

Review and prospects: in celebration of the 20th anniversary of *Journal of Southeast University (English Edition)*

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Abstract: The twenty years history of *Journal of Southeast University (English Edition)* and its significant achievements are briefly reviewed. Based on the experiences accumulated over its twenty years, some suggestions for improving the quality of this English-language academic journal are proposed, including focusing on the report of the excellent disciplines of its sponsoring university, attracting high-level papers by giving the priority of publication, publishing special issues for experts and scholars at home and abroad, shortening publication period, and realizing the internationalization of the members of the editorial committee, etc.

Key words: English-language academic journal; *Journal of Southeast University (English Edition)*; the 20th anniversary; retrospection; prospect; suggestion

When you hold this issue of *Journal of Southeast University (English Edition)* in your hands, it will have been twenty years since this English-language journal was first published and distributed. Great changes **have taken place since it was first published in 1984.**

1 Establishment and Growth of This Journal

Journal of Southeast University (English Edition), sponsored and published by Southeast University, is a comprehensive academic publication in science and technology primarily publishing Southeast University faculty research papers. This English-language journal made its initial appearance in October 1984, and was formerly called *Journal of Nanjing Institute of Technology (English Edition)*. In 1991, it adopted the current name — *Journal of Southeast University (English Edition)* (JSEU (EE)) — reflecting the new name of the university. This English-language journal, with CN serial numbering CN 32 – 1325/N and international standard serial numbering ISSN 1003 – 7985, is distributed at home and abroad.

As the sponsoring university of JSEU (EE), Southeast University, with a history of 102 years, is one of the national key universities administered directly under the Ministry of Education of China, listed into “Project 211” in 1995. The university is a comprehensive university with science, engineering, art, social sciences, law, economics, management, languages, etc. with engineering as its focus, and

consists of over 40 schools or departments. The number of full-time students is approximately 30 000, nearly 8 000 of whom are postgraduates. It is one of the top 10 universities in scientific research and development in China and has over 20 national or provincial research institutes. In the past ten years, it has completed more than 1 000 research projects, over 500 of which have been awarded national and provincial science and technology prizes. Its research funds exceeded 400 million yuan in 2003.

Most of the papers published in JSEU (EE) relate to the fields of civil engineering, architecture, mechanical engineering, power engineering, radio engineering, electronic engineering, computer science and engineering, automatic control, electrical engineering, instrument science and engineering, thermal power engineering, communication and transportation, material science and engineering, biological science and medical engineering, management science and engineering, mathematics, physics and chemistry, etc.

The editorial committee, which is the sixth editorial committee since the establishment of JSEU (EE), consists of 31 famous experts and scholars at home, including two academicians of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, professors Gu Guanqun and Lü Zhitao.

Prior to 1989 JSEU (EE) was an annual; it then became a semi-annual publication. As of 2002, this English-language journal has been extended from a semi-annual journal to a quarterly journal. It has been published in international standard 16-division format since 2001. Through the end of 2004, 20 volumes

comprising 42 issues of *Journal of Southeast University* (English Edition) have been published, with the total number of published articles reaching 819 (see Fig.1).

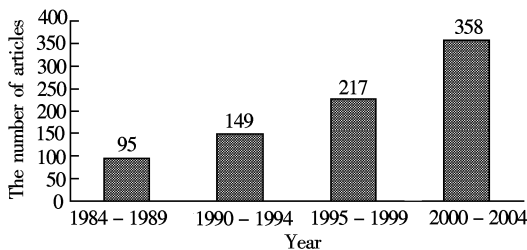


Fig.1 The number of articles published in 20 years

2 Significant Achievements

Tab.1 illustrates the significant growth of *Journal of Southeast University* (English Edition) throughout its twenty years. In the past three years, the increase in articles published has been particularly dramatic (see Fig.1).

Tab.1 Main events in the history of *Journal of Southeast University* (English Edition)

Year	Events
1984	Made its initial appearance as an annual, named <i>Journal of Nanjing Institute Technology</i> (English Edition)
1989	Published as a semi-annual
1991	Published formally with CN serial numbering CN 32 – 1325/N and international standard serial numbering ISSN 1003 – 7985; named <i>Journal of Southeast University</i> (English Edition)
1999	Included in ZBI MATH in German
2001	Included in CSA, CA in America and AJ in Russia, published in an international standard 16-division format
2002	Published quarterly, and included in MR in America and INSPEC in UK
2003	Included in Ei Compendex in America
2004	The twenty years of this journal

At the beginning, most of its articles were published by translating the articles previously published in the Chinese language edition of *Journal of Southeast University* (Natural Science Edition)^[1]; today it only publishes up-to-date research achievements not previously reported; in its initial appearance, it published only one issue per year with approximately 16 articles per issue; today it publishes four issues per year with usually over 25 articles per issue. Prior to 1989, when it was an annual periodical, the publication period was nearly two years; prior to 2002, when it was a semi-annual journal, approximately one year. Today it is only about seven months. Before 2002 there was only one editor on staff; today there are two. At the beginning, almost all

its authors were faculty of Southeast University; today its authors are from both Southeast University and outside Southeast University, with the number of outside authors reaching 50% in 2004. Furthermore, the proportion of its overseas authors reached 7% in 2003. This shows that this English-language journal has achieved a wider reputation in both China and abroad.

Since 2003, the editorial department has invited an American teacher engaged by our university to improve the language quality of JSEU (EE). As a result, the quality of English writing of this journal has been improved greatly. Practice has proved that this is successful.

This English-language journal has established a wide international association with about 160 universities, including those having communication and cooperation relationships with our university. The editorial department sends copies as gifts to the libraries of some world famous universities such as Princeton University, Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Oxford University, Cambridge University, etc. to greatly extend its international influence.

Journal of Southeast University (English Edition) has been included in some famous search periodicals and databases at home and abroad, including well-known international indexing systems such as Ei Compendex, CA, CSA and MR in America, INSPEC in UK, ZBI MATH in German, and AJ in Russia. The percent of its articles indexed in Ei Compendex exceeds 80%. Readers can search all the articles published in JSEU (EE) for full text in <http://new.wanfangdata.com.cn>, <http://www.cnki.net>, and <http://dx2.tydata.com/index.asp>.

It can be seen from all the above that this English-language journal has made great progress in the past 20 years. It has begun to attract more and more high-level articles from other universities and research institutes. In recent years, the indices of this English-language journal have been raised greatly. For example, last year the rate of articles supported by funds was 46%, while two years ago it was only 32%.

3 Future Prospects

Although *Journal of Southeast University* (English Edition) has made great progress in the past 20 years, compared with other well-known journals in China and world-famous journals, the statistic indices of this journal, such as citation rate, impact factor, immediacy index, cited half-life, the article supported-by-fund

rate, and the regional distribution of authors should be augmented.

Our tasks in the future are to further improve the academic quality of this English-language journal, extend its impact in China and abroad, and make it a well-known journal in science and technology throughout the world. To achieve these goals it is recommended that we:

- Improve the academic level

First, it is necessary to attract high-quality articles to improve the academic level of a journal. We should give high-level papers the priorities of publication time and free publication. Furthermore, the same measure should be adopted to attract high-quality articles supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the National Basic Research Program of China (973 Program) and other provincial and ministerial science funds to improve the academic quality and the article supported-by-fund rate of our journal. At the same time, we should do our best to persuade the well-known experts and scholars of our university to submit their best articles to our journal.

Secondly, we may publish special issues for academicians of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Engineering, famous experts and scholars at home and abroad, and some national key disciplines such as civil engineering, architecture, electronics, information technology, power engineering, etc. Practice has demonstrated that the publication of a special issue with the articles of well-known experts and scholars can improve the academic level of a journal in science and technology^[2]. Additionally due to the relative concentration of specific-discipline information in a special issue, its publication helps to attract more readers, thus raising the total citation and impact factor of a journal.

It is also important to further shorten the publication period of this English-language journal to attract high-quality articles. Since this journal became a quarterly in 2002, its publication period has been shortened greatly, from approximately one year before 2002 to only seven months in 2004. Compared with well-known journals at home, however, its publication period is still too long. For example, the shortest publication period of *Tsinghua Science and Technology*, a bimonthly, has been shortened to three months^[2]. It is possible to further shorten the publication period of our journal to no more than six months through establishing a strict review system and increasing its information density.

- Realize the relative specialization

Undoubtedly, a professional academic journal will have a greater readership than a comprehensive one. We recognize that a comprehensive journal by its very nature will have less appeal. However, it is possible for it to focus on reporting the research of Southeast University's pre-eminent departments such as civil engineering, architecture, mechanical engineering, electronic engineering, and thermal power engineering. This is called relative specialization. In fact, the publication of special issues as mentioned above is an effective measure in the specialization of a comprehensive journal in science and technology.

- Extend the international impact

To extend the impact of a journal in the world, it is necessary to realize the internationalizations of its authors, readers and members of the editorial committee^[2-4], of which the internationalization of its authors is the most important of all. At present, the number and ratio of articles from overseas authors is limited. In order to attract more articles from overseas authors, we should adopt the following measures:

First, we ought to strengthen our connection with overseas Chinese experts, especially those from our university who are going abroad. As many of them may also be authors of our journal, through them we may also solicit high-level articles from more foreign experts.

Secondly, we should invite some famous foreign experts and scholars to become members of the editorial committee. Not only can these foreign experts and scholars serve as excellent authors, providing our journal with high-level articles, but also review and recommend high-level articles and relevant peer reviewers for our journal. Perhaps, most importantly the foreign members of the editorial committee should present our journal to more readers all over the world. Certainly some of these overseas readers may be potential authors of our journal.

Furthermore, we should set up a Web page of our journal for the convenience of overseas readers and authors and make more overseas readers aware of *Journal of Southeast University* (English Edition).

We must continue to strive to further improve the English quality, editing quality and printing quality of our journal.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of *Journal of Southeast University* (English Edition), we would like to thank everyone who has supported our past work. We are looking forward to even greater success for this English-language journal in the future.

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回顾与展望：庆祝《东南大学学报(英文版)》创刊 20 周年

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摘要: 回顾了《东南大学学报(英文版)》创刊 20 年来的历史进程和取得的成绩. 在此基础上, 就如何进一步发展学报提出了建议. 指出重点报道主办学校的优势学科、吸引高质量论文并给与优先发表权、出版国内外专家学者的专辑、缩短论文发表周期及实现编委国际化等是提高英文版学报质量、扩大其影响的有效途径.

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