teacher (and their colleagues) taught a course, developed a MOOC version of the course (see the section below), and also published a textbook. For example, a course titled "Academic Writing and Presentation in English" is offered by a team of English teachers at the School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Jiao Tong University (see Zhang, 2021). The course has both a MOOC version (at its 11th offering in the fall semester of 2024-25) and an accompanying textbook (i.e., Zhang & Sheng, 2021).

Of particular interest is a series of five postgraduate English-medium textbooks on "English Writing in Disciplines" compiled by a team of language teachers at the University of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (UCAS) and published by Tsinghua University Press in 2023. Each of the five volumes addresses one disciplinary domain: chemistry, materials science, electronic engineering, earth science, and computer science. The series broke new ground in ERPP textbook making in the country by incorporating both genre analysis and corpus methods and drawing upon research findings in the ERPP literature.[1]

For instance, one volume in the UCAS series, on research writing in chemistry (Du, 2022), opens with Chapter 1 on "Building your own corpus", covering sections on "What is a corpus," "How to build a chemistry-specific corpus," "What you can do with your own corpus," and "How to create a chemistry-specific word list." The remaining four chapters focus, in turn, on Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion, followed by Appendices. A further example are the headings in Chapter 2, Introduction: "Corpus in use," "Lead-in questions," "2.1 A story to justify the research," "2.2 Big issue vs. research question," "2.3 Telling the story," "2.4 Writing the opening," "2.5 Writing the funnel," "2.6 Writing the aim," "Functional expressions and sentences," and "Assignment." It will not be hard to see that an ERPP textbook like this one would demand of the language specialist author years of hard work researching and teaching the academic discourse in the target discipline to develop sound "specialized knowledge" (as opposed to "specialist", or content, knowledge) of the discipline (Ferguson, 1997).

For comparison, beyond the UCAS series, a Chinese-medium textbook written by two content specialists (Li & Jiang, 2020) on the similar topic of research writing in chemistry, consists of 9 chapters: an overview; the Experimental section; the Results and Discussion sections; Conclusion and Introduction sections; Title and Abstract; Referencing and citation; Tables and figures; Writing skills for conciseness and coherence; and Norms in English expressions and specialist terminologies. Here, the frontloading of the Experimental and the Results and Discussion sections indicates the writing order practiced by scientists and echoes Cargill and O'Connor's (2021) recommendation.

Language specialists' and content specialists' ERPP textbooks (and courses) can be seen to complement each other, with the former informed by scholarship in applied linguistics and the latter by first-hand publishing

1 It is also worth mentioning that UCAS (previously GUCAS, or Graduate University of the Chinese Academy of Sciences) was where Margaret Cargill, with local and Australian colleagues, conducted a 4-year action research project between 2006 and 2009, developing a proposed curriculum for teaching ERPP to postgraduate students of sciences (see Cargill et al., 2018).

experience in disciplines. If real-life collaboration, as exemplified both in Cargill and O'Connor's (2021) textbook and in their team-teaching (described in Li et al., 2019), cannot be achieved, for whatever reasons, use of both types of text, together or sequentially, could be one recommended approach.

ERPP-Oriented Courses on the Chinese Universities' MOOC Platform

China's embrace of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in the early 2010s was not spontaneous. It was embedded in national-level vision and strategy as outlined in two MoE documents, in particular: *Ten-year development plan for education informatization (2011–2020)* (PRC MoE, 2012), and *Opinions of the Ministry of Education on strengthening the construction, application, and management of online open courses in higher education* (PRC MoE, 2015). These documents helped mobilise institutional momentum toward online open courses, including the Chinese Universities' MOOC (https://www.icourse163.org/) (hereafter CU MOOC) platform.

By November 2022, the courses hosted on CU MOOC had exceeded 61,900, with 402 million registered users (Li, 2023). At the time of writing, we found 23 past and present ERPP-oriented courses on CU MOOC by trying a variety of search terms. Of these courses, hosted by 17 universities, 20 were taught by teams of English teachers (with 2 courses also listing a disciplinary teacher as a team member); the remaining 3 courses were led by disciplinary teachers (with 2 also listing a language teacher as a team member). Anyone with a valid mobile phone number for Mainland China can register for these semester-long MOOC courses for free (such a phone number is needed for receiving an authentication code to input during the registration process). Two Chinese-medium courses, led by a language specialist and a content specialist respectively, are summarized in Table 9.1.

Points of difference between the two courses sketched in Table 9.1 include the order of teaching the sections of a research article: the first, a language teacher's course followed an AIMRaD sequence, while the second, led by disciplinary teachers, moved from results, discussion, conclusion, and abstract, to literature review, and then to the experimental part. The latter pedagogical order of presenting the sections reflects scientists' common order of writing, as we pointed out earlier for a textbook written by content specialists (i.e., Li & Jiang, 2020). The discipline-based authors also include a more extensive focus on submission, while the language specialist's content includes stand-alone sections on vocabulary and sentences. These differences are echoed and magnified in textbooks written by the two categories of authors.

Table 9.1. A Comparison of Two Writing for Publication Courses on CU MOOC

Course Title and URL	**Publication of English Research Articles: A Ladder to the International Academic Arena** https://www.icourse163.org/course/HIT-1449775174	**Scientific Paper Writing in Chinese and English** https://www.icourse163.org/course/XMU-1206984801
Host Institution	Harbin Institute of Technology	Xiamen University
Duration and Cohort Size	2 h per week x 17 weeks; 100+ participants in the 10th offering, fall semester of 2024-25	3–5 h per week x 15 weeks; 300+ participants in the 11th offering, fall semester of 2024-25
Course Leader	An English language specialist	A disciplinary specialist
Course Structure	12 units, each of 2-5 sections plus quiz; each section based on a 10-15 min video	8 units, each of 2-5 sections; each section with a 10–15 min video, a handout and a quiz; a final exam
Unit Topics	1. Introduction to research articles; 2. Lexical selection; 3. Sentence construction; 4. Textual construction; 5. How to write Abstracts; 6. How to write the Introduction section; 7. How to write Materials and Methods; 8. How to write the Results section; 9. How to write Discussion and Conclusions; 10. References and academic ethics; 11. Revision and editing; and 12. Getting your paper published	1. Topic selection and proposal preparation; 2. Preparing to write a scientific paper; 3. Scientific paper writing strategies (covering results, discussion, conclusion, and abstract); 4. Writing the literature review; 5. Writing the experimental part; 6. Selecting a target journal and communicating with editors and reviewers; 7. Preparing oral presentations; and 8. Academic ethics

ERPP Instruction on Chinese Social Media Platforms

If the survey above has demonstrated that there is a rich and growing amount of ERPP or ERPP-oriented instruction happening at Chinese universities, in textbooks and on CU MOOC, all these endeavors pale somewhat when compared with the sea of ERPP-related materials on Chinese social media platforms. The background to the rise of this technology-mediated ERPP teaching and learning is the skyrocketing use of WeChat (an instant messaging App)—and its related WeChat Subscription Accounts (a multi-functional "we media" platform)—and of Bilibili (a video streaming platform, nicknamed the "B Site"). Statistics show that the 4th quarter of 2023 saw monthly active users of 1.3 billion for WeChat and 336 million for Bilibili (Statista, 2024a, 2024b).

Web-based talks and seminars on "How to write and publish an SCI/SSCI paper in (a certain discipline)" are frequently advertised in WeChat groups (maximum 500 members per group) and WeChat Subscription Accounts (unlimited numbers of subscribers). Yet, it is on the B Site that one can gain instant access to a sea of videos that claim to teach viewers how to publish English papers. Chinese students call it "B Site University", thus implying that they learn here what they do not learn at their own institutions. Paywalled videos abound, but an extensive range of videos are free of charge. Noticeably, rather than language specialists, the "instructors" in these videos are predominantly content specialists, in the roles of supervisors, or PhD students/graduates who have successfully published articles in English. Many release videos under a pseudonym.

Some of these offerings are called "courses," each comprising a set of videos teaching SCI writing and publishing. An ambitious "SCI Writing Course" consists of 27 videos (14–50 minutes each), running the gamut from preparing Figures and Tables and writing individual sections, through language focus, to submission, revision, and publication (Shiyan Wanshiwu, 2020). There are video series produced by disciplinary supervisors featuring themselves analysing and reading an article in English (as would be done in a research group meeting) and sometimes demonstrating how they read and revise students' paper drafts. Sharing by PhD students or graduates is also popular, covering a range of subjects: useful tools, writing templates, topic selection, literature searching and review, and article writing and publishing. One PhD graduate, sharing under the title, "Highly efficient academic writing" (Ruoruoruoshui, 2022), based on a set of 15 videos, has acquired 11,000 fans. Understandably, given the sea of materials available, promotional language characterises the headlines of videos vying for attention: e.g., "Strong recommendation from Tongji University! This may be the-most-worth-studying SCI paper writing course on the B Site!".

The prominence of content specialists and PhD graduates, rather than trained language educators, in these social media-based ERPP offerings raises questions about what kinds of knowledge, expertise, and pedagogical models are seen as legitimate or desirable. While these resources address a real and urgent demand, their emphasis on quick strategies, templates, and tools often reflects a highly instrumental approach to academic writing, one that may obscure the rhetorical, epistemological, and disciplinary complexities of writing for publication. This vast, unregulated instructional ecosystem suggests a broader fragmentation of ERPP support, in which students increasingly turn to individual instructors or influencers for help with navigating high-stakes writing tasks. This informal ecosystem both points to a systemic gap

in formal writing support and raises the question of whether universities may interpret the abundance of online resources as a justification to underinvest in high-quality, curriculum-embedded ERPP provision.

Conclusion

In the sections above, we have outlined the development of ERPP endeavors in China, beginning in the 2000s. Over the course of the two decades since EAP started to develop in China, with ERPP orientation growing steadily within that category though not gaining wide traction as a term in its own right, a lot has thus been achieved. Taken together, the institutional, platform-based, and social media-driven forms of ERPP instruction examined in this chapter reveal a complex, uneven, and evolving landscape. While they reflect commendable local initiatives and responsiveness to growing publication pressures, they also expose deeper structural tensions, between formal and informal instruction, between disciplinary and linguistic authority, and between pedagogical depth and utilitarian shortcuts.

ERPP/EAP teaching will continue to enjoy an upward trajectory in the country, as ERPP-oriented courses, textbooks, MOOC courses, and social media-based learning resources keep growing in response to the increasing demand for the "interdisciplinary talents" who can support the achievement of China's goals for its international research reputation. Of these lines of development, the ERPP-related resources on Chinese social media platforms apparently offer more immediate access, despite their uncertain quality and pedagogical effectiveness.

With the current rapid rise of Generative AI, the situation is now becoming more complicated. In surveying language teachers' ERPP-oriented course instruction, although we have not found reports on the use of Generative AI in ERPP teaching at the time of writing, language teachers' discussion of such use is emerging (e.g., Guo et al., 2023), suggesting its potential of application in ERPP classrooms at Chinese universities in coming years. Yet, in contrast to the cautious handling of the issue of teaching academic writing at Chinese universities in the age of Generative AI, an extensive range of videos on how to use AI tools to quickly produce a paper, from literature gathering to finalizing the text, are already there for free access on Chinese social media, including on the B Site. To what extent these new developments—freely available, extensive online resources and AI tools—will prompt language teachers, content specialists, and policy makers at Chinese universities to work toward high-quality ERPP-oriented instruction at their institutions remains to be seen.

English language education will undoubtedly continue to be an indispensable part of the curriculum at Chinese universities in their internationalization drive. Yet it should not be forgotten that China has over 2,700 regular higher education institutions (PRC MoE, 2021) and, in 2022, the total enrollment of doctoral students at Chinese universities reached 556,100 and that of Master students hit 3,097,500 ("Jiaoyubu: 2022 nian benke zhaosheng," 2023). The ecology of English language education across the tertiary sector—far beyond the cases that we were able to survey through published course reports, textbooks, and CU MOOC courses—matters a great deal for the wider populations of students as well as of language and disciplinary teachers.

Against this backdrop, despite the developments outlined in this chapter, we conclude by highlighting three key challenges for ERPP in the Chinese context and by proposing lines of future work on both the pedagogical and research fronts. While these suggestions are grounded in the Chinese experience, they also carry implications for the global ERPP community.

Firstly, it can be seen that a "silo" phenomenon separating English language from other academic disciplines, an issue we discussed over a decade ago (Cargill et al., 2012), has continued to exist, despite evidence of modest efforts to tackle such a silo at some tertiary institutions in the country (Li et al., 2024). This chapter reveals a persistence of the silo in course instruction, textbook making, and MOOC development, where language teachers and disciplinary specialists have largely worked in parallel, with limited coordination or mutual influence. This lack of integration both reflects enduring institutional structures in Chinese universities that separate language teaching from domain-specific research training and restricts the potential for more coherent and discipline-informed ERPP pedagogy. While such separation is not unique to China, it poses particular challenges in contexts where publishing in English is closely tied to institutional and national performance metrics, yet where cross-disciplinary pedagogical development remains under-supported.

Secondly, while the EAP initiatives are being witnessed at a growing number of institutions, support has fallen short at policy and resource levels for the "transition" of English teachers from being traditional EGP teachers to becoming EAP teachers, a change called for and slowly proceeding since the 2000s. Degree programmes on EAP for English majors (the main force of future ERPP teachers) generally continue to be missing at Chinese universities, with the training and professional development of emerging EAP teachers often remaining ad hoc and self-initiated. The China EAP Association (CEAPA), established in 2015 and warmly welcomed by practitioners in the field, has not achieved "legitimate" status at the official level, and as of May 2024, has been prevented from hosting its highly popular events (e.g.,

professional development for teachers, EAP conferences, and intercollegiate EAP contests for undergraduates) (Jigang Cai, Professor at Fudan University and President of CEAPA, and previously President of China ESP Association, personal communication).

Thirdly, related to the lack of policy support, tough battles remain for English language teachers at Chinese universities, in particular those teaching students across disciplines (as opposed to English majors), who are the mainstay of the emerging EAP practitioners in the country. They continue to struggle for career development and status recognition, as well as for collaboration with disciplinary teachers. Notably, English language teachers have so far not generally been part of the picture in the policy-driven EMI initiatives at Chinese universities (Li et al., 2024), nor has their expertise been called on in the proliferation of ad hoc online resources flooding social media platforms.

On the pedagogical and research fronts, several avenues for future work can be identified. As outlined in this chapter, the trajectory of ERPP development in China has been strongly shaped by national research evaluation systems and institutional mandates. These structural incentives have tended to privilege journal article production over broader conceptions of academic literacy, publication in "international" journals over national outlets, and English-medium publication over Chinese-medium publication. This brings into focus the broader issue of how metrics shape ERPP pedagogy (e.g., Cargill & Burgess, 2017; Corcoran et al., 2019). However, the specific mechanisms through which such shaping occurs remain underexplored. Further research is needed to examine pedagogical practices, materials development, and students' learning processes in detail, as well as to identify potential routes for pedagogical intervention. At the same time, ERPP development in China also extends beyond the classroom. A further "informal" response to the needs in the sector has been the extensive practice of brokering and editing manuscripts pre-submission (Luo & Hyland, 2021). As an important factor contributing to China's international research output, it requires more investigation. While beyond the scope of this chapter, this phenomenon highlights the need to situate ERPP pedagogy within a wider ecology of both formal and informal support.

Earlier in this chapter, in examining language teachers' ERPP instruction as reported in course descriptions, we noted that despite the widespread adoption of genre pedagogy, its potential to support deeper rhetorical or epistemological engagement with disciplinary knowledge-making has generally not been realised. In the context of the current instrumental orientation of China's EAP provision, it may be beneficial for Chinese EAP practitioners to draw on the insights of Chinese scholars who have advocated "strategic planning for foreign languages" for a "Community of Shared Future for Mankind" (e.g., Shen &

Wei, 2018) and who have called for language planning in the domain of science and technology (e.g., Shen & Zhang, 2022). Nurturing epistemic and critical perspectives among Chinese EAP teachers will require targeted teacher education and professional development programmes. Relatedly, future research could investigate how such capacity building might be implemented in practice, and how Chinese ERPP pedagogy could engage with wider debates on linguistic justice and epistemic inclusivity (e.g., Curry & Lillis, 2017; Soler, 2021).

The EAP/ERPP movement seems irreversible in the Chinese setting and the momentum will grow. The challenges outlined above must be addressed, at both the institutional policy level and the practitioner level, in order to contribute optimally to China's growing international reputation as a publishing powerhouse of high-quality research. Many non-Anglophone countries potentially bear resemblance to the Chinese scene in terms of the need to move from traditional EGP to EAP and ERPP to boost their international profile. We expect that the investigation outlined in this chapter has highlighted both similarities to and differences from other comparable contexts, with extensive potential for cross-fertilisation.

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