Six years of *E-JournALL*: Reflections on open access, international, multilingual applied linguistics publishing[1]

LAURA DI FERRANTE
Sapienza Università di Roma

KATIE A. BERNSTEIN
Arizona State University

1. Introduction

The phonograph, the photograph, the telescope, the microscope, the thermometer, the air gun, the liquefaction of oxygen, the discovery of planet Neptune, and centrifugal pumps are among 148 inventions and discoveries described in a 1922 scholarly article as "made independently by two or more persons" (Ogburn & Thomas, 1922, p. 93). At a time when the Internet was still a long way off, people who were geographically distant were unknowingly seeking answers to similar questions. Nearly a century later, even with the advent of the Internet and online academic publishing, *E-JournALL* was founded in response to a similar scenario. As scholars coming from Spain and Italy who were working in the United States, the founding editors saw repeatedly that while scholars in the United States were frequently exploring the same issues as their European counterparts, the solutions, ideas, and theories developed in one country often did not seem to be known in the others. They realized that online access, even free online access, may not be enough, and that there was a need for a journal that was explicitly multilingual and international.

E-JournALL, *EuroAmerican Journal of Applied Linguistics and Languages* published its first issue in November 2014. The journal was meant to be a bridge: between scholars working in Europe and the Americas; between scholars writing in English, Italian, and Spanish; and between scholars publishing in the journal and researchers and language teachers across the world with or without university-paid access to expensive journal subscriptions. The journal was founded, therefore, on three pillars: internationalism, multilingualism, and open access.

In this reflection, written at the end of our sixth year as a journal—and with the release of our 12th issue and 97th article—we look back on the last six years, taking stock of how well we have lived up to our founding principles, and we look ahead to the journal's next six years.

2. 2020: A year of change

This year has been a year of transformation, both inside and outside the journal. In spring 2020, one of our founding editors, Elisa Gironzetti, stepped down as Co-Editor-in-Chief. Former Associate Editor, Katie Bernstein, who has been with the journal since its founding, became the new Co-Editor-in-Chief, along with founding editor and current Co-Editor-in-Chief, Laura Di Ferrante. Additionally, Emily Linares, former coordinator of the English proofreading team, became our new Associate Editor. Our proofreading teams also each have a new coordinator: Angélica Amezcua (Arizona State University) for Spanish, Cinzia Giglioni (Sapienza Università di Roma) for Italian, and Elyse Ritchey (National University of Ireland, Maynooth) for English. Valentina Riso (James Madison University), who has been with us since 2015, stays on as coordinator of the translation team.

This year's small, internal revolutions within the journal occurred in tandem with a huge, external one: the Covid-19 pandemic, which has presented myriad novel problems, but also novel possibilities in how we work, how we communicate, and how we share information. This spring, international organizations called for open access to scientific information, citing the free exchange of scientific knowledge as critical in the face of the worldwide pandemic:

---

[1] The two authors jointly constructed the ideas and writing in this the article together in a Google doc, sometimes simultaneously, through conversation and collaboration over time, and it is not possible to attribute any of the words or ideas herein to a single author.

> Scientific communication, research and data offer key building blocks to create new scientific knowledge. It is important to acknowledge that the creation of new scientific knowledge to deal with the emergency risk management depends on creating *an open and level playing field* and providing *unconditional access and sharing* of scientific contents, technologies and processes *to the entire scientific community* from *developed and developing countries alike.* (Unesco, 2020; italics ours)

Indeed, it was truly remarkable to witness the shift around the world, as the field of medicine sought to share research outcomes related to Covid-19 in ways that were as timely, as broad, and as accessible as possible (Grove, 2020). Researchers disseminated their work, pre-peer review, on institutional and personal websites, and journals completed external review for Covid-related work in mere days (Palayew et al., 2020). Perhaps most significantly, journals that typically publish behind paywalls, including the *New English Journal of Medicine*, continue to make all research on Covid-19 openly accessible to anyone (NEJM, n.d.).

While these changes have come in response to Covid-19, in our opinion, they can and should be applied all disciplines, out of recognition that, once produced, knowledge should not be conceived of as "proprietary," but as a fundamental, easily and freely accessible resource for all.

3. *E-JournALL* as open access

The sudden, global, open sharing of information around Covid-19 coincides with a longer, slower, simmering conversation about open access that began in 1990s when physicist, Paul Gisparg, developed the first open-access archive, arXiv (originally XXXArchiveLANL; see Delle Donne, 2010; Ginsparg, 2011; Moore, 2017). The open access movement has since gained momentum across disciplines. In 2019, in one of the strongest institutional pushes for open access publishing to date, the University of California (UC) system—the world's largest public university system—cut ties with Elsevier, the world's largest academic publisher, when Elsevier failed to find an avenue to make all UC-produced research published in its journals open access without charging researchers an additional fee (UC Office of the President, 2019). This idea, of research that is both free to consume and free to publish, is central to *E-JournALL*'s mission.

From its inception, *E-JournALL* was conceived of as an open access journal. Its goal was to make quality applied linguistics research available around the world, regardless of a region's political and economic power. In our sixth year of full, unconditional open access publishing—that is, open access publishing that is free for readers and free for authors—we at *E-JournALL* can say we have met our first goal handily. We've fielded 227 submissions, facilitated hundreds of peer reviews, published 12 issues and 97 articles/reviews, and achieved *Classe A* status in Italy,[2] all without charging authors or readers a cent. Every issue of *E-JournALL* is freely available immediately on publication and remains freely available for anyone, anywhere to read and download.

Importantly, open access means that language teachers across the world without institutional access to paid journals can read *E-JournALL*'s content, filling one of many research-to-practice gaps (see for example Buysse, Sparkman, & Wesley, 2003; Carnine, 1997; McIntyre, 2005). With this practitioner audience in mind, we are proactive in encouraging submissions of applied, classroom-based research. We also ensure that all articles include implications for teaching and learning and that they comprise applied content, including teachers' and learners' voices, educational practice examples, and appendices with useful material for research reduplication. Bringing together writing-for-academic purposes and writing-for-teaching/learning purposes has not always been simple, but we believe that it is important that academic research paves a way towards improved teaching practice. As Buysse et al. (2003) wrote, "[T]he idea that practitioners and researchers should work together to co-construct knowledge as part of a common enterprise, rather than through separate endeavors, could have far-reaching consequences for connecting what we know with what we do in education" (p. 275). Looking forward, we will continue to encourage the free exchange of approaches and expertise between researchers and practitioners.

Yet, maintaining an open access, independently-operated journal is hardly free. It depends on the unpaid, voluntary work of a small army of editors, proofreaders, translators, and peer reviewers, who together ensure the high quality of the articles we publish and without whom this journal would not be possible. While the authors, deservedly, receive credit for their research, the final products have been

---

[2] A status indicating a research journal of the highest caliber. For more, see footnote 3.

touched by many hands. Editors and peer reviewers offer their expertise to help authors in the production of original and scientifically-grounded knowledge. Proofreaders allow for this knowledge to be presented so that it can be enjoyed by as many people as possible, through ensuring clear language, writing style, and rhetorical structure, along with accurate references, accessible figures, and adherence to conventions of an academic genre. Finally, the translation team makes each author's abstract and biographical note accessible across all three of the journal's working languages. In short, the articles that are accessible to the world are quite different from those that were first submitted. The many people who work on *E-JournALL* with care, professionalism, and sometimes the urgency of strictly approaching deadlines all work toward one end: Participating in the process of collective construction of knowledge and its dissemination. The research published by *E-JournALL* is only openly accessible thanks to these monumental collective efforts.

4. *E-JournALL* as multilingual

To achieve our second goal—of a multilingual publication—we publish articles in English, Italian, and Spanish. These languages are the three working languages of the countries whose research communities the editors initially sought to bridge, as well as the three working languages of the founding editors themselves. Importantly, including all three languages in one journal opens connections across research communities who might not otherwise interact.

In addition to publishing articles in all three languages, we also provide translations of each article abstract and author biographical note in all three languages. We issue calls for papers in all three languages, we have a website and submission information in all three languages, and we offer communication with authors and reviewers in all three languages. Finally, we also intentionally curate individual issues to contain articles or reviews in all three languages whenever possible.

This curating includes encouraging authors to write book reviews in a language different from that of the book under review. The day after the publication of one such review (a review published in Spanish about a book written in English), we received an email from one of the editors of the book:

> Congratulations on the publication of your *E-JournALL*, which I have just received notification of. To my surprise, the edition includes a review of a recent book which I have co-edited . . . It's very pleasing to see this contribution - especially since it's written in Spanish and will therefore offer the possibility of reaching a wider audience.

In order for all of these intentionally multilingual practices to function, it is necessary not only to have proofreading teams in each language, but to have an extensive translation team, as well as editors who can, at minimum, read at an academic level in all three languages.

These initiatives are an attempt, not only to bridge research communities, but to reduce the imbalance between English, which is largely acknowledged as the dominant language of science (see for example, Altbach, 2004; Bocanegra-Valle, 2014; Tardy, 2004) and Italian and Spanish. (For an extended discussion of these efforts, see Di Ferrante, Bernstein, & Gironzetti, 2019).

So, how have we done? Since our first issue, published in November 2014, we received 227 submissions, 97 of which have been published (63 articles and 34 book or technology reviews). Of these, 39 articles and 15 book reviews were written in English, 14 articles and 9 book reviews in Italian, and 8 articles and 11 book reviews in Spanish. One article, part of a special issue on translanguaging, was (fittingly) written translingually (English/Spanish). These numbers tell us that, on average, we publish roughly three full-length articles per issue in English, two in Italian, and slightly less than one in Spanish. In other words, despite our efforts, English continues to dominate compared to the other two languages. And as we note in our 2019 article on *E-JournALL*'s multilingual publishing practices (Di Ferrante et al.), many of our authors who publish in English, work in Italian or Spanish-speaking contexts and *could* have published in one of our other two working languages. As this observation suggests, for many scholars, the push to publish in English remains strong.

However, considering the number of people worldwide who speak each of *E-JournALL*'s languages, as well as the size of each language's research community, Italian is actually quite well-represented in the journal. This may be due to the presence of editorial board members who are affiliated with Italian universities and who function as a driving force in attracting authors from their networks to *E-JournALL*. In addition, in 2018, the journal was awarded *Classe A* status by the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of

the University and Research (ANVUR).[3] Since then, we have observed a steady increase in Italian readership, as well as in submissions by scholars affiliated with Italian universities.[4] Yet, tellingly, amidst pressure to publish in English, there has not been a substantial change in the number of publications written in Italian.

Publications in Spanish are the least represented in the journal and this may be partly due to the fact that much of the applied linguistics scholarship *on* Spanish (but not *in* Spanish) is carried out in the United States, where many experts in Spanish applied linguistics publish in English. Our Issue 2.2, a special issue on Spanish as a Heritage Language, clearly exemplifies this tendency. Although the topic was Spanish learning and authors were invited to write the articles in any of the three working languages of the journal, 8 out of 9 elected to write their articles and book reviews in English. Table 1 illustrates these trends.

Table 1
Languages of the articles and book reviews published in E-JournALL

Published Issues	Articles				Reviews			Total
	English	Italian	Spanish	Trans-lingual	English	Italian	Spanish	
1.1 (2014)	3	3	1	0	0	0	1	**8**
2.1 (2015)	3	1	0	0	3	2	1	**10**
2.2* (2015)	5	0	1	0	3	0	0	**9**
3.1 (2016)	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	**7**
3.2* (2016)	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	**7**
4.1 (2017)	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	**6**
4.2* (2017)	2	3	1	0	0	2	0	**8**
5.1 (2018)	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	**6**
5.2* (2018)	6	0	0	1	0	2	2	**11**
6.1 (2019)	3	1	0	0	2	0	1	**7**
7.1* (2020)	6	1	1	0	0	1	1	**10**
7.2 (2020)	3	2	0	0	2	0	1	**8**
Total	**39**	**14**	**8**	**1**	**15**	**9**	**11**	**97**

* = Special Issue

In our next six years, therefore, a major goal is to encourage the submission of Spanish-language articles. Additionally, to date, most of our authors who publish in Spanish have been based in Spain, as have the majority of our Spanish-language editorial board members and members of the Spanish proofreading

---

[3] In order to access the next step of their careers, university professors in Italy need to earn the National Scientific Habilitation (ASN - Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale); for example, Ricercatori and Ricercatrici (Assistant Professors) need to earn the habilitation to Professore Associato as part of the process of becoming Associate Professors. A five-member committee of Full Professors evaluates the curriculum and quality of publications of each candidate for habilitation (see MIUR, n.d.). However, in order to be evaluated, each candidate, depending on the discipline sector of his/her teaching and research (settore scientifico disciplinare, SSD) must produce a minimum fixed number of publications, which are divided into three categories: number of monographs, number of articles/book chapters etc., and number of articles published in Class A journals. Publications in Class A journals are then a mandatory requirement for scholars who seek career advancement. Regulations and criteria for the classification of academic journals can be found at this link: https://www.anvur.it/attivita/classificazione-delle-riviste/classificazione-delle-riviste-ai-fini-dellabilitazione-scientifica-nazionale/regolamento-per-la-classificazione-delle-riviste-nelle-aree-non-bibliometriche/
[4] Before the ANVUR award (up to issue 5.2) the average number of authors affiliated with Italian universities was 2.5 per issue. After the Anvur award, the number increased to 3.6.

team. To this end, we are working to expand both our editorial board and our proofreading team to include Spanish-language scholars whose networks are centered in the Americas and who speak and write non-peninsular varieties of Spanish. Finally, we are carefully considering ways to encourage more translingual work, that is, scholarship that translanguages across (and beyond!) our working languages. These considerations are closely related to the third pillar on which we founded *E-JournALL*, internationalism.

5. *E-JournALL* as international

We have sought to uphold internationalism not only in the authors and in the content of the journal, but also in our editorial board, our internal teams, our readers, and our explicit attention to publication norms and criteria in both Europe and the US. In our view, internationalism has been a tool to bring together multiple voices from as many countries as possible. In order to achieve this goal, we adopted several strategies. One approach consisted of establishing an international board with scholars and practitioners affiliated with a wide range of institutions. Six years in, our board is made up of 35 scholars: 18 from Europe (13 from Italia, 4 from España, 1 from England), 15 from the United States, and two from América do Sul (Brasil). Other strategies we used to foster internationalization comprise the dissemination of our calls for papers in as many venues as possible and the selection of at least one reviewer per article from a different country than the authors of the article. This latter choice has proven particularly fruitful, as experts who work in different cultural and scholarly contexts often present authors with alternative perspectives, additional bibliographic material, and novel insights. Additionally, as shown in Table 2, our actions to foster internationalization have resulted in authors from a range of locations. The 128 authors who have published in *E-JournALL* since its founding live and work in 18 countries, spread across multiple continents.

Table 2
Authors' affiliations in E-JournALL *by issue*

Country	Issue												Total	% Total
	1.1	2.1	2.2*	3.1	3.2*	4.1	4.2*	5.1	5.2*	6.1°	7.1*	7.2		
United States	8	2	13	2	4	1		3	8	2		3	46	35,94%
Italy	3	6		3,5	1	2	5		2	3	2	6	33,5	26,17%
Spain	2	2		1		2		3		3	5		18	14,06%
England				1					2	1	3		7	5,47%
Brazil				0,5			1					2	3,5	2,73%
Netherlands							1		2				3	2,34%
Australia					1		1	0,5					2,5	1,95%
Germany							2						2	1,56%
Iran		2											2	1,56%
Israel											2		2	1,56%
Japan	1								1				2	1,56%
Switzerland				1					1				2	1,56%
Latvia	1												1	0,78%
Mexico					1								1	0,78%
Finland									1				1	0,78%
Sweden												1	1	0,78%
Vietnam								0,5					0,5	0,39%
All	15	12	13	9	7	5	10	7	17	9	12	12	128	100%

Note. ,5 represents authors with joint affiliation in two institutions in two different countries.
* = Special Issue
° = In 2019, to facilitate a shift in publication schedule from summer/winter to spring/fall, we published one issue.

Because the three working languages of the journal are English, Italian, and Spanish, most of the authors are from countries where these languages are common—the United States, Italy, and Spain, in addition to England, Mexico, and Australia. But we, proudly, have also published work by authors from Vietnam, Israel, Iran, Germany, Finland, Switzerland, Sweden, The Netherlands, Latvia, Brazil, and Japan.

We see similar trends among our readers. Based on our website traffic (see Table 3), while around 45% of the users of our website (www.e-journall.org) are from the United States, England, Italy, and Spain, the journal has attracted readers from 130 different countries in very diverse geographical areas: Quite surprisingly, after the United States, most of *E-JournALL*'s readers are in Russia. Moreover, among the top 10 countries with greatest *E-JournALL* readership, we find five countries whose official languages do not coincide with those of our journal: two Asian countries, China and Japan, two European countries, France and Germany, and one South American, Brazil. This may suggest that our efforts to disseminate research beyond our network and beyond our linguistic limits are somehow succeeding. On the downside, we seem to have reached few readers in other countries where Italian, Spanish, or English are the officially spoken languages; for example Mexico ranks 11th, Canada, 15th, and Australia, 19th.

Table 3
Fifteen most frequent location of access for e-journall.org users since November 2014, To (Source: Google Analytics, 20 October 2020)

Country	Number of Users	Percentage of Total
United States	2719	22,06%
Russia	1812	14,70%
Italy	1296	10,52%
Not set*	1079	8,76%
Spain	753	6,11%
United Kingdom	528	4,28%
Brazil	461	3,74%
France	459	3,72%
China	279	2,26%
Germany	232	1,88%
Japan	165	1,34%
Mexico	133	1,08%
Kyrgyzstan	132	1,07%
Netherlands	129	1,05%
India	128	1,04%
Canada	115	0,93%

Note: * = not set indicates those visitors to the websites whose geographical location was not recorded

With regard then to our original goal of bridging research in Europe and the Americas, we feel that our mission has been, and continues to be, accomplished. In our next six years, we have set a new goal of increasing submissions by authors from Spanish-speaking countries beyond Spain and the United States, as well as continuing to expand our reach to more authors, readers, reviewers, and guest editors beyond North America and Europe.

6. Conclusion

We believe that *E-JournALL* supports an important idea for science dissemination today: science for all, or the conviction that knowledge should be available to everybody around the world and should be unconditionally free. Nurturing this idea, however, comes at a cost, in terms of time and energy spent—time and energy spent unpaid—by all of the many members of the *E-JournALL* team, from editors to proofreaders to reviewers, with career payoffs that are debatable in the face of the amount of effort we all put into this multilingual, international collaboration. Yet, we persist, because we believe in this work.

We conclude this state-of-the-journal editorial, therefore, with our gratitude to all the people who make this journal possible. Thank you to our proofreaders, our translators, our team coordinators, our editorial board, and our reviewers for your contributions to this labor of love. Here's to the next six years. ¡Adelante! Avanti! Onward!

References

Altbach, Philip G. (2004). Globalisation and the university: Myths and realities in an unequal world. *Tertiary Education & Management, 10*(1), 3–25. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:TEAM.0000012239.55136.4b

Amano, Tatsuya, González-Varo, Juan P., & Sutherland, Williaw J. (2016). Languages are still a major barrier to global science. *PLoS biology, 14*(12), e2000933. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.2000933

Bocanegra-Valle, Ana (2014). 'English is my default academic language': Voices from LSP scholars publishing in a multilingual journal. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 13*, 65–77. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2013.10.010

Buysse, Virgina, Sparkman, Karen L., & Wesley, Patricia W. (2003). Communities of practice: Connecting what we know with what we do. *Exceptional Children, 69*(3), 263–277. https://doi.org/10.1177/001440290306900301

Carnine, Douglas (1997). Bridging the research-to-practice gap. *Exceptional Children, 63*(4), 513–521. https://doi.org/10.1177/001440299706300406

Delle Donne, Roberto (2010) Open access e pratiche della comunicazione scientifica. In Mauro Guerrini (Ed.), *Gli archivi istituzionali. Open access, valutazione della ricerca e diritto d'autore* (pp. 125–150). Editrice Bibliografica.

Di Ferrante, Laura, Bernstein, Katie A., & Gironzetti, Elisa (2019). Towards decentering English: Practices and challenges of a multilingual academic journal. *Critical Multilingualism Studies, 7*(1), 105–123. https://cms.arizona.edu/index.php/multilingual/article/view/177

Ginsparg, Paul (2011) It was twenty years ago today . . . arXiv preprint arXiv:1108.2700.

Grove, Jack (15 May 2020). Open-access publishing and the coronavirus. *Inside Higher Ed.* https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/05/15/coronavirus-may-be-encouraging-publishers-pursue-open-access

Hennemann, Stefan, Rybski, Diego, & Liefner, Inge (2012). The myth of global science collaboration—Collaboration patterns in epistemic communities. *Journal of Informetrics, 6*(2), 217–225. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2011.12.002

McIntyre, Donald (2005). Bridging the gap between research and practice. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 35(3), 357–382. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640500319065

MIUR, Ministero dell'Istruzione, Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca (n.d.). Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale. Retrieved October 20, 2020, from https://www.miur.gov.it/abilitazione-scientifica-nazionale

Moore, Samuel (2017). A genealogy of open access: negotiations between openness and access to research. *Revue électronique de la Société française des sciences de l'information et de la communication, 11*(2). https://doi.org/10.4000/rfsic.3220

NEJM (n.d.). *Coronavirus (Covid-19)—NEJM.* New England Journal of Medicine. Retrieved October 24, 2020, from https://www.nejm.org/coronavirus

Ogburn, William, & Thomas, Dorothy (1922). Are inventions inevitable? A note on social evolution. *Political Science Quarterly, 37*(1), 83–98. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2142320

Palayew, Adam, Norgaard, Ole, Safreed-Harmon, Kelly, Andersen, Tue H., Rasmussen, Lauge N., & Lazarus, Jeffrey V. (2020). Pandemic publishing poses a new COVID-19 challenge. *Nature Human Behaviour*, *4*(7), 666–669. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-020-0911-0

Tardy, Christine (2004). The role of English in scientific communication: lingua franca or Tyrannosaurus rex?. *Journal of English for academic purposes, 3*(3), 247–269. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2003.10.001

UC Office of the President (2019, 28 February). *UC terminates subscriptions with world's largest scientific publisher in push for open access to publicly funded research* [Press release]. https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-terminates-subscriptions-worlds-largest-scientific-publisher-push-open-access-publicly

Unesco (2020, June 29). *Open access to facilitate research and information on COVID-19.* https://en.unesco.org/covid19/communicationinformationresponse/opensolutions